

Poetry.

From the Knickerbocker.

The subjoined poem may strike some readers as not being entirely original. A greater mistake could not possibly be made. We, at least, have never seen anything like it anywhere: and whose has, let him point it out:

PEARLS at random strung,
By future poets shall be sung.

The night has come but not too soon:
Westward the star of empire takes its way:
To banks and braes of bonnie Doon!
Blue spirits and white, black spirits and gray.

Rocked in the cradle of the deep,
Old Cassin's work was done:
Piping on hollow reeds his pipe-sheep,
Charge, Charge, charge! On, Starbuck, on!

There was a sound of revelry by night,
On Linden when the sun was low:
A voice replied far up the height,
Tall oaks from little acorns grow.

What if a little rain should say,
I have not loved the world, nor the world me:
Ah! well a day!
Woodman spare that tree!

My heart leaps up with joy to see
A primrose by the water's brim:
Zacchens, he did climb the tree:
Few of our youth could cope with him.

The prayer of AJAX was for light,
The light that never was on sea or shore:
Pudding and beef make Britons fight
Never more!

Under the chestnut-tree,
For hours together sat;
I and my Annabel Lee:
A man's a man for a' that.

Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
And waste life's sweetness on the desert air:
In thunder-lightning, or in rain,
None but the brave deserve the fair.

Tell me not in mournful numbers,
The child is father of the man:
Hush, my dear, he still and slumber,
They can conquer who they can.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dreams;
Whatever is, is right;
And things are not what they seem:
My native land, good night!

Select Tale.

From the Knickerbocker.

Observations of Mace Sloper, Esq.

If we take it first and last all through life, it's really amazing what a raft of people we've heard and never seen. Especially in hotels. It has been Mace Sloper's luck to be, very frequently quartered in rooms with but a door betwixt his room and his neighbor's, and whenever this happened he has been pretty generally about as certain to hear, willing or unwilling, considerable that wasn't spoken to him. Particularly when girls were in the next room! Not giving myself credit for any especial cuteness, I can't brag of ever having got up any nice theory on the subject; but it does seem to me that the queerest, wildest, and most amazing speeches I ever heard in all my life from mortal lips, always came from people I couldn't see. Moreover—and every body'll agree with me if he will rake out his own experience a little—I maintain that no two people can talk in the dark to one another as they do in the light. Report such a talk, and read it to them, and they'll as soon believe that they've been talking injun. That's so!

Which reminds Mace Sloper of a talk he once heard in a New-Jersey hotel. I had quietly smoked myself into a regular nap such as the good alone enjoy, when I was awake by hearing somebody enter the next room. Apparently he woke somebody else up too, who was sleeping there in advance of him. 'Hullo there?' says the man a-bed. 'Hullo and behold!' answered the one entering.

'Wait for your welcome afore you come in,' said No. 1.

'In-comes are always welcome,' answered No. 2. 'The mixologist of tipplers directed me to apartment XC, which, being exceedingly weary, I did uncondemned. Yet if you desire illuminosity—'

'Stranger!' cried No. 1. 'hold that! don't light a match for the love of God! I know adsackly what your look like without going further. You're five feet seven inches high, got gray eyes and a colorless vest; short cropped hair and a loose over-coat, nose like a razor handle, and scar over your left eye. That's the stripe!'

'How do you cognovit that?' was the amazed reply.

'Cog—hunder!' was the response. 'How do I know how you look? Why, who the hell ever heard of a man's coming to bed in the dark, and calling a bar-keeper a mixologist of tiboular exins, unless he had gray eyes, razor handled nose, short hair, and a colorless vest? Don't light a match, stranger, on my account. Drummond lights would be darkness on your face arter such a blaze of language as that. 'Illuminosity' and 'cog-

novit! That shows you've got a cap-bag in your hand and a whiskey-bottle in de shoe. There was a sound like the pop of a cork, and a clear case of drinking to better acquaintance going on. I fell to sleep. We hear queer things in the dark. That Western man rather knocks me whenever I think of him.

It was in a country-tavern of a still harder stripe, in Pennsylvania, that I once heard in next room a talk with a twist in it. Two fellows, apparently regular city rough scouffs, were having a comfortable palaver, the subject being sour-crot.

'I used for to like crot—once-t—' said one, 'but I don't care about crot now. No sir, I'm down on crot like a nigger preacher is on the wices of white folks.'

'What fur?' grunted the other. 'Wot fur?' drawled his friend. 'I'll tell yer wot fur. Yer know two years ago when de Blood Balls and Murderers lammed de Tormentors and killed Greasy, besides squashing a bu-by under the in-gine wheels? Ha, ay?'

