

Poetry.

THE FOUR PHILOSOPHERS.

Four great philosophers,
Come every year;
Teach in the open air;
Then disappear.

WINTER'S the Stoic
So chill and heroic;
He sits in the mountain breeze, biting and pure,
And when to bring fear and doubt,
Damp night winds are out,
Wraps an old cloak about—he can endure,
SPRING, at dull hearts to mock,
Comes in a farming-trook,
With garlands and ploughshare a lesson doth give;
He sings through the field awails,
Turns up the sowing soil,
All haste and laughing toll—briskly can live.

SUMMER, with mantle free—
EUCREAN he—
Lolls in the cool shade like a tired boy;
While the blazing suns unkind,
Leave the stout mower blind,
Where faints the mountain wind—he can enjoy.

AUTUMN, when all are done,
He's a good CHRISTIAN one,
Fills well the granaries, where seeds may lie,
New coming years to bless;
Then, in his russet dress,
All hope and quietness—sweetly can die.

TIME.

Yes, and the smallest worlds which navigate,
The unutterable deep that hath no shore,
Will lose their starry splendors, soon or late,
Like tapers, quenched by Him whose will is fate!
Yes, and the angel of Eternity,
Who numbers worlds, and writes their names in light,
One day, O Earth, will look in vain for thee,
And start and stop in its unerring flight,
And with the wings of sorrow and afflict,
Vell his impassioned brow and heavenly tears.

LEWNEER ELLIOT.

Miscellaneous.

From the Providence Journal.

THE MYSTERIOUS TRACKS.

In the winter of 1851, and the following Spring, much attention was excited by mysterious tracks in the snow. These tracks were of the size that would be made by yearling colt, and were deep in the snow, though made by a heavy animal. Yet at the same time their appearance indicated that they were made by a winged animal. In some cases they were traced up to a high wall, as commenced again on the other side, although there was no aperture through which an animal large enough to make such a track could pass. In other cases the tracks appeared for a few rods and then disappeared, though the animal had alighted, and after walking a little distance, had again taken wing. The tracks were from eight to ten inches apart, in a single trail, as though made by a two legged animal. In one case it was said that a circular mark was observed in the snow, as though made by the wing of a great bird.

These tracks were first observed on the morning of Thanksgiving day, and were seen in many places distant from each other, at various parts of the State. The descriptions of all corresponded, and in some cases were frozen in the sleet, and the impression was distinct and well preserved. It is said that similar appearances were found in Ohio.

The explanation generally received was that these tracks were made by the snowy owl, a bird which belongs to a more northerly region but which the extreme cold weather had driven south. This bird weighs from four to five pounds, a weight quite sufficient to make a deep impression in the snow. Its foot is covered with feathers which curve under it, and when it stands with its talons bent under, it would make an impression not unlike the colt's hoof. Some observers have not accepted this theory, but we believe they have not offered any other. In the neighborhood of Aponeaug, some boys made similar tracks with stilts, and we remember that they brought to our office the stilts with the ends carved in the fashion of a hoof. This idle hoax explained the marks only in one vicinity, and was not probably thought of till after they had been seen in other places, and their origin made a subject of discussion.

The same appearances which excited so much wonder here in 1851 and 1852, have been observed this winter in England, and have caused more superstitious dread than the "mysterious tracks" did on the side of the water. The following paragraph is from the London Times of Feb. 16.

EXTRAORDINARY OCCURRENCE.—Considerable sensation has been caused in the towns of Topsham, Lympstone, Exmouth, Teignmouth and Dawlish, in the south of Devon, in consequence of the discovery of a vast number of foot-tracks of a most strange and mysterious description. The superstitious go so far as to believe that they are the marks of Satan himself; and that great excitement has been produced among all classes may be judged from the fact that the subject has been descanted on from the pulpit. It appears that, on Thursday night last, there was a very heavy

