

SLUMBER FAIRIES.

Up the side of the trundle-bed Softly they go, And over the pillow with gentle tread They come to the golden baby-head; Under his lashes he tries to peep, But before he knows he is fast asleep. —Isn't it so?

A STRANGE CHARACTER.

One evening, during the progress of the war of the Revolution in America, an old woman, living in the suburbs of Portsmouth, England, was summoned to her door by a knock, and, on opening it, found herself confronted with an old man, poorly dressed, with a bundle in his hand, such as travelers of his class frequently carried on their pedestrian tours.

"Madam," he said, respectfully, "can I get to lodge here to-night?" "It aren't my business to take lodgers," replied the mistress of the house, scanning the applicant closely by the light she held in her hand.

"I s'pose not, madam—but I'm a poor man, and want shelter somewhere."

"Well, why don't you go to an inn? there's plenty of them in the town."

"Just because I'm poor, and can't afford to pay as much as they'd ask. I've got a little money, only a little, and I want to make it go as far as I can. I'm willing to pay you what's reasonable; and then I'd save something, I'm thinking."

"Who are you? where do you belong? and what's your business?"

"I'm called John the Painter, and that explains my business, and I belong anywhere where I happen to be. If you're not satisfied with this answer, why, good night to you, and I'll trudge on to try my chance somewhere else."

The old woman, who was poor herself, and lived alone, in a small, crazy, old house, thought she might as well gather in a few pennies, by keeping the traveler, as to let some of her neighbors do it; and so, after a little reflection, she replied:

"I s'pose I can keep you, if as you say, you'll pay me what's reasonable—for, like you, I'm poor, too, and can't afford to do it for nothing. Come in and sit down—you look tired. I s'pose you want supper?"

"Yes, if you please," said John the Painter, as he walked in and took a seat near the fire, upon which he fixed his eyes somewhat abstractedly, while he carelessly threw his hat and bundle down beside him.

For the half hour that the mistress of the house was busied in preparing his supper, the traveler seemed deeply absorbed in matters of his own, and scarcely once took his eyes from the fire, or changed his position. At first the old woman glanced at him furtively, with an air of ordinary curiosity, and occasionally ventured some common-place remark; but finding he made no reply, took no notice of her presence, and even seemed not to hear her, she became bolder in her manner, and two or three times stopped near him, staring directly into his face.

He appeared to be between sixty and seventy years of age, had gray hair, a stern, pinched face, a large nose, thin, compressed lips, and cold, staring eyes, the expression of which was far from pleasing, and which was not redeemed by anything else in his countenance. In fact he seemed like a man not at peace with himself or the world, and who was either then brooding over some committed crime or some contemplated revenge.

"There, sir, your supper's ready, if you want it," at length spoke the mistress, in a half querulous tone, as if offended that none of her previous remarks had been noticed.

The strange traveler took no heed, but still sat staring at the fire.

"I say your supper's ready, man; and, if you want it hot, you'd better eat it before it gets cold; for I'll not warm it again, this blessed night, for you nor nobody else!" cried the hostess, in an angry tone.

Still no movement—no response—no indication that her unmusical voice was not yet heard.

"I say!" she half screamed in his ear, at the same time taking hold of his arm rather rudely.

Like a ball he sprang from his seat and confronted her, his eyes looking wild and wicked.

"Good Lord, man, don't scare a body so!" exclaimed the woman, taking two or three quick, backward steps, and turning pale with fright. "I'm only trying to make you understand your supper's ready."

The stranger glared at her for a moment, then at the table, and then seemed to comprehend the true facts.

"Oh! ah! yes!" he replied, with a grim smile. "I beg your pardon!—it's likely you've spoke to me before!"

"It's like I have, a half a-dozen

times, just as I might have talked to a post!"

"Yes, madam, I see—I thank you—I beg your pardon! I was busy thinking, and forget where I was."