Well, I cleared out frum town—kase the perlice, Gawd da-a-m-em, were arter me, and I went to Harrisberg.

'There I come across two covies I used to be thick in with in Philadelphia, Members of the Legislator.

'Well—we got ter skylating about, and there was licker aroun', and poaty god, rum too. I got tighter 'n a heep and de legislators dey was sprung us so many rattles. Ye might have split their skulls wid a spanner, and they would a't er knowed what tipped them.'

Here the voice of the chap telling the story sunk down so low that I could hear nothing but a dim sort of growling about 'fight, lamm-ing, and watchman.' All at once he louted up with:

'Yes—dey tuck us to de lock-up and made us eat sour-crot frum eleven o'clock to two de next morning.'

'Yer got sick of crot that time—' a-a-ay Jakey?'

'Well, I did—hoss-fly!'

I heard nothing more of their talk. Some folks would think that the foregoing sample was enough in all-conscience. But I'm free to confess that, not being one of your 'cute sort, the allusion to sour-crot has been one of the great marvels of Mace Sloper's life-time. Is it one of the legal punishments in Harrisburgh to make offenders swallow sour-crot for hours together? It is, in Mace Sloper's sincerest prays that if he ever visits that virtuous village he may remain virtuous, and never be tempted into doing anything which will bring him into the power of its police.

I remember another queer dialogue which came within my experience at a hotel in Boston. I was going to bed rather late, when all at once I heard one of the sweetest voices in the world, with a sort of English ring in it, say in the next room:

'Clara, dear!'

'Well, dear?' answered another just as sweet, and just in the same English chime.

'Is it the lobster you want?'

'Ye, love, answered Clara. 'And I want the ham, too; and you may open the oysters—and the sarding-box.'

'Well, thought I, Mace Sloper, if those angels un't going in for a pretty substantial supper, I'm mistaken.' But I had more before me to astonish me.

'While you're about it, Clara dear, you may as well open the Yarmouth blouter. I'm going to take all this in it. And the cheese, the cheese, oh! don't forget the cheese!'

All at once Clara who, as high as I could judge from the sound, was poking about very industriously, cried out with joy:

'Oh! I've found the Strawsburg pie! the dear little putty de foj grow. Oh! I must go to the bottom of the Strawsburg pie!'

'That'll do!' thought I, as I rolled back. 'I've heard of English appetites, but don't want to hear any more. I've heard Hiram say that Byron didn't like to see a woman eat; and I don't blame him, if they all eat like this. Whew w!'

There was a rattling sort of a going on for a while, until, by-and-by, Clara cried:

'I declare there's my white satin dress in the lobster!'

'And here's my diamond-ring in the cheese! Oh! how odd! Why, I expected to find it in the pie as much as could be.'

A dim suspicion began to come into my head, that the evening meal of the young ladies wasn't limited to eatables, and that one of the effects of the refreshments was to make things lie around loose in a very promiscuous manner. But what was my utter amazement when the soft silvery voice of Clara again cried:

'Oh! dear! I'm so hungry! Lucy, love, we've got nothing here of any consequence—let's ring and make them send us up something to eat!'

'You'll do!' thought I. 'I wonder if you're rich. There will be a famine in Boston if you stay long, that's so! Ham, lobsters, herrings, pies! Joe—whilkens!'

Here I fell asleep, and the next day found me bright and early at the Fitchburg depot, rattling off to the ancient shades of Chip-aty, Whonk, where the bones of the Revolu-

tionary Sleepers lie buried. And it came to pass that after a while I forgot all about Clara and Lucy, especially as it was a story I didn't dare to tell.

About a year afterwards I was at the celebrated 'Bed Bug and Bible Temperance Hotel,' situated in a well known city on the North River. While staying there I got acquainted with two as nice English girls as I ever knew, traveling with their Pa, a plump old fellow who had been in the fancy victualing business in London. The girls wore the names too of Clara and Lucy, but somehow I never thought of the other couple in Boston. Leastways, this pair didn't eat much to speak of, and no body who ever saw their dear clear cream and rose-leaf faces, and beautiful eyes, which sparkled spry with common-sense, or else swum about in wonder at the scenery as we went down the river, would have accused them of eating too much, let alone drinking.

I offered, being as I was a single man, to attend to their luggage. They went forward with me to point it out. As we got near the city, there was considerable of a jam and hurry, and the girls were in rather a 'furry too, not being used to travel.

