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John B. Bratton.

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## Poetical.

### SPRING IS COMING.

BY FRANK MYRTLE.

Spring is coming, Spring is coming!
Don't you hear her in the rills,
Tripping gally o'er the valley,
Flying o'er the sunny hills!
Nature leaps to meet her coming,
With her teeming babbling throng;
Gladsome Spring! with joy we greet thee,
With a cheerful voice of song.

Spring is coming, Spring is coming!
She is in the Southern breeze;
Merrily the birds are singing
Matins in the forest trees.
Modest violets are springing
From the gladsome earth the while,
And the butter cups and daisies
Greet her with a lover's smile.

Spring is coming, Spring is coming!
Tiny leaflets venture out;
Torrents, that for months have slumbered,
Hasten seaward, with a shout.
Wanton breezes kiss the flowers,
Butterflies are on the wing,
Birds have set the day to marry,
And invited guests to sing.

Spring is coming, Spring is coming!
Joyous beats the pulse of life;
Weary ones, almost desponding,
Start anew to meet the strife.
Nature's bosom throbs with pleasure;
Spring has set the captives free;
Earth, with all her teeming millions,
Chants the song of jubilee!

### THOU ART GROWING OLD, MY MOTHER!

BY LYLY LEA.

Thou art growing old, my mother,
And thy brow is marked with care,
All furrowed is thine aged cheek,
Once beautiful and fair.
Thy soft brown locks are sadly changed,
Chill frosts have settled there,
And touched with many a freezing kiss
Thy gently flowing hair.

Thou art growing old, my mother,
As I catch the half-drawn sigh,
Well I know that years of sorrow
Have bedimmed thy melting eye;
But with gentle light it beameth,
Beameth on me even yet,
With a love that never changeth
Till the sun of life is set.

Thou art growing old, my mother;
Many of our household band
Have before thee journeyed onward
To the far off "better land."
But thy voice in tender accents
Still is falling on my ear,
Sweetly brightening my pathway,
Which without thee were so drear.

Thou art growing old, my mother;
And around thy youngest born
Shadows gather—darkly gather—
Even in life's early morn.
But the blessed Saviour spareth
*Thee to* still protect thy child,
While the storms of sorrow hover,
Hover o'er me dark and wild!

Thou art growing old, my mother,
Soon I feel that thou wilt rest
In the "land of the hereafter,"
In the regions of the blest.
Who will love me then, my mother,
When the last life cord is riven?
Let us pray that both together
God will take us safe to Heaven.

## Miscellaneous.

### THE TAME SEAL.

AN IRISH STORY.

It is seldom that one meets with a more touching recital, in reference to the brute creation, than the following, which is quoted from an Irish work:

About forty years ago a young seal was taken in Claw Bay, and domesticated in the kitchen of a gentleman whose house was situated on the sea shore. It grew space, becoming familiar with the servants, and attached to the house and family, it played with the children; came at his master's call, and as the old man described, it was as "fond as a dog, and playful as a kitten." Daily the seal went out to fish, and, after providing for his own wants, brought in a salmon or a trout to his master.

His delight in the summer was to bask in the sun, and in the winter, to lie before the fire, or if permitted, to creep into a large oven, which at that time formed the regular appendage of an Irish kitchen. For four years the seal was domesticated, when, unfortunately, in that country, the *crippaun*—a kind of paralytic affection of the limbs which generally ends fatally—attacked some black cattle belonging to the master of the house. Some died, others became infected, and the customary cure, by changing them to dryer pastures, failed.

A "wise woman" was consulted, and this hag assured the credulous owner that the mortality among the cows was occasioned by his keeping an unclean beast about his habitation—the harmless and amusing seal. It must be made away with immediately, or the crippawn will continue, *and the* charms be unable to avert the malady. The superstitious man consented to the hag's proposal; the seal was put on board a boat and carried out beyond Clour Island and there committed to the deep, to manage for himself the best he could. The boat returned—the family retired to rest, and, next morning, a servant awakened her master to tell him the seal was quietly sleeping in the oven. The poor animal over night came back to the beloved home, crept through an open window, and took possession of his favorite resting place.

Next morning another cow was reported to be unwell. The seal must now be removed. A Galway fishing boat was leaving Westport on her return home, and the master undertook to carry off the seal, and not put him off till he had gone leagues beyond Lunis Bofin. It was done. A day and a night passed. The second evening closed. The servant was raking the fire for the night when something scratched at the door—it was, of course the house dog—she opened it and in came the seal.

Wearied with his long and unusual voyage, he testified his delight to find himself at home—then stretching himself before the glowing embers on the hearth, he fell asleep. The master of the house was apprised of this unexpected and unwelcome visit. In this exigency the belldame was awakened and consulted. She averred that it was always unlucky to kill a seal, but suggested that the animal should be deprived of sight and a third time carried out to sea. To this hellish proposition the besotted creatures who owned the house consented; and the affectionate and confiding creature was cruelly robbed of sight for which he had resigned his native element! Next morning, writhing in agony, the mutilated seal was embarked, taken outside Clear Island, and for the last time committed to the waves.