He then took his seat at the table, and, while eating his supper, tried to make amends for his former impolite abstraction, by making himself as agreeable as possible. He succeeded so well in his efforts to please, that the mistress of the house became quite charmed with his conversation, and began to think he might possibly be an angel in disguise—or, in other words, a rich and eccentric old gentleman, whom good fortune had thrown in her way for a future husband or possible legacy.

But these bright hopes did not have a long duration—for scarcely had the stranger finished his meal, than he suddenly grew cold, taciturn and abstracted, and presently asked to be shown to his bed. If he slept soundly, the mistress of the house did not—for after the dispelling of the bright fancy of future wealth, she began to fear that the stranger might take a notion to shorten her life before morning, and so lay awake and listened, and trembled at every unusual sound.

The night, however, passed off without any disturbance; and at daylight the old man rose and went out, leaving his bundle behind. Scarcely was he out of sight before the curiosity of his hostess set her at work to see if she could gather any new facts.

If he had left a trunk, instead of a bundle, she would probably have found away to open and rummage it; but as it was, she had only to untie an old, dirty handkerchief, and there, before her eyes, lay a shirt, a pair of stockings, and a tin box—a curious-looking tin box—for which, unfortunately for her ease of mind, she could not imagine any use. She held it up, turned it over, shook it, and tried her best to see into it, and conjecture for what purpose it was made; but not being able to do this, she at length resigned it with a sigh, rolled it up as she had found it, tied up the bundle, and went about her own business.

John the Painter came back to a late breakfast, and then settled with the curious widow for all he had of her, at the same time remarking that he might possibly remain in town another night, in which case he hoped he would be permitted to return and pass another night under her hospitable roof.

To this she now readily gave consent, again thinking him a man of some consequence.

He then inquired where he could find a tinman; and receiving the proper direction to one, he bade her good-bye and started off, this time taking his bundle with him.

Toward evening, however, he came back, and said he had concluded to stay another night in town, and wanted supper, which the widow again prepared for him.

He ate this meal in silence, and soon after made some excuse to go out.

He was absent some two or three hours; and when he returned he reported that there was quite a large fire, which he understood to be in some government buildings that he feared would be consumed.

"But blessed are the poor!" he added, with a strange kind of a laugh, which his hostess afterwards recalled; "for they have nothing to lose."

He then went to bed, and appeared to rest well through the night; but rose at the first streak of day, paid his reckoning, and took his departure, saying he should not return.

On going out, an hour or two later, the widow was surprised to see the usually quiet town of Portsmouth in great commotion—groups collected here and there, as if discussing some remarkable event—and mounted men, both military and civil, dashing hither and yon, all seeming hurried and anxious. On every blank wall, too, there was a flaming placard, announcing the startling fact that a hundred thousand pounds worth of naval stores had been destroyed by incendiarism, that secret emissaries of the enemy were supposed to be in their midst, offering large rewards for the arrest and conviction of the guilty, and ordering all citizens to report to the nearest magistrate the names of all strangers who had lodged in town during the last three days, and more especially the last night.

As soon as the widow fairly understood this matter, she hastened to give in the name of John the Painter, with a description of his person, manner, conversation, and withal, his curious tin box and visit to the tinman. The latter was immediately sent for, and deposed that he had made a curious affair, the use of which he did not know.

All this fully fixed suspicion upon the eccentric old man; and as it was supposed he had been dispatched from town to some distant point by relays of horses, horsemen were sent off in every direction in hot pursuit, with orders to arrest every mounted person they might find.

Somewhere about mid-day John the Painter was overtaken, on the regular London road, by one of these mounted parties, who stopped and inquired if any one had passed him on horseback that morning.

"Not a soul," replied the old man.

"How long have you been on this road?"

"Since daylight. Why?"

"There was a great destruction of naval stores in Portsmouth last night, the work of some infernal incendiary, and we want to catch the villain."

"Well, do you s'pose he fled on horseback?" said the old man, with a peculiar twinkle of his eyes.

"Undoubtedly."

"Well, he didn't—he went on foot."