fall of snow in the neighborhood of Exeter and the south of Devon. On the following morning the inhabitants of the above towns were surprised at discovering the foot-marks of some strange and mysterious animal, endowed with the power of ubiquity, as the foot-prints were to be seen in all kinds of unaccountable places—on the tops of houses and narrow walls, in gardens and court yards, enclosed by high walls and palings, as well as in open fields. There was hardly a garden in Lympstone where these foot prints were not observable. The track appeared more like that of a biped than a quadruped, and the steps were generally eight inches in advance of each other. The impression of the foot closely resembled that of a donkey's shoe, and measured from an inch and a half (in some instances) two and a half inches across. Here and there it appeared as if cloven, but in the generality of the steps the shoe was continuous, and, from the snow in the centre remaining entire, merely showing the outer crest of the foot, it must have been convex. The creature seems to have approached the doors of several houses, and then to have retreated, but no one has been able to discover the standing or resting point of this mysterious visitor. On Sunday last the Rev. Mr Musgrave alluded to the subject in his sermon, and suggested the possibility of the foot-prints being those of the kangaroo; but this could scarcely have been the case, as they were found on both sides of the estuary of the Exe. At present it remains a mystery, and many superstitious people in the above towns are actually afraid to go outside their doors after night.

In the London Illustrated News of Feb. 24th, is an article stating the same facts, with engravings of the tracks. The writer says:

"This mysterious visitor generally passed once down or across each garden or court yard, and did so in nearly all the houses in many parts of the several towns above mentioned, as also in the farms scattered about; this regular track passing in some instances over the roofs of houses, and hayricks, and very high walls (one fourteen feet) without displacing the snow on either side or altering the distance between the feet, and passing on as if the wall had not been any impediment. The gardens with high fences or walls, and gates locked, were equally visited as those open and unprotected. Now, when we consider the distance that must have been gone over to have left these marks—I may say in almost every garden, on door-steps, through the extensive woods of Luscombe, upon commons, in enclosures and farms—the actual progress must have exceeded a hundred miles. It is very easy for people to laugh at these appearances, and account for them in an idle way. At present no satisfactory solution has been given. No known animal could have traversed this extent of country in one night, besides having to cross an estuary of the sea two miles broad. Neither does any known animal walk in a line of single footsteps, not even man."

In the same paper of March 3d are several communications upon the subject, one of them illustrated with engravings. One of these communications mentions a rumor that two kangaroos had escaped from a menagerie, but this was not considered as offering a plausible explanation. The same correspondent says:

"A scientific acquaintance informed me of his having traced the same prints across a field up to a hay-stack. The surface of the stack was wholly free from marks of any kind, but on the opposite side of the stack, in a direction exactly corresponding with the track thus traced, the prints began again! The same fact has been ascertained in respect of a wall intervening.

No animal with Cushing paw, such as the feline tribe—diminutive or large (cat or tiger)—exhibit, could have made these marks; for the feet of most quadrupeds tread in parallel lines, some widely divaricated, others approximating very closely. The ass, especially, among the animals daily seen, approaches the single line. The fox leaves round dots in a single line; the stoat two and one alternately. Moreover, the feline tribe leave concave prints; whereas, in each of these mystic prints, the space enclosed by the bounding line was convex, as in the print of the patten.

Early in the week we were informed that two cranes had been shot at Otterton, below Barleigh Salterton, and that these were the mystical printers; but the well informed in zoology at once rejected this offered explanation. Within the last four and twenty hours, a very shrewd and intellectual neighbor of mine, about six miles distant, wrote me word that a gentleman in the parish adjoining his own had traced these peculiar prints through his garden walks into a six inch cutter, and there he saw the marks of claws. This has induced some to suppose them to be tracks of a catamountain. Two other gentlemen, residents in the same Parish, pursued a line of prints during three hours and a half, making their progress under gooseberry bushes and espalier fruit trees; and then missing them, regained sight of the impression on the roofs of some houses to which their march of investigation brought them. These gentlemen "swear

to claws." Upon which my correspondent (a member of the society of Antiquaries) observes, we are inclined to believe they must be otters driven out in quest of food. Our friend felt toe-marks at the contracted part of the print, though they were not discernible by the eye.