A week passed over and things became worse instead of better. The cattle of this truculent wretch died fast, and the infernal old hag gave him the pleasurable tidings that her arts were useless, and that the destructive visitation upon his cattle exceeded her skill and care. On the eighth night after the seal had been devoted to the Atlantic, it blew tremendously. In the pauses of the storm a wailing noise at times was faintly heard at the door. The servants who slept in the kitchen concluded that the *banshee* came to warn them of their approaching death, and buried their heads in the bed coverings.

When the morning broke, the door was opened, and the seal was there lying dead on the threshold! "Stop, Julius!" I exclaimed, "give me a moment's time to curse all concerned in this barbarism." "Be patient, Frank," said my cousin, "the finale will probably save you that trouble." The skeleton of the once plump animal—for, poor beast, it perished from hunger, being incapacitated from blindness to procure its customary food—was buried in a sand hill, and from that moment misfortune followed the abettors and perpetrators of this inhuman deed. The detestable hag, who had denounced the inoffensive seal, was within a fortnight hanged for murdering the illegitimate offspring of her daughter.

Everything about this devoted home melted away; sheep rotted, cattle died, and blighted was the corn. Of several children none reached maturity, and the savage proprietor survived everything he had ever loved or cared for. He died blind and miserable. There is not one stone of that accursed building standing upon another. The property has passed to a family of a different name, and the series of incessant calamity which pursued all concerned in this cruel deed is as romantic as true.

### ONE AND TWENTY.

With youth the period is looked forward to with so much impatience as the hour that shall end our minority. With manhood none is looked back to with so much regret.

Freedom appears to the young man as the brightest star of our existence, and is never lost sight of till the gaol to which he has been so long traveling is reached. When the mind and the spirit are young, the season of manhood is reflected with a brightness from the future, which nothing can dim but its own cold reality. The busy world is stretched out before our boyhood like the exhibition of a mechanical automata. We behold the merchant accumulating wealth—the scholar planting his foot upon the summit of the temple of fame—the warrior twining his brow with the laurel wreath—and we yearn to struggle with them for supremacy. In the distance we see nothing but the most prominent part of the picture, which is success—the anguish of disappointment and delay is hidden from our view. We see not the pale cheek of neglected merit, or the broken spirit of unfortunate genius, or the sufferings of worth. But we gaze not long, for the season of youth passes away like the moon's beam from the still water, or like a dew drop from the rose in June, or an hour in the circle of friendship. Youth departs, and we find ourselves in the midst of that great theatre in which we have so long gazed with interest.—The paternal bonds, which, in binding, have upheld us, are broken, and we step into the crowd with no guide but our conscience, to carry us through the intricate windings of the path of human life. The beauties of the prospective have vanished. The merchant's wealth has furrowed his cheek. The acquirements of the scholar were purchased at the price of his health—and the garland of the conqueror is fastened upon his brow with a thorn, the rankling of which shall give him no rest on this side of the grave. Disappointment damps the ardor of our first setting out, and misfortune follows closely in our path, to finish the work and close our career.

How often, amid the cares and troubles of manhood, do we look back to that sunny spot in our memory, the season of our youth; and how often a wish to recall it escapes from the bosoms of those who once prayed fervently that it might pass away.

From this feeling we do not believe that living man was ever exempt. It is twined around the very soul—it is incorporated in our very nature, and will cling to us even when parental enthralment is broken, and when the law acknowledges the intellect to be full grown, may at the time, be considered one of rejoicing, yet after life will hang around it in the emblems of sorrow, while it is hallowed as the last bright hour of happy youth.

### SHERIDAN'S POTIONS.

In the year 1805, on the day when the very animated debate took place upon the celebrated Tenth Report of Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, the attention of a gentleman, who happened to enter a coffee-house near the House of Commons, was instantly fixed by another gentleman, whom he observed at one of the tables, with tea, and pen, ink and paper before him.—For some time the latter sat alternately drinking tea and taking down memoranda, and then called to the waiter to bring him some brandy; when to the observer's great surprise, a half-pint tumbler full was brought. The gentleman placed it by him, continuing a while alternately to write and drink tea; when at length, collecting his papers together, he put them in his pocket, and swallowing the half pint of brandy as if it had been water, and went out of the coffee-house. The stranger was so much struck by all he had observed, particularly at the facility with which such a quantity of spirits was taken that he could not forbear to ask the waiter who that gentleman was. The man replied—"Pshaw, don't you know him? Why that's Sheridan; he is going now to the House of Commons." It will be remembered that in the course of this debate Mr. Sheridan made one of the finest speeches ever delivered by him, alike remarkable for keenness of argument and brilliancy of wit, and this under the influence of a potion that would wholly have deprived most men of their faculties.