"Ha! how do you know?"

"Because I know the man who did it."

"Who is he? Where is he?" demanded the leader excitedly.

"He's called John the Painter, and he's here, I'm the man."

"Take care how you jest, old fellow!" returned the other warmly; "it might get you into trouble."

"If you can't understand plain English, you're as big a fool as your royal master is a knave!" said the old man, with an angry sneer. "I tell you I'm the man that did it—and I'm the man that glories in it—and if you don't believe me, ride on and hunt till you get sense!"

The horsemen now thought the old man was crazy; but, after what he had said, they concluded to arrest him and take him back to Portsmouth. They did so, and there he was confronted with the old woman and the tinman, both of whom identified him as the mysterious stranger they had described.

He was then asked to make a confession and his name accomplices.

"I never had any accomplices," said the old man, indignantly. "What I did, I did alone, and I glory in it. I once lived peaceably and happily in the quiet little town of Amboy, State of New Jersey, far away over the great waters; and I'd been living peaceably there to-day, if the minions of King George had left me alone; but they came there, and insulted and abused me, and burned down my dwelling, and cast me adrift to shift for myself—and then I took a solemn oath I'd be revenged. It was my first intention to kill your vile king; and I'd have done it, only for Mr. Deane our secret minister at Paris who convinced me it was wrong to slay the Lord's Anointed; and so, as the next best thing, I determined to burn as much of the king's property as I could. I came direct from Paris here, and you know what I've done since I got here, and that's enough. I know you'll hang me for it—but I don't care for that. I'm a poor, friendless, old man, made sick of life by your accursed deeds; and now, that I've got my revenge, I don't care how soon I die."

They sent the old man, under guard, to London, where he underwent a close examination before the Privy Council—but no new facts were elicited. He strictly adhered to his first statement; and mainly on his own evidence, or confession, he was tried, convicted, sentenced, and hanged.

We have only to add, that the foregoing may be relied on as strictly authentic.

Gathering Money.

During their American tours Bernhard, Langtry and Irving gathered in over a million dollars. Mrs. Langtry's total earnings were \$229,663. Mme. Bernhard's are stated to have been \$390,000 for twenty-six weeks, an average of \$2,145 for 181 performances. Mr. Irving's are given as \$405,964, or an average of \$2,242. When Rachael appeared thirty-eight times in New York and Boston, in 1855, the total receipts were 629,242 francs. Mr. Irving's greatest success was, perhaps, in Boston. In one week he played there to 27,000 hearers—something which he never did before. The weeks receipts were \$24,087.

Cure "Crazes."

About ten years ago the blood cure started, and for a time every one troubled with weak lungs became a convert, that is, in our large cities. Then came the mud bath. People flocked to a certain Spa in Germany to try the virtues of a sticky black mud, which was said to cure rheumatism. To bathe in it meant simply to be buried in it up to the chin for an hour or two, and then to spend several hours in a tub of water getting rid of the reminiscence. The blue glass cure will be recollected by all. The sun bath cure, the fish oil cure for consumption, the simple diet cure, the celery cure for nervousness, and many others, started out as crazes but their best points have found their way into the array of orthodox remedies.

Books, like friends, should be few and well chosen.

To be proud of learning is the greatest ignorance.

Good, the more communicated, more abundant grows.

To know how to wait is the great secret of success.

Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder.

Children are living jewels dropped unstrained from heaven.

To read without reflecting is like eating without digesting.

Chastity, once lost, cannot be recalled; it goes only once.

By general mistake, ill-nature as often passes for wit as cunning does for wisdom.

Hyde Park.

It is the unfortunate Charles the First that the English people have to thank for the opening of Hyde Park to the public. During his reign the gentry of the neighboring country used to try the speed of their horses in friendly races beneath its spreading trees, witnessed by the pleasure-loving Londoners, who cheered each his favorite, and drank to his success in draughts of new milk carried around and sold by pretty milkmaids, crying, "New milk of a red cow!" just as they continued to cry a century after at Milk Fair in St. James' Park. Not only did the simple London folk come to witness these sports, but the king and his nobles were animated spectators; for we read of fair and noble dames betting "scarlet silk stockings and scented Spanish gloves" with the gallants of the court, often giving odds of twenty to thirty for or against some particular steed.