Som "chiel among" the congregation where I was discoursing three Sundays since had evidently been "taking notes, and faith; he printed them (as Burns would say); and though, without incurring the charge of the slightest approach to irreverence, I found a very apt opportunity to mention the name of kangaroo, in allusion to the report then current. I certainly did not pin my faith to that version of the mystery, nor call upon others to receive it, *ex cathedra*; but the state of the public mind of the villagers, the laborers, their wives and children, and old cronies and trembling old men, dreading to stir out after sunset, or to go out half a mile into lanes or by ways, on a call or message, under the conviction that this was the Devil's walk and none other, and that it was wicked to trifle with such a manifest proof of the great enemies immediate presence, rendered it very desirable that a turn should be given to such degrading and vitiated notions of a superintending Divine Providence; and I was thankful that a kangaroo was "in the wind," as we should say, and serving to disperse ideas so derogatory to a Christianised, but assuredly most unenlightened community. I was reminded never the less, by one pertinacious recusant, that it is written that Satan should be unchained for a thousand years, and that the latter days were at hand. Still mine was a word in due season, and did good.

The generality of such of us as can reason dispassionately in view of a phenomenon which seems, as yet, to be without precedent or parallel, incline to believe it must be a bird of some unfamiliar tribe, wandering and hopping over this region; but all inquiry seems to be fruitless. I have addressed communications to the British Museum, to the Zoological Society, to the keepers of birds and beasts in the Regent's park menagerie; and the universal reply is, they are utterly unable to form any conjecture on the subject, however correctly the impressions had been copied.

In the same paper is a communication from Professor Owen. He has seen the drawing of the foot prints, and pronounces them those of the badger. He says:

"The badger sleeps a good deal in his winter retreat, but does not hibernate so regularly and completely as the bear does in the severer climate of Canada. The badger is nocturnal, and comes abroad occasionally in the late winter, when hard pressed by cold and hunger it is a stealthy prowler, and most active and enduring in its quest of food.

That one and the same animal should have gone over 100 miles of a most devious and irregular route in one night is as improbable as that one only should have been awake and hungry out of the number concealed in the 100 miles of the rocky and bosky Devonshire, which has been startled by the impressions revealed by the rarely spread carpet of snow in that beautiful country.

The cause of the proof that one creature made them in one night rests with the assessor, who ought to have gone over the same ground with a power of acute and unbiased observation, which seems not to have been exercised by him who failed to distinguish the truly single from the divided foot prints in question.

Nothing seems more difficult than to see a thing as it really is, unless it be the right interpretation of observed phenomena."

DEATHS BY SCALDING.

We still see reported, almost daily, an appalling number of deaths by burns and scalds not one of which we take it upon ourselves to say, need prove fatal, or would do so, if a few pounds of wheat flour could be promptly applied to the wound made by fire, and repeated until the inflammatory state has passed. We have never known a fatal case of scalding or burning, in which this practice has been pursued, during thirty years experience, and having treated hundreds in both public and private practice. We have known the most extensive burns, by falling into caldrons of boiling oil, and even molten copper, and yet the patients were rescued by this simple and cheap remedy, which from its infallible success should supplant all the fashionable nostrums, whether oil, cotton, lead-water, ice, turpentine or pain extractors, every one of which has been tried a thousand times with fatal results, and the victims have died in excruciating agony, while a few handfuls of flour would have calmed them to sleep, and rescued them from pain and death. Humanity should prompt the profession to publish and re publish the facts on this subject which are established by the authority of standard medical works on both sides of the Atlantic.—Flour is the remedy, and the only one, in several cases of scalding and burning, casualties which else so often destroy life. Let us keep it before the people, while the explosion of steam-boilers, and burning fluid lamps are so rife all over the country.—West's Medical Gazette.