'Well, Miss Lucy,' says I, 'only point me out your traps, and I'll send 'em up to the hotel, and fix you off all as square as a box—'

'Which is it?'

'O Mr. Sloper! Pa has such a queer way of marking his baggage. He was terribly afraid of losing it, and so he put on marks he was sure there could be no mistake about—'

There, those trunks and boxes with such queer little pictures in white paint under the handles are ours!'

There was an awful hurry and skurry going on around; porters, firemen, passengers and every thing, rushing and crushing about like mad; but as Lucy spoke, and as I looked at her baggage, something came into my mind, a light broke over me like a sky-rocket into mid-night, and I burst into the loudest laugh that ever stirred me up since I was born. None of your little town-garden grins, but a regular hundred-thousand-acre guffaw—a laugh by the square mile—a whole Western prairie laugh.

The old gentleman wanting to distinguish his baggage, had stencilled little store-marks under the handles, such marks as you reader can see at the groceries on boxes of imported preserves and potted meats. On one trunk was a lobster, on another a herring, &c. Yes! it was in that identical lobster that Clara had kept her white satin dress, and in that very 'cheese' that Lucy had discovered the diamond ring.

'MORAL.—All is not gold that glitters, and all lobsters and pies are not made to be eaten; Neither is it always possible to judge of a young lady without seeing her, though old folks tell us wives should be chosen by the ears and not by the eyes.'

SOURS OR ACIDS.

The sourness of the juice of a lemon and the acidity of vinegars are so well known that the mere mention of them is sufficient to convey a knowledge of the chief qualities of sour or acids in their natural state.—There are so many acids that two or three pages of an index to a chemical book are taken up in enumerating them. Every fruit contains an acid; nearly all the metals are capable of forming acids. When coal, wood, paper, rag, charcoal, brimstone, phosphorus, and many other substances are burned acids are produced. A flint stone is an acid. There is an acid in our window glass, and in many of the most costly precious stones. The air we breathe contains an acid. We create an acid in the lungs by the act of breathing. By a very slight change sugar can be converted into oxalic acid, which is a strong poison. Sugar, by another change, is converted into vinegar. These two illustrations show that a sweet can be converted into a sour; but when sour fruit becomes sweet it proves almost to demonstration that a sour can become a sweet acid.

The most powerful acid is that derived from burning sulphur—it is called sulphuric acid, and is one of the most important articles of manufacture. Its acidity is so great that a teaspoonful is sufficient to make a pail-full of water quite sour. Nitric acid, obtained from saltpeter, or saltpetre, is of the next importance in the arts. It is so corrosive that it has long been distinguished by the name of aqua fortis, that is, strong water—strong, sure enough, for a nodule of iron, lead, or silver, dissolves in it like sugar placed in water. From the number of acids which we find in nature, and the tendency of many artificial substances to become sour, it is evident that acids and sour are essential to our life and well being. Acids assume all forms and colors; some are liquids, some gaseous, others solid. The acids of fruits, when separated from the grosser particles that accompany them, are very beautiful and crystallizable substances. By the ingenuity of the chemist the sour of unripe apples, grapes, tamarinds, lemons, &c., may be crystallized into beautiful snow-white bodies which, however, when touched by the tongue, at once indicate their origin by their flavor.

SLEEP, DREAMS, MENTAL DECAY.

The following passages are from a brief review, in a London paper, of Sir Benjamin Brodie's Psychological Inquiries.

'Dreams are next discussed, as also the problem, "What is sleep?" which our author declares insoluble. The sense of weariness appears confined to those functions over which the will has power; all involuntary actions are continued through our resting as well as our waking hours. Sleep accumulates the nervous force, which is gradually exhausted during the day. But these are words only; for who can define or explain the "nervous force?" Darwin's axiom, "that the essential part of sleep is the suspension of volition," still holds good, and is accepted unsatisfactorily. Talking and moving in sleep, though apparently phenomena irreconcilable with this theory, are not so in reality; for there are degrees of sleep, and these things only occur where the slumber is imperfect. It may be urged again that the mere absence of volition would not produce that insensibility to sight and sound which is the characteristic of the sleeper, but few persons are aware how much the will is concerned in the reception of impressions in the senses. One who is absorbed in reading or writing will not hear words addressed to him in the ordinary tone, though their physical effect on the ear must be the same as usual.'