The following anecdote of Sheridan was related by one of the oldest surviving friends and followers of Fox. This gentleman and Sheridan had dined together at Bellamy's, Sheridan having taken his allowance, said, as usual:—"Now I shall go down and see what's doing in the House;" which in reality meant, and was always so interpreted by whoever dined in his company, "I have drank enough: my share of the business is done; now do yours; call for the bill, and pay it." The bill having been settled by Sheridan's friend, the latter, hearing that Sheridan was "up," felt curious to know what he could possibly be at, knowing the state in which he had just departed. Accordingly, he entered the House, and to his astonishment, found Sheridan in a fit of most fervent oratory, thundering forth the following well known passage: "Give them a corrupt House of Lords; give them a tyrannical prince; give them a truckling court; and let me have but an unfettered press, and I will defy them to encroach a hair's breadth upon the liberties of England!"

APPROPRIATE.—The following is 'traveling': A young married lady, whose union had not been prolific of 'darlings' has suspended on the wall in her bed room, directly over the head of the bed, a neat little picture, underneath which is the following quotation from Scripture: 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

### "A Chip from the Old Block."

There is no disputing this fact; it shines in the face of every little child. The coarse, brawling, scolding woman will have coarse, vicious, brawling, fighting children. She who cries on every occasion "I'll box your ears—I'll slap your jaws—I'll break your neck" is known as thoroughly through her children as if her unwomanly manners were openly displayed in the public street.

These remarks were suggested by the conversation in an omnibus—that noble institution for the student of men and manners—between a friend and the schoolmaster. Our teacher was mirthful caustic, mirthful and sharp. His wit flashed like the polished edge of a diamond, and kept the "buss" in a roar." The entire community of insiders—and whoever is inmate with these conveyances can form a pretty good idea of our numbers—inclusive of "one more" so well known to the fraternity, turned their heads eyes and ears one way, and finally our teacher said:

"I can always tell the mother by her boy. The urchin who draws back with double fists and lunges his playmate, if he looks at him askance, has a very questionable mother. She may feed him and clothe him and cram him with sweetmeats and coax him with promises, but if she gets mad, she fights. She will pull him by the jacket: she will give him a knock in the back: she will drag him by the hair; she will call him all sorts of wicked names, while passion plays over her face in lambent flames that curl and writhe out at the corner of her eyes.

"And we never see the courteous little fellow with smooth locks and gentle manners—in whom delicacy does not detract from courage and manliness—but we say, "That boy's mother is a true lady." Her words and her ways are soft, loving and quiet. If she reproves, her language is 'My son'—not you little wretch—you plague of my life—you torment—you scamp!"

"She hovers before him as the pillar of light before the wandering Israelites, and her beams are reflected in his face. To him the word mother is synonymous with everything pure, sweet and beautiful. Is he an artist? In after life, the face that with holy radiance shines on his canvass is that of his mother. Whoever flits across his path with sunny smiles and soft low voice, will bring "mother's" image freely to his heart. "She is like my mother," will be the highest meed of his praise. Not even when the hair turns silver and the eye grows dim will the majesty of that life and presence desert him.

"But the ruffian mother—alas! that there are such—will form the ruffian character of the man."

We wonder not that there are so many awkward ungainly men in society—that they have all been trained by women who knew not nor cared for the holy nature of their trust. They have been made bitter to the heart's core, and that bitterness will find vent and lodgment somewhere. Strike the infant in anger, and he will, if he cannot reach you, vent his passion by beating the floor, the chair or an inanimate thing within his reach. Strike him repeatedly and by the time he wears shoes he will become a little bully, with hands that double for fight as naturally as if especial pains had been taken to teach him the art of boxing.

### *The Considerate Doctor.*

A poor girl, who had just recovered from a spell of sickness gathered up her scanty earnings, and went to the doctor's office to settle her bill. Just at the door, the lawyer of the place passed into the office before her on a similar errand.

"Well, doctor," said he, "I believe I am indebted to you, and I should like to know how much."

"Yes," said the doctor, "I attended upon you about a week, and what would you charge me for a week's services, or what do you realize, on an average, for a week's services?"

"O," said the lawyer, "perhaps seventy-five dollars."

"Very well, then, as my time and profession are as valuable as yours, your bill is seventy-five dollars."

The poor girl's heart sank within her, for should her bill be anything like that, how could she ever pay? The lawyer paid his bill and passed out, when the doctor turned to the young woman, and kindly inquired her errand.

"I came," said she, "to know what I owe you, although I know not as I can ever pay you."

"I attended you about a week," said he.

"Yes, sir."

"What do you get per week?

"Seventy-five cents," said she.

"Is that all?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then your bill is seventy-five cents."

