

Poetry.

THE HEART'S GUEST.

When age has cast its shadows
O'er life's declining way,
And the evening twilight gathers
Round our departing day...

Biography.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

The common idea of Newton is very vague. In writing to the earliest of his biographers, Pope expressed a desire to have some "memoirs and character of him as a private man."

Whiston describes him as equally impatient, and of the most fearful, cautious and suspicious temper that he ever knew. D'Alembert gives the French idea of him when he says: "In England, people were content with Newton's being the greatest genius of his age; in France one would have wished him to be amiable."

As we look farther into Newton's character, we find everywhere the same absence of color, the same whiteness that Bishop Burnett observed. One curious specimen of it is presented in a letter of advice to his young friend, Francis Aston, who was about to set out on his travels.

Sir David Brewster has done his best to prove the contrary. He even fancies that he has discovered Sir Isaac in love. Sir Isaac in love! It is incredible—it is impossible.

ladies—that is the question, and that is the style of courtship which Sir David, his eyes open, and all his brilliant optical reputation, attributes to a philosopher, whose soul was fixed on one idea—the increase of gravity inversely as to the square of the distance.

In comparison with Newton, Uoole Toby's behavior to the widow Wadman was the extreme of gallantry and idleness. It must be remembered that Newton was a god, and Alexander the Great used to say that two—he might have said three—things reminded him that he was a mortal, and not a god—love, sleep and food.

While speaking of food, we may mention, in passing, as a set off to the negations of Newton's animal nature, his own physical enjoyment. He liked fruit, and could eat any quantity of it. As a boy, we find him in his account book, spending his money on cherries and marmalade.

Other enjoyments Newton had which were not purely intellectual. Even as a boy, he never joined in the games and amusements of his companions. We find him making dials and water-clocks and windmills; and on the day of the great storm of 1658, when Cromwell was drawing his last breath in Whitehall, and Goodwin stood by his bedside, assuring him that his soul was safe, and Bates went soft and sad from room to room, and the trees in St. James's Park were uprooted by the tempest, Newton in his sixteenth year was jumping about in the gale to measure the force of the wind.

With such pleasures it will not be surprising that we return to negation, and say that his esthetical nature was utterly blank. He had a perfect horror of poetry, and would have echoed the sentiment of his friend Barrow, that it is an "ingenious kind of nonsense."

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"If you be affronted," wrote the philosopher, "it is better in a *fortaine country* to pass it by in silence, or with a jest, than to endeavor revenge; for in the first case your credit's not the worse when you return to England, or come into company that have not heard of the quarrel. But in the second case, you may bear the marks of the quarrel while you live, if you outlive it at all."

"For I see not," he writes, "what there is desirable in public esteem, were I able to acquire it and maintain it. It would, perhaps, increase my acquaintance—the thing which I chiefly study to decline." This appalling

self-absorption is without a parallel in the history of the human mind. After having been embroiled in a trifling optical discussion with a Dutch physician of the name of Linus, he writes as follows to one of his friends: "I see I have made myself a slave to philosophy; but if I get free of Mr. Linus's business, I will resolutely bid adieu to it eternally, excepting what I do for my private satisfaction, or leave to come out after me."

All his pursuits were for his own private satisfaction; he shunned mankind, and there is not one of his discoveries that would ever have been published if it had not been dragged into the light by his friends, while he looked on, frotting and muttering at the intrusion.

Dwelling thus apart, and viewing with singular apathy all that men most prize in public esteem and private sympathy, it was natural that Newton should look with stoical contempt on all the objects of human ambition. Love he needed not, honor he sought not, above all things he despised wealth. Master of the Mint, money had no charms for him.

"What cared he for wealth? He had no interest in human life; he had no sublunary pleasures which money could purchase, except pippins and redstreaks. He gave it away to anybody who asked him for it. In one of his absent fits he had his pockets picked of more than two thousand pounds, and suspected a nephew of the celebrated Whiston; he made no effort to recover his bank bills, and when asked how much he had lost, only replied, "Too much." He was so far imposed upon that he paid four thousand pounds for an estate in Wiltshire worth only half of that sum; he was told that he might vacate his bargain in equity, and he declined the trouble.