At one of those racing boats old Aubrey tells us that Charles the First gave a mortal affront to one Henry Martin, M. P. for the county of Berks. Martin, it appears, was a rough fellow, and several complaints had been made to the king respecting his rudeness. It so happened that Martin was present in the park when the king was going to witness the sports, and seeing him, Charles said aloud, so that all could hear, "Let that ugly rascal begone out of the park." The royal mandate was obeyed, but the "ugly rascal" had terrible revenge when, a few years later, he put his name next to Cromwell's upon Charles' death warrant. On that ominous day Martin, sitting beside Cromwell, gave his vote very merrily, and was a great sport, whilst the Roundhead leader besmeared Martin's face with ink, a joke which the jolly member for Berks immediately retaliated by punching the jaws of General Oliver—at least so say the historians of the times.

From time to time during each succeeding reign Hyde Park was the playground of the people. Routs, revels, dances, plays and races were lustily enjoyed by the good citizens of London, no matter how much discord and strife shook the country or engaged her soldiers in home and foreign wars. In later years it has been greatly reduced in area, always, however, against the sturdy protest of the people. In 1825 a strip of ground at Hyde Park corner was cut off from the park and added to the grounds of Apsley House, the residence of the Duke of Wellington, who at that time was by no means popular; and that mighty power, even in monarchical England, "the people," expressed in pretty strong language their opinions respecting this encroachment upon their ancient rights and privileges. But after all they gained more than they lost, for the locality had long been the resort of idlers and vagabonds. They simply asserted their right to grumble, and then submitted.

From Home to London.

From Rome to London in forty-eight hours! It seems a dream! Yet it was so! Says a recent correspondent: I left Rome on Thursday, at five minutes to three o'clock P. M., and was in London at a few minutes past five o'clock on Saturday, and we lost two hours and more in Calais, and an hour and a half at Bale, otherwise we should have been in London three and a half hours earlier. At first, I thought of taking the new Nice route, but the fare being about two hundred francs more than on any other route, I chose the St. Gothard route, as being the newest and most picturesque, and within an hour of the swiftness of the other route, which was worth saving two hundred francs. I think, speaking from experience, I would advise every one to select the St. Gothard route, one way, at least, and never to take the Nice route, unless compelled to pass by Nice, as no time is saved by it, and it is less picturesque than any other route, whilst costing 200 francs more than the other routes. I must also warn travelers against taking a bed in one of the sleeping-cars that are now added to every railway train in Europe. You may, perhaps, think they are like American sleeping-cars, but they are not. By night and by day they resemble church pews in the Protestant churches of England, with the partition walls carried up to the roof, giving you a stifling, suffocating feeling, quite unbearable at times. The beds are placed one above the other, in ship's berth fashion. I would not have one of these beds if given to me, for, not only are they uncomfortable in every way, but you run the risk of catching all kinds of illnesses, as there is no time given to their cleaning and airing between each journey. They are roughly swept and dusted, but that is all. I know what I say, for I saw this done all along the route, though several sick persons had occupied the beds. The Nice route train, also, which goes direct to Rome from Calais, arrives in Rome at three o'clock and leaves again at five, there being but one train a week; there is not a change of cars at either end of the route. For a party of three, the coupe beds are better on the European railroads for night traveling, but as they cannot be transformed into ordinary seats, they are useless on long journeys, comprising several days and several nights.

Taking Care of New Dresses.