The poor girl paid him thankfully, and went back with a light heart.

An old and rich man of my acquaintance was once remarking to the doctor, that no one earned their money so easily as the doctor, or could get rich so easily. The doctor reminded him of the many losses incurred, as they must visit the poor as well as the rich.

"Well," said my old friend, "you must charge the rich the more, and then you can afford to lose by the poor."

Not many weeks after, the old man was obliged to employ the doctor for some time. At the last visit his bill was presented, and strongly resisted as enormously high.

"But," said the doctor, "you know what you told me, and I have only followed your advice."

Not a word more was said, but the amount was immediately paid.

HOPS AND MALT.—One of the New York German papers has recently published an extended notice of the Lager Beer manufacture. The quantity consumed is astonishing. Doctor Dixon, in his medical journal, the *Scalpel*, is cautioning the public against its use. He says that it affects the spine, and produces the well-known "cow-like tread." He charges upon it a bloating effect, and a bad influence on the voice. He thinks that the present excess will show itself in the physical and mental condition of the community.

The hop was once considered injurious, and was not used in English malt liquors. Galen and Dioscorides condemned malt liquors. Sinclair says they are not suitable for the sedentary or the corpulent. Doctor Dunglison remarks that they do not agree with the dyspeptic, and that the corpulency produced is not a natural, healthy condition. Physicians generally agree that a large and continued use of such drinks is injurious. The nutriment of barley can be taken in soup or gruel. It is not necessary to mix with it the "narcotic pop," or the fiery alcohol.

If our hardworking men are spending their money for that which injures them, it is desirable that they should be enlightened. We should feel bound to warn them, if we saw them pouring down quarts, every day, of any herb drink, or any fluid which must have some effect upon the system. It is foolish to drink as much of any thing, even water, as many drink of lager beer. And, then, sixpence a day is nearly twenty-three dollars a year. Why do not our laboring men think of this?

### THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

There's mourning in the household—
There's a wail on the air of Night!
There's a crushed and broken spirit—
Crushed when their hopes were bright.
The fell-destroyer's missioned,
Again the fond heart's torn,
Again, from the arm of affection,
A cherished one is born.

There's joy among the angels—
There's music in the spheres—
Another has joined their number,
She a white-robed form appears!
And there, in her saint-like beauty,
She roams, a spirit blest,
"Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest!"

### Look at the Bright Side.

Away with long faces! What is the use of looking as if you had a season ticket for a funeral? Can't you find a better name for this world than a "vale of tears," and "scene of tribulation?" If you can't it will do you good to read a letter which a friend has just furnished us. It is from a wife, in Massachusetts to her husband in California. She doesn't intend to go through the world with an air as if

"Muffled drums were beating.
Funeral marches to the grave."

Here is the letter:

"MY DEAR HUSBAND!—As it is some time since you left us for California, I suppose you would be glad to hear how we are getting along in your absence. I am happy to say that we are all enjoying very good health on the whole. Just at present two of the boys have got the small-pox. Amanda Jane has got the typhus fever. Betsey is down with the measles. Samuel got hooked by the cow the other day, and little Peter has just chopped off seven of his fingers with the hatchet. It's a great mercy that he didn't chop them all off. With these trifling exceptions, we are all well, and getting along nicely. You needn't be at all anxious about us.

"I almost forgot to say that Sarah Matilda eloped last week with a tin-pedlar. Poor girl! she's been waiting for this last ten years for a chance, and I am glad she's got married at last. She needen't have taken the trouble to elope though. She was a great eater; and I find the baked beans don't go off near so fast now as they did. The way that girl would dip into the pork and beans was a caution to the rest of the family.

"The cow took it into her head yesterday to run away, which was very fortunate, I'm sure, for the barn caught fire and was consumed. I was in hopes that the house would go too, for it's very inconvenient, but the wind was the wrong way, so it didn't receive much injury.

"Some boys broke into the orchard the other day, and stripped all the fruit trees. I am glad of it, if they hadn't, I presume the children would have made themselves sick by eating too much.

"Hoping that you enjoy yourself in California as well as we do at home, I remain your affectionate wife."

### *Life's Last Hours.*

*Life's last hours are grand, testing hours—death tries all our principles, and lays bare all our foundation. Many have acted the hypocrite in life, who were forced to be honest in the hour of death. Misgivings of heart, that have been kept secret through life, have come out in death; and many who seemed all fair and right for heaven, have had to declare that they have only been self-deceived. A gentleman of renown was on his dying bed, when a friend, near at hand, spoke of the Savior. "As to the Bible," he replied, "it may be true: I do not know." What then are your prospects? he was asked. He replied in whispers, which, indeed were thunder, "Very dark—VERY dark." "But have you no light from the Sun of Righteousness? Have you done justice to the Bible?" "Perhaps not," he replied; "but it is now too LATE." A mother, who had laughed at religion and religious people, was seen to be very restless and miserable on her bed of death. She decired that her children should be called—they came: in broken accent she addressed them: "My children I have been leading you in the wrong road all your life, I now find the broad road ends in destruction, I did not believe it before. O! seek to serve God, and try to find out the gate to Heaven, though you may never meet your mother there." Her lips were closed forever, and her spirit departed to its account, while the house-hold looked on terror-struck. Mother! Father! would *you* die thus! O, no.—Then point to Heaven, and *lead the way.*