A PARADISE FOR A LAZY MAN

Lieutenant Gibbon, in his account of his recent exploration of the Valley of the Amazon gives the following account of the daily life of a Creole family, in the town of Santa Cruz, the Capital of the Bolivian department of the same name:

"Very early in the morning, the Creole, getting out of bed, throws himself into a hammock; his wife stretches herself upon a bench near by, while the children seat themselves with their legs under them, on the chairs, all in their night dresses. The Indian servant girl enters with a cup of chocolate for each member of the family; after which she brings some coals of fire in a silver dish. The wife lights her husband a segar, then one for herself. Some time is spent reclining, chatting and regaling. The man slowly puts on his cotton trousers, woolen coat, leather shoes and vicuña hat, with his neck exposed to the fresh air—silk handkerchiefs are scarce—and walks to some neighbor, with whom he again drinks some chocolate and smokes another segar.

At mid-day, a small low table is set in the middle of the room, and the family go to breakfast. The wife sits next to her husband; the women are very pretty, and affectionate to their husbands. He chooses her among five, there being about that number of women to one man in the town. The children seat themselves and the dogs form a ring behind. The first dish is a chupo of potatoes, with large pieces of meat. The man helps himself first, and throws his bones straight across the table; a child dodges his head to give a free passage, and the dogs rush behind her. The second dish holds small pieces of beef without bone. Next comes a dish of finely chopped beef, then beef soup, vegetables and fruits;—then coffee or chocolate. After breakfast the man pulls off his trousers and coat and lies down in the hammock. His wife lights him a segar. She finds her way back to bed with her segar. The dogs jump up and lie on the chairs—the fleas bite them on the ground! The Indian girl closes both doors and windows taking the children out to play while the rest of the family sleep.

At two, P. M., the church bells ring, to let the people know the priest is saying a prayer for them which rouses them. The man raises, stretches his hands above his head and gaps, the dogs get down and whinnily stretch themselves; while the wife sits up in the bed and loudly calls out for fire; the Indian girl re appears with a "chunk" for her mistress to light her master another segar, and she smokes again herself. The dinner, which takes place between three and five, is nearly the same as breakfast, except when a beef is recently killed by the Indians, when they have a boil. The ribs and other long bones of the animal are trimmed of the flesh leaving the bones only coated with meat; these are laid across a fire and roasted; the members of the family while employed with them, look as if all were practicing music.

A horse is brought into the house by an Indian man, who holds him while "the patron" saddles and bridles him; he then puts on a large pair of silver spurs, which costs forty dollars, and mounting, he rides out the front door to the opposite house; halting, he takes off his hat and cries out, "Buenas tardes, senoritas"—good evening ladies. The ladies make their appearance at the door; one lights him a segar, another him a glass of lemonade to refresh himself after the ride.—He remains in the saddle talking, while they lean gracefully against the door post, smiling with their bewitching eyes. He touches his hat and rides off to another neighbor. After spending the afternoon in this way, he rides into the house again. The Indian holds the horse by the bridle, while the master dismounts. Taking off the saddle he throws it into one chair, the bridle into another, his spurs on a third, and himself into the hammock; the Indian leads out the horse, the dogs pull down the riding gear to the floor, and lay themselves on their usual bedsteads. Chocolate and segars are repeated.

THE OLD MAN'S SECRET.—An Italian bishop struggled through great difficulties, without repining, and met with much opposition without ever betraying the least impatience. All intimate friends of his, who highly admired these virtues which he thought impossible to imitate, one day asked the bishop if he could communicate his secret of being always easy.

"Yes," replied the old man; I can teach you my secret with great facility. It consists of nothing more than making a right use of my eyes."

His friend begged him to explain himself. "Most willingly," returned the bishop. "In whatsoever state I am, I first of all look up to heaven, and remember that my principal business here, is to get there. I then look down on earth, and call to mind how small a space I shall occupy in it when I come to be interred. I then look abroad on the world and observe what multitudes there are who are in all respects more unhappy than myself. Thus I learn where true happiness is placed where all our cares must end, and how very little reason I have to repine or complain.

STORY OF A BRAVE MAN.