There is an old proverb that says a lady is always to be known by her boots and gloves. Quite as crucial a test is the faculty of taking good care of her costumes, and one that quite as distinctly marks the well-bred lady. Any one can buy an elegant wardrobe if she have money enough, but to take the requisite care to keep it fresh and dainty requires something more than a check-book. Of keeping nice dresses, a lady writes:

"Each dress should have its own wrap or cover to keep it from chafing or fading. Take fine, firm cotton cloth, something over a yard wide, cut it into squares, then hem and wash the squares. They should be fine, take no room and weigh little; firm, to keep away from dust; hemmed, that you may keep the same side next the silk, and washed, to do away with the bleaching chemicals, which are liable to change the color of the silk. Fold the bottom of the train back and forth in about eighteen or twenty-three inch folds so as to fit the box you have for it. The bottom now being all together you will cover it with a small cloth or towel to keep the dusty train from rubbing against the cleaner parts of the robe; roll the whole dress loosely to the size and shape of the box, lay it upon the white cloth and fold the corners of the same over the top of the package and place it in the box. Now loosen the roll and adjust it to its space so as to favor any delicate or easily crushed portion of the dress—as Medici collars, flower garniture, embroidery, etc.—relieving crowded places and distributing the thick to the thin spots. When you come to use the robe shake it out and you will find it in good condition. The fold of a dress or shawl will often work up between the trays of boxes and by motion of cars, wagons, etc., get chafed into holes. To avoid this, pin the cloth over it so it cannot jut over the box. To pack laces, fold them in blue tissue paper or soft linen, because white paper contains bleaching acids and discolors and decays the ribbon or lace. The same is true of white shoes and gloves, and especially of silver ornaments. The latter, though worn every evening, retain their purity and brilliancy for months if kept closely in blue tissue paper. Shoes and slippers should never be folded together without a cloth or paper between them, as the sole of one soils the upper of the other. Put one in cloth, turn it over, and then add the other."

Old Public Functionaries.

Fifty years ago James Lawrenson of Maryland received an appointment to a \$400 clerkship in the post office department, Washington. He celebrated the semi-centennial of his service by taking a half-holiday from his desk in the dead letter office and receiving the congratulations of his friends. He was a clerk at the post office in Baltimore for ten years before he came to Washington, so that he has been in the employment of the government for sixty years, and in age as well as length of service is the oldest of Uncle Sam's hired men. During nearly a quarter of a century Mr. Lawrenson acted in the capacity of correspondent for the Baltimore Sun, and has the additional honor of being the oldest journalist in Washington. He is still in good health and able regularly to perform the duties of his office, although the discipline is a little relaxed in his favor.

William T. Barry was postmaster-general when Lawrenson came in, and Andrew Jackson was President. Before Barry's time the post office department was considered merely a bureau, as the agricultural department and government printing office are now, but Jackson invited him to a seat in the cabinet, in defiance of precedent, and against the protests of John C. Calhoun, who was secretary of state and a great stickler for etiquette. The only authority the postmaster general has for a seat in the executive chamber is Andrew Jackson's invitation to Barry. Seventy clerks did the post office department business in those days, and three men were assigned to the mail morgue. It requires over one hundred now to open, read, return, or destroy the dead letters that come in at the rate of two million a year.

Uncle Jimmy Marr, the venerable chief clerk of the first assistant postmaster-general, ante-dates Lawrenson's service by three years, having been appointed to a clerkship on the 20th of June, 1831. There are also several postmasters who hold commissions longer than his, although, including his service in the Baltimore post office, Lawrenson heads the list of veterans. Lindley Mure, the venerable old negro who sits at the mahogany door which leads to the beautiful office of the secretary of the navy, comes second, with a service of 56 years, having been appointed in 1828 by Samuel Southard; and the third on the list is the Hon. William Hunter, second assistant secretary of state. A clerkship was given to him by Martin Van Buren in 1820, and he has been promoted from time to time. He reached his present position under Johnson's administration, and Mr. Marr is the fourth on the list. There are a number of clerks in the departments who have seen forty, and some have seen forty-five years of service.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

Holiness is the architectural plan upon which God buildeth up his living temples.