### Thrilling Adventure of a Boy.

A lad named Tracy, 14 years of age, on Saturday forenoon last, was passing through Colt's Meadows, carrying the dinner of one of the workmen of the armory, and was passing along were the snow was about a foot deep, when he suddenly found himself going down, down, down, he knew not where; but, to use his own expression he thought he was 'going to heaven or the other place, sure.' When he struck bottom he found himself in five feet of water at the bottom of a forty foot well, with a smooth brick wall, all the way up. Fortunately, in coming to the surface of the water, he found a stout plank, upon which he supported himself for half an hour, calling for help but no help came. Getting desperate, the boy out with his knife, and, while holding on with one hand to the plank, cut off his boots, torg off his coat and vest, and then bracing his back against the wall and his feet on the other side, he commenced working his way up by inches. After struggling in this way for half an hour, he succeeded in reaching daylight, completely exhausted, but thankful to escape with his life. His escape from death was remarkable under the circumstances.—*Hartford Courant.*

RIPE BREAD.—Bread made of wheat flour, when taken out of the oven, is unprepared for the stomach. It should go through a change, or ripen before it is eaten. Young persons, or persons in the enjoyment of good health, may eat bread immediately after being baked without any sensible injury from it; but, weakly and aged persons cannot eat such without doing harm to their digestive organs. Bread, after being baked, goes through a change similar to the change in newly brewed beer, or newly churned buttermilk, neither being healthy until after the change. During the change in bread it sends off a large portion of carbon, or unhealthy gas, and imbibes a large portion of oxygen, or healthy gas. Bread has, according to the computation of physicians, one-fifth more nutriment when ripe than when just taken out of the oven. It not only has more nutriment, but imparts a greater degree of cheerfulness. He that eats old ripe bread will have a much greater flow of animal spirits, than he would were he to eat unripe bread. Bread, as before observed, discharges carbon and imbibes oxygen. One thing in connection with this fact, should be particularly noticed by all housewives; it is to let the bread ripen where it can inhale the oxygen in a pure state. Bread will always taste of the air that surrounds it while ripening; hence it should be placed where the air is pure. It should never ripen in a cellar nor in a bed-room.

### How to Talk.

One might fancy, at first thought, that nothing is easier (except to a mute) than to talk. But really good conversational powers, acceptable to all hearers, form one of the rarest accomplishments. All can speak, but it is not every one who can say any thing. It were impossible to define and describe the thousand things that are included in the attractions of pleasant conversation. Some are natural, others acquired, and all may be either enhanced or defeated. There is an anecdote of a gentleman of remarkable erudition and talent, who was in the habit of listening with the greatest apparent interest and pleasure to the nothings uttered by a beautiful woman. When asked how he could endure such nonsense, he answered that he "liked to *see* the pretty fool talk." It was not what was said, but the manner, the varying expression of a charming face, the light in her eyes, and the movement of her lips, that bound the old sage as with a spell. He would have looked with quite as much intentness into the eyes of a handsome spaniel, if he had happened to be a dog fancier. But fasten him without hope of release to such a senseless doll, and he would soon cease to admire her. We would not ask impertinent questions, but is it not more than possible that the ante-nuptial attractions of some other ladies have a hold quite as precarious? He must be very ungallant who cannot admire a charming face, though no wisdom issue from its lips. But the old fable is re-enacted. The imaginary angel betrays her weakness, and when the error is past recall, the former adoring suitor, now penitent husband, finds he has miscalculated the permanence of the power of imagination. She may be all his fancy painted her, but fancy paints are not fast colors.

Young women, however, are not alone in the lack of the essentials of true and lasting agreeableness. Indeed, the proportion of young men who are incapable of sustaining themselves with credit in conversation, is very much greater than the number of the deficient of the fairer sex. They may be found of all types and characters; but are more commonly of the order Toots, or the class of which Sparkler is a representative. Their minds are perfect vacuums, and their words are but parrot-like repetitions of the last fashionable phrase, or of their own eternal mannerisms. They cannot talk, because, having nothing to say, they are incompetent, like a pretty woman, even to say nothing gracefully. They read works on etiquette, are *au fait* to the last fashion in dress, visiting cards, envelopes, ladies' fans, and gentlemen's moustaches. At least they think they are; but Titlebat Titmouse is ever evident in their awkward attempts to act as if the chief end of man were to keep up with the edicts of the tailor and the dancing master. If it is a fact that we are required thus to be "nothing if not etiquetical," there should be a college of ceremonies, like the Chinese, and an unalterable code of fashions. Then one might hope to be thoroughly finished at three score and ten, and ready to go out of the world a most respectable admirable Crichton after the Chinese model. But, for our own listening we should still prefer Dr. Johnson, with his big black thumb in the sugar, to any secated popinjay who keeps inviolate all the special edicts of "gentility."