"I have seen," says honest Humphrey Newton, "I have seen a small pasteboard box in his study set against the open window, no less, as one might suppose, than one thousand guineas in it, crowded edgewise. Whether this was suspicion or carelessness I cannot say; perhaps to try the fidelity of those about him."

This letter, it must be remembered, however, was written not long before his circumstances were such as to give him some anxiety, and he was glad to escape his weekly payments as a member of the Royal Society. If ever he thought of money-making, it was only to pay his frugal buttry book, buy putty for his lenses, and oranges for his sister. He gave away his money without concern; he was even offensive in his liberality, and quarrelled with persons who refused to use his purse.

"We have not said anything of the controversies which brought Newton into contact with his fellow men, and put his manliness to the test, and we must leave it to others to adjust all the microscopic details of authorship and copyright which these controversies involve. But it is impossible to pass without reprehension the unfairness with which Newton treated his opponents Huygens and Hooke, Leibnitz and Flamsteed. It is a just retribution that Newton's corpuscular theory of light has succumbed before the undulatory theory defended by Huygens and Hooke; that his law of double refraction has been displaced by that of Huygens; that his theory of the inflexion of light has been forgotten for that of Hooke; and that his method of fluxions,

which raised the greatest din of all, has been supplanted by the differential calculus of Leibnitz. For one thing in these controversies we may be proud of Newton. His jealousy was absurd, all generosity was forgotten, but he never descended to the atrocious frauds which disgraced his opponents, Bernoulli, Leibnitz and Wolf.

Such was Newton as a man. Glorious in his intellect, with a piety rather intellectual than devotional, he was a stoic without the merit of a stoic, for he had no feelings to contend with. It is very saddening to find that the two most splendid names which science can boast of, belong to men so deficient in their moral natures as Lord Bacon and Sir Isaac Newton. In the former we find a positive moral obliquity, which would awaken pity, were it not joined to so majestic an intellect that it excites terror and despair of human nature.

The Cradle of Napoleon's Future Heir.

We translate from the correspondence of *Independence Belge* the following description of the cradle which the city of Paris is about to offer to the future heir of Napoleon III.

"This cradle is a real *chef d'œuvre*, in the decoration of which all the arts seem to have vied with each other. It far surpasses the celebrated cradle of Rome, and a description of it may not prove uninteresting to our readers.

"The cradle is in the form of a ship, which is the principal emblem in a coat of arms of the city of Paris. At the prow, a silver eagle with wings outspread, in the act of flying. On the stern, the city of Paris, crowned with towers, sustains above the pilot an imperial drom of silver, to which are attached the curtains. The figure is flanked by two others representing children, the one wearing a helmet, the other a crown of olive-branches, personifying Peace and War; the three statues are of silver and half the size of life.

"The little vessels repose on two supports formed each of two miniature columns, and placed one at the end of the cradle. The supports are joined together by a long baluster. The extremities of the supports, and the baluster that joins them, are of solid silver. The body of the cradle is entirely of rosewood, so sculptured as to receive the branches of laurel and silver ornaments that cover it almost entirely. On each side of the cradle are two medallions of blood red jasper, richly framed in silver, and destined to be wrought into emblematic devices.

"Below the rosewood hand-rail that completely surrounds the upper part of the cradle-shell, extends an open-work gallery of quaint architecture, and covered with silver ornaments. This gallery is intersected on each side by a silver cartouch bearing the cyphers of their majesty's on a groundwork of enamel. From this cartouch depend garlands of silver flowers, which descending to the middle of the ships hull, pass below several medallions of jasper, and wind, the one around the prow, the other around the stern, relieving the uniformity of the vessel.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE IN TURKEY.

The New York Observer contains a letter from the Rev. C. N. Righter, a Presbyterian missionary at Constantinople accompanied by one from the Hon. Carroll Spencer of Baltimore, the American Minister in Turkey, appealing for the Abolition throughout the Turkish dominions of the death penalty against Mahometans who have turned Christians. It appears from the letter of Mr. Righter, that a deputation on behalf of the Evangelical conference of Paris, embracing France, England, Germany, and America, recently waited upon the Sultan and the Minister of Foreign Affairs with a memorial praying for liberty of conscience in the Turkish dominions, and also the repeal of the Turkish law which inflicts the penalty of death upon all native born Mussulmans, who embrace the Christian faith. They were very kindly received and assured that the subject would receive due consideration. Mr. Righter gives several instances where, of late, Turks who have embraced the Christian religion have been banished or severely punished.