The telegraph briefly announced the suicide at Jackson, Miss., of Col. Alexander K. McClung. Our manuscript despatch read, "Col. McClung, *Duelist*;" but he was otherwise distinguished in a very eventful life in the south-west, than in his prowess under the bloody "Code of Honor," and deserves, in death, to be remembered as the evil which the telegraphic record would cause to live after him. He was a brave man for his country in war, as well as a desperate one in defence of his own perhaps too sensitive honor, in peace. He was prompt gallant and distinguished in the Volunteer Service in Mexico, in 1847, under General Taylor. He was first to scale the Black Fort at Monterey, and for this intrepidity in placing the Stars and Stripes on its captured walls, was marked and pierced by the enemy with wounds under which he suffered the most agonizing pain for five or six months, and so chafed that he could not be rid of them to hear his part on the field of Buna Vista, within a few miles of which he was inviolated.

The personal story of Col. McClung, though a sanguinary one, is not without its reliefs.—He was called a desperate duelist; not that he was by nature blood thirsty, or loved the practice for the poor renown it brought him, but because when he did fight in this way, which was not often, he made no compromise for the chances of life; and exacted as well as granted, the extreme terms of the code, as practiced in Mississippi fifteen or twenty years ago, when extravagance and desperation in every department of life, appeared to run riot. His first meeting was in 1833 or 1834, with a man by the name of Allen.—The weapons, pistols, to be fired at ten paces, or advancing nearer to each other, and then the use of the bowie-knife. Allen fell. The second meeting was five years afterwards, or more, with young Mennifee, the brother of Richard H. Mennifee, Member of Congress from Kentucky in 1838-'39. The weapon, the rifle, both parties excellent shots, but Mennifee fell at the second fire. There may have been other altercations in which he was engaged, but they are not now remembered.—Those two fatal transactions in which he was engaged, gave quite a sufficient notoriety to the man which he was far from being proud of, and the public recollection of which he endeavored to efface, in his riper years, by political and military service, first as the head of the Whig press in Mississippi in the Presidential campaign of 1840; then as Marshal of the United States for the Northern District of the State, and afterwards as a volunteer to Mexico, the Lieutenant Colonel of his regiment. After the war he was the political friend of General Taylor, not to the exclusion of Mr. Clay, of whose neighborhood in Kentucky McClung was a native, but in default of his nomination at Philadelphia. Under his administration he was appointed to a diplomatic station as *Charge d'Affaires* to Bolivia, South America, the capital of which, far in the interior of the country, he no doubt had too much difficulty to find to be impressed by its greatness or captivated by its social or political attractions. He returned to the United States after a two years residence near the Bolivian Government, in the year 1851, since when we have heard little of him until the present dreadful announcement of death by his own hands. His age must have been 45 years.—New York Times.

A WATCH.

I have now in my hand a gold watch which combines embellishment and utility in happy proportions, and is usually considered a very valuable appendage to the person of a gentleman. Its hands, face, chain and case, are of chased and burnished gold. Its gold seals sparkle with the ruby, topaz, sapphire, and the Emerald. I open it, and find that the works, without which this elegantly furnished case would be a mere shell, those motionless hands, and those fingers without meaning, are made of brass. I investigate further, and ask what is the spring by which all these are put in motion, made of? I am told it is made of steel. I ask what is steel? The reply is, that it is iron, which has undergone a certain process. So then I find the m in spring, without which the watch would be motionless, and its hands, fingers, and embellishments but toys, is not of gold—that is not sufficiently good nor of brass—that would not do—but of iron. Iron is therefore the only precious metal;—and this watch an emblem of society. Its hands and fingers which tell the hour resemble the master spirits of the age, to whose movement every eye is directed. Its useless but sparkling seals, sapphires, rubies, topaz, and embellishments are the aristocracy. Its works of brass are the middle class, by the increasing intelligence and power of which the master spirits of the age are moved; and its iron main spring shut up in a box, always at work but never thought of, except when it is disorderly, broken or wants winding up, symbolically, the laboring class, which, like the main spring we wind up by the payment of wages, and which chases are shut up in obscurity, and though constantly at work and absolutely as necessary to the movement of society, as the iron main spring is to the gold watch and never thought of, except when they require their wages, or are in some want or disorder of some kind or other.—*Weekly Excerpt.*