Not, however, that Johnson was a good talker. Begging Boswell's pardon, the giant must have been most intolerable as a constant companion. An occasional listening to such ponderous small talk, might, perhaps, be agreeable; but in Boswell's reports we have the advantage over Johnson's contemporaries. Nor was Coleridge a good talker. "Did you ever hearine preach?" he asked Charles Lamb. "I never heard you do anything else," was the withering answer. No man who monopolises the conversation, is long-bearing and dogmatises, is even tolerable society. Ladies may attempt it—but at a risk. We have seen old frequenters of society diligently striving to escape from the delightful talkers about whom new comers clustered with wonderful eagerness. The veterans had heard the speaking ladies out, long ago, and were perfectly willing to resign their places to those who lacked their experience.

How to talk? It is and always must be an open question. It is easier to say how one must not talk. Not like a book, for instance, for that is a questionable recommendation of one's colloquial powers. There is, indeed, no colloquy in such conversation. It is a mere monologue. Not politics—for partisan politics having apparently invaded the last hope of the nation—the Supreme Judiciary—no American should talk politics in society. Let one sanctuary remain hallowed to true humanity and unsordid themes. Not nonsense, except as a skillfully introduced condiment to graver dishes. When then? The hour and the place must suggest the subject, and the stores of your own mind furnish the illustrations. If you have no such stores, you are ill-found, and nobody would underwrite upon such a risk. You are sure to make shipwreck of yourself sooner or later. One only rule is of universal application. Don't talk about yourself, and don't speak ill or disparagingly of the absent. Seem rather to listen than to speak, aim more to draw others out than to obtrude yourself; when you have nothing to say, be silent; and this deference to others will give you the reputation of a good talker, though you speak seldom.—*North American.*

WEBSTER ON BYRON.—Daniel Webster's Private Correspondence contains his moral estimate of the greatest point of his age, and we transfer it to our column. In a letter dated Washington, April 8, 1853, he says:

"I have read Tom Moore's first volume of Byron's life. Whatever human imagination shall hereafter picture of a human being I shall believe it all within the bounds of credibility.—Byron's case shows that fact sometimes runs by all fancy as a steamboat passes a scow at anchor. I have tried hard to find something in him to like besides his genius and wit; but there was no other likeable quality about him. He was an incarnation of demonism. He is the only man in English history for a hundred years that has boasted of infidelity and of every practicable vice, not included in what may be termed, what his biographer does term, meanness. Lord Bolingbroke, in his most extravagant youthful sallies, and the wicked Lord Littleton, were saints to him."

"All that Moore can say is, that each of his vices had some virtue or some prudence near it, which in some sort checked it. Well, if that were not so in all, who could 'scape hanging? The biographer, indeed, says his moral conduct must not be judged by the ordinary standard! And this is true, if a favorable decision is looked for. Many excellent reasons are given for his being a bad husband; the sum of which is that he was a very bad man. I confess I was rejoiced then, and am rejoiced now, that he was driven out of England by public scorn; because his vices were not in his passions but in his principles. He denied all religion and all virtue from the house-top.—Dr. Johnson says there is a merit in maintaining good principles, though the preacher is seduced into violation of them. This is true.—Good theory is something. But a theory of living, and dying too, made up of the elements of hatred to religion, contempt of morals, and defiance of the opinions of all the decent part of the public—when before has a man of letters avowed it? If Milton were alive to recast certain prominent characters in his great epic, he could embellish them with new traits without violating probability."

☞ Maple sugar, it is said, will be largely made all over the country the present season. Glad to hear it.