The Gong.

We find the following rib-tickler in an exchange: Speaking of gongs, a trio of old ladies, delegates to the Woman's Rights Convention, lately stopped at the Burnett House, Cincinnati. They had never heard a gong, and we give Mrs. Trodwell's own description of it: "We hadn't been in our own room very long, till, jenny criming, of all the noises that ever did noise-growlin', bollerin', howlin', screechin', and thunderin', all rumblin' up in one infernal mäss of a sound! We thought the day of insurrection had come, sure enough; all were awfully frightened. Miss Saffron vowed that it was Gabriel blowing his last trump, and that he was a little hoarse. Miss Skinfint, she bounced into her bed, crying out, 'feathers is non-conductors.' Directly, the all-fired howlin' thing shut up, and then there was a sound of folks runnin' down stairs fit to break their necks."

"We were all making for the door to run, too, when something knocked at the door. We were afraid to open, but at last, Miss Saffron, bold as a lion, advanced and peeped through a key-hole. There she stood, shivering with fright—just at this moment the door opened, and what in the name of foggins do you think it was? Why, nothing but a poor, mean, good for nothing, deceitful, yaller nigger, wanting to know if we had come to supper. 'Has the telegraphic magnetif explodid?' asked Miss Skinfint. 'Ma'am' says he again. 'Then,' says I, 'what was that infernal howling about, you great, stupid, silly nigger?' 'That noise just now? oh, nothing but the gong, I reckon,' said he, and the critter went off grinning. 'What a gong was we couldn't tell, but from its voice, we guessed it was some astonishing savage beast they had tamed and let loose about the house to skeer decent people out of their senses.'"

"Traveller for perdition!" said Mrs. Partington, turning round in State Street, as a little boy was proclaiming in dismal tones that he had the "Traveller—fourth edition," for sale. It was evident that she had misunderstood him. "Poor child!" said she, with a benignity that would have furnished the capital stock for four Samaritan societies, "and are you really in so bad a way as that? I knowed there was a good many going that road in this neighborhood, but shouldn't think you was one of 'em, so young. But people begin in sin airly in Boston, and here you are, at your age, calling yourself a traveller for perdition!" The old lady's voice trembled; there was a tear good for a dime in her eye; her hand was in her spacious reticule in search for the coin; the little boy stood selecting the paper from the number under his arm; busy merchants stood buying and selling all around her, and busy brokers were shaving notes and shaving each other within sound of her voice. The search for the dime went on, but not one cent could she find, and with a benediction on the disappointed boy, she left him. Hearing his melancholy voice in the distance—"Here's the traveller for perdition!"—she sighed deeply, and in her abstraction wandered into a snow-bank, where she had mischievously led her.

A DEATH BELL.—A story is told of the casting of the bell for the church of St. Magdalen Breslao. When the metal was ready to pour into the mould, the chief founder went to dinner, and forbade his apprentices under penalty of death, to touch the vent by which the metal was conveyed. The Youth, curious to see the operation, disobeyed orders, and the whole of the metal ran into the mould, and the enraged master, returning from his meal, slew him on the spot. On breaking away the mould, he found he had been too hasty, for the bell was cast as perfect as possible. When it was hung in its place, the master had been sentenced to death by the sword for the murder of his apprentice, and he entreated the authorities that he might be allowed to hear it once before he died. His petition was granted and the bell has since been rung at every execution.

Hoops are dangerous in some places. Read and tremble. In New York, a day or two since, a full rigged lady was walking up Broadway, when one of the hoops with which her circumambients were inflated, the ends of which had not been strongly secured together, suddenly broke loose, and flying back with great force, tore completely through the outer garment and struck a small boy, who was standing on the sidewalk, about twenty feet from the lady. The small boy was taken home senseless; it is feared he will not recover. The hoop is already recovered.

Young America is growing rapidly. Every day we meet with proofs of this encouraging state of facts. Here is one of the latest instances of rapid development: "Have you been to the Astor Library?" asked a youth of his father a few days ago. "No, I have not," replied the father. "You had better call and see it," the youth continued. "Just mention my name to the Librarian, and he will show you every attention."