No matter how unworthy a man may be, he should have our sympathy if he is suffering.

What is defeat? Nothing but education, nothing but the first step to something better.

A great many people in this world praise goodness, and then do as they have a mind to.

Moderation may be considered as a tree, of which the root is contentment and the fruit repose.

When the sun of virtue is set, the blush of shame is the twilight. When that dies, all is darkness.

He that cares only for himself, has but few pleasures, and these are generally of the lowest order.

Doctrines are of use only as they are practiced; men may go to perdition with their heads full of truth.

The real wealth of a man is the number of things which he loves and blesses, and by which he is blessed.

If you hit the mark, you must aim a little above it; every arrow that flies feels the attraction of the earth.

Philanthropy, like charity, must begin at home. From this centre our sympathies may extend in an ever-tending circle.

A loving act does more good than a fiery exhortation. What mankind needs is not more good talkers, but more good Samaritans.

Idleness is the most corrupting fly that can grow on the human mind. Men learn to do ill by doing what is next to it—nothing.

The man whose soul is in his work finds his best reward in the work itself. The joy of achievement is vastly beyond the joy of reward.

There collection of a deep and true affection is rather a divine nourishment for the soul to grow strong upon than a poison to destroy it.

He that does not know those things which are of use and necessity for him to know, is but an ignorant man, whatever he may know besides.

Consideration is the small coin of kindness and affability; it is current everywhere, with all, and always brings back a little friendship.

How abundant are the men and women who crave martyrdom in leadership! How few are willing to honor themselves in the loyalty of service!

He who is conscious of his ignorance, viewing it in the light of misfortune, is more wise than one who mistakes superficial polish for real knowledge.

Never contradict anybody in general society. Rarely do it even at home. Nobody likes to be contradicted, even when contradiction is deserved.

Examine your lives, weigh your motives, watch over your conduct, and you will not take long to learn or discover enough to make you entertain charitable opinions of others.

We should no more lament that we have grown old than the husbandman, when the bloom and fragrance of spring have passed away, should lament that summer or autumn has come.

Good breeding is the result of much good sense, some good nature, and a little self-denial for the sake of others, and with a view to obtain the same indulgence from them.

Exclusive solitude and exclusive sociality are both injurious; and, with the exception of their order of precedence, nothing is so important as their interchange.

Resolve not to be poor. Whatever you have, spend less. Poverty is a great enemy to human happiness. It certainly destroys liberty, and it makes some virtues impracticable and others extremely difficult.

As the sun does not wait for prayers and incantations before he rises, but straightway shines forth and is hailed of all, so do not wait to do good for applause and noise and praise, but do it, with your own desire, and, like the sun, you will be loved.

The most influential man, in a free country, at least, is the man who has the ability, as well as the courage, to speak what he thinks when occasion may require it.

The fortunate man, is he who, born poor, or nobody, works gradually up to wealth and consideration, and having got them dies before he finds they were not worth so much trouble.

Exclusively dwelling upon ourselves, on our own virtues and failings and experiences, weakens our power of sympathy with others, while it increases our acuteness of sensibility as regards self.

A man that hath no virtue in himself ever envieth virtue in others; for men's minds will either feed upon their own good or upon others' evil; and who wanteth the one will prey upon the other.

The study of literature nourishes youth, entains old age, adorns prosperity, solaces adversity, is delightful at home, unobtrusive abroad, deserts us not by day or by night, in journeying nor in retirement.

A great man under the shadow of defeat is taught how precious are the uses of adversity; and as an oak tree's roots are daily strengthened by its shadow, so all defeats in a good cause are but resting places on the road to victory at last.

Bacon says, "There is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth and that which a man giveth himself as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as is a man's self, and there is no such remedy against the flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend."

The majority of people are ever ready to judge the conduct of their neighbors—in other words, to "cast the first stone." But we have no right to judge others until we know all the circumstances that influence their conduct. In many cases we might imitate those we condemn, under like circumstances, "Judge not, that ye be not judged!"