### Position in Sleeping.

It is better to go to sleep on the right side, for then the stomach is very much in the position of a bottle turned upside down, and the contents are aided in passing out by gravitation. If one goes to sleep on the left side, the operation of emptying the stomach of its contents is more like drawing water from a well. After going to sleep, let the body take its own position. If you go to sleep on your back, especially soon after a hearty meal, the weight of the digestive organs, and that of the food, resting on the great vein of the body, near the back bone, compresses it, and arrests the flow of the blood more or less. If the arrest is partial, the sleep is disturbed, and there are unpleasant dreams. If the meal has been recent or hearty, the arrest is more decided, and the various sensations, such as falling over a precipice, or the pursuit of a wild beast, or other impending danger, and the desperate effort to get rid of it, arouses us; that sends on the stagnating blood, and we wake in a fright, or trembling, or in a perspiration, or feeling of exhaustion, according to the degree of stagnation and the length and strength of the effort made to escape the danger. But when we are not able to escape the danger, when we do fall over the precipice, when the trembling building crushes, what then? *That is death!* That is the death of those of whom it is said, when found lifeless in their beds in the morning—"They were as well as they ever were the day before," and how often is it added, "and *ate heartier than common!*" This last, as a frequent cause of death to those who have gone to bed well to wake no more, we give mercly as an opinion. The possibility of its truth is enough to deter any rational man from a late and hearty meal. This we do know with certainty, that waking in the night with painful diarrhœa, or cholera, or bilious cholic, ending in death in a very short time, is properly traceable to a late large meal. The truly wise will take the safer side. For persons who eat three times a day, it is amply sufficient to make the last meal of cold bread and butter, and a cup of some warm drink. No one can starve on it, while a perseverance in the habit soon begets a vigorous appetite for breakfast, so promising of a day of comfort.—*Hall's Journal of Health.*

### Presence of Mind.

This extract, from a reminiscence concerning a series of murders committed some years since in France, develops a rare instance of presence of mind in women. We will premise that the murderer was known by the fact that in some previous brawl or scene of murder, he had lost three fingers from one of his hands:—

There lived on the outskirts of Dieppe, a widow lady, by the name of Beaumaurice. She had no family, but with one servant girl, lived in a very retired manner. The cottage in which she resided was situated about half a mile from the city—a little off from the public road.

Madame Baumaurice had been the wife of an old officer of the Guards. She was an extraordinary woman in every particular; but especially so in respect to a certain coolness of character she possessed, in the midst of danger, which, together with a large amount of moral courage, made her a very notable person. The recent murders made, perhaps, less impression on her mind than upon any one else in Dieppe, although it was naturally supposed the retired situation in which she lived would have caused her to be more fearful.

About ten o'clock on the night of the 30th of April, just ten days after the murders in the Rue Grenard, Madame Baumaurice went up into her bedroom. She was suffering from a nervous headache. She felt very sleepy, and seated herself in a large arm-chair previous to undressing herself. The lamp was placed on a chest of drawers behind her. Opposite to her was a toilet table, with a cloth on it reaching to the floor. She had already commenced taking off her clothes, when happening to look around her, she saw something that for a moment chilled her blood. It was the shadow of a man's hand on the floor. The hand had only three fingers!

She divined the truth in a moment—the assassin was there—in her house—under the toilet table. She made not the least motion or sign, but reflected two or three minutes as to the best course to be pursued.

She divined what to do, and advancing to the door, called her servant maid.

"Oh, Mary!" exclaimed she, when the girl entered the room. "Do you know where Monsieur Bernard lives?"

"Yes, madame."

"I have to pay 5000 francs away very early in the morning. You will have to run to his house and get the money for me."

"Very well, madame."

"I will write you a note which you will deliver to him, and he will give you bank bills to the amount."

She wrote as follows:—

"*My dear Monsieur Bernard*:—The assassin of the Rue des Armes and the Rue Grenard is now in my house. Come immediately with some gendarmes and take him before he escapes."

HELENE BAUMAURICE.

And without entering into any explanation with her servant, she dispatched her on her errand. She then quietly re-seated herself and waited.

Yes, she sat in the room with that man under the table for a whole hour. She sat there, calm, cool and collected. She saw the shadow of the hand shift several times: but the murderer did not make any attempt to escape from his place of concealment.

In due time the gendarmes arrived, and Jaques Reynauld was arrested—not, however, without a violent struggle.

I need scarcely add, that the most convincing proof as to his guilt was found, and in due time he was guillotined.

### A Good Dog Story.

The *Ohio Statesman*, of Saturday, has the following:

REMARKABLE SAGACITY OF A DOG.—A day or two since, Mr. Case, of this city, having business at the house of an acquaintance a short distance in the country, started out accompanied by his dog, a large animal, crossed with the Newfoundland and bull-dog. Upon arriving at the door he rang the bell and was admitted by one of the inmates, leaving his dog on the portico. His visit was somewhat prolonged, and before he had completed his business the bell again rang. Supposing that another gentleman was without, the gentleman of the house went to the door, when, to his utter surprise he found the dog standing upon his hind feet with the bell knob in his mouth. This was the second opportunity the animal had of witnessing the process by which his master had gained admittance into the house, and being tired of waiting for his return, he undertook by the same means to effect entrance himself, or perhaps to bring his master forth.

We do not remember of ever having heard a a more remarkable instance of sagacity in the canine species than is afforded in the above. If this is instinct, it certainly approximates very closely to reason.

☞ Gen Pierce will return to New Hampshire about the middle of May next.

### The Rat Tribe.

The last number of the London *Quarterly Review* contained an interesting article on the habits, &c., of rats, in which the instances given of their fecundity, ferocity and ingenuity, are almost incredible.

A single pair of rats, in three years, if undisturbed, will have thirteen litters of eight each at a birth, and the young will begin littering in the ratio when six months old; so that at the end of three years a single pair will have multiplied to 656,808. Calculating that ten rats eat as much in one day as a man, the consumption of these would be equal to that of 64,608 men. It is clear then, that if it were not for the extraordinary diminution in their numbers caused by the ceaseless warfare carried on against them by dogs, cats, polecats, otters, snakes, and beyond all, human rat-catchers, the whiskered vermin would speedily cause a famine in every part of the world in which they are found.

Rats are great travelers. The ship rat infests vessels of all classes; as many as five hundred have been found in a single East Indiaman.—Their greatest difficulty, when on shipboard, is that of procuring water; and they have been known to ascend the rigging by night, after a storm, and sip the rain found in the folds of the sails. When on shore, ship rats are exceedingly fond of prime fruit; and by burrowing under the walls of gardens will help themselves to a taste of the choicest melons, strawberries, grapes, &c., that they can find.

Rats exist in millions in sewers and drains, particularly where there is not a good supply of flushwater. By burrowing in every direction they do immense harm to the brickwork of the sewers, and frequently spoil pipe drains by causing them to dip at the joints, under which they have excavated the earth. In London and Paris numbers of professional rat catchers find lucrative employment in hunting them in the sewers. When caught, they are disposed of either for sporting purposes, for which they command a ready sale in London at 75 cents per dozen, or they are killed for the sake of their fur, which is extensively used in getting up the unrivalled "beaver hats" sold by Parisian hatters. The hide, also, is useful for making the thumbs of the best (so called) kid gloves.

Rats also commit great depredations in slaughter houses and knackers' yards. In the severe frosts, when it is impossible to cut up the bodies of the horses, and when the outside flesh is too hard for the rats to feed upon, they enter the body and devour the flesh from the inside, so that when the thaw comes the workmen find nothing below the skin but a skeleton, better cleared of its flesh than if it had been done by the most skillful operator. When rats have no other food they will destroy each other. M. Majendie placed a dozen rats in a box in order to try some experiments; when he reached home and opened the box, there were but three remaining. These had devoured the rest, and left only the bones and tail.

These little animals are indefatigable in the pursuit of food, and hardly any amount of precaution can keep them from a place where they know there is a supply to be had. The proprietors of bonded warehouses know this to their cost. They infest the London Zoological Gardens, in immense numbers, have eaten their way through the copper wire floor of the tigers' dens. The proprietors of the gardens have been compelled in self defence to keep a pack of terriers to hunt them, by whom as many as a hundred are sometimes destroyed in one night.

The propensity of the rat to gnaw through even the hardest obstacles is not merely a craving, but a necessity. His teeth are so formed as to continually grow towards each other, so that nothing but the constant wearing away by friction could prevent his incisors from passing completely through his lips. A good sized sewer rat can inflict very severe bites, even in some instances enabling him to vanquish a terrier dog, or even a ferret.

There has been instances in which rats have become thoroughly domesticated like a cat or dog; and when this is the case they render good service by driving from the premises all others of their tribe. One mode of ridding a house of rats is to catch a single specimen, and fasten a small bell round his neck, the tinkling of which, as he approaches the haunts of his comrades, will frighten them away. An expert rat catcher, however, familiar with the habits of his prey, will very soon clear a house of its obnoxious tenants.

In China, where the excess of population has driven the inhabitants to economise every species of food, rats are eaten and esteemed a great luxury; and cases are recorded in which ships' crews, when short of provisions, have avenged themselves on the rats for lessening the supplies, by cooking and eating them in the form of baked pies, which it is said have been deemed quite dainty by the partakers.

One of the most common modes of ridding premises of these unwelcome inmates, is that of administering arsenic to them. This, however, is attended by very great danger, for rats which have partaken of arsenic make at once for the nearest water, and if there be a cistern in the house they are apt to poison it. Our readers are aware that a case of this kind has recently occurred at Washington, in which the lives of President Buchanan and several of the most prominent politicians of the day were placed in imminent hazard by partaking of water from a cistern the contents of which had been thus poisoned.

### Character of Mankind Shown by the time of Birth.

JANUARY.—He who is born in this month, will be laborious, and a lover of good wine, but very subject to infidelity; he may too often forget to pay his debts, but he will be complaisant and withal a fine singer. The lady born in this month will be a pretty, prudent housewife rather melancholy, but yet good tempered.

FEBRUARY.—The man born in this month, will love money much, but the ladies more, he will be stingy at home but prodigal abroad.—The lady will be a humane and affectionate wife and tender mother.

MARCH.—The man born in this month will be rather handsome but will die poor. The lady will be a jealous, passionate chatter-box, somewhat given to fighting, and in old age too fond of the bottle.

APRIL.