Dreams are inexplicable. Lord Brougham suggested that they took place only in the momentary state of transition from sleep to waking. But facts contradict this theory, since persons will mutter to themselves, and utter inarticulate sounds, indicative of dreaming, at intervals of several minutes. The common puzzle as to how dreams, apparently long, can pass in a moment of time, presents no difficulty to the psychologist. Life is not measured by hours and days, but by the number of new impressions received, and limit to these is in the world without us, not in the constitution of our minds. To a child whose imagination is constantly excited by new objects, twelve months seem a longer period than to man. As we advance in life time flies faster. The butterfly living for a single season, may reasonably enjoy a longer existence than the tortoise, whose years exceed a century. Even between the busy and the idle among human beings, there exists a similar difference, though less strongly marked.

It has been usually held that large heads are more powerful thinking machines than small ones; and as a general rule, experience justifies the conclusion. But Newton, Byron, and others, were exceptions to it; and it is quite certain that a large brain may be accompanied with the most dense stupidity.

Many remarks scattered through this little treatise are worthy the recollection of all ages and classes. "The failure of the mind in old age," says Sir Benjamin Brodie, "is often less the result of mature decay than of disuse." Ambition has ceased to operate; contentment brings indolence; indolence decay of mental power; ennu and sometimes death. Men have been known to die, literally speaking, of disease induced by intellectual vacancy. On the other hand, the amount of possible mental labor is far less than many persons imagine. If professional men are enabled to work twelve or fifteen hours daily, it is because most of their business has become from habit a mere matter of routine.—From four to six hours is probably the utmost daily period for which real exertion of mind can be carried on.

'AN IRISHMAN DISSOLVING THE UNION.—By way of illustrating the supreme folly of the cry about the dissolution of the Union, Lieut. Gov. Ford related one evening, in his own inimitable manner, the following capital story: "Dissolve the Union?" said Ford; I should like to see them attempt to dissolve the Union. Why, this silly cry reminds me of an Irishman who went down into a well to "clean it out. When he was through, he made the signal to be hauled up. His companions who were determined to have a joke at his expense, hauled him up about half way and then stopped. There he hung, no way to get up—no safe way to get down if that were desirable. He begged and entreated, but it was of no use. He stormed and raved, but it did no good. At last he sung out, "Haul me out ye spalpeens, or by the piper that played before Moses, I'll be after cutting the rope!"

'Let them cut the rope, if they like the plunge," was Ford's application of the story.

'An honest son of Erin, lately arrived at Baltimore, was employed to drive a dirt cart. Not being an adept in the art and mystery of hauling dirt, he was naturally perplexed when he wished to empty the cart, and after as much manœuvring to get into a proper position as would have sufficed to move a seventy-four, he marched up to the horses' head, seized the bridle with a powerful grasp, and sang out with a hearty "good-bye!"

'Up he stepped, calculating, we suppose, that the horse would elevate himself, enough to empty the cart!

The Price of Potatoes in 1805.

The following anecdote of the first Napoleon—this necessity of discriminating between the two Napoleons is a little inconvenient—is related in a letter from a correspondent, who was a considerable time in the French military service, and vouches for its authenticity. We might say of it, "Se non e vero e ben trovato."

'The evening before the battle of Ulm, when Napoleon the first in company with Marshal Berthier, was walking incognito through the camp and listening to the talk of his soldiers, he saw in a group not far off a grenadier of the Guard, who was roasting some potatoes in the ashes.

'I should like a roast potato above all things," said the Emperor to the Marshal; "ask the owner of them if he will sell one." In obedience to the order, Berthier advanced to the group and asked to whom the potatoes belonged. A grenadier stepped forward and said, "They are mine."

'Will you sell me one?'

'I have only five, and that's hardly enough for my supper.'

'I will give you two napoleons if you will sell me one.'

'I don't want your gold; I shall be killed, perhaps, to-morrow, and I don't want the enemy to find me with an empty stomach.'

Berthier reported the soldier's answer to the Emperor, who was standing a little in the back ground.

'Let's see if I shall be luckier than you,' said the latter, and going up close to the grenadier, he asked him if he would sell him a potato.

'Not by a long shot,' said the grenadier. 'I haven't enough for myself.'

'But you may set your own price. Come, I am hungry, and haven't eaten to-day.'

'I tell you I haven't enough for myself, besides all that, do you think I don't know you in spite of your disguise?'

'Who am I then?'

'Bah! The little corporal as they call him; am I right?'

'Well, since you know me, will you sell me a potato?'

'No, but if you would have me come and dine with you when you get back to Paris, you may sup with me to-night.'

'Done!' said Napoleon, 'on the word of a little corporal; on the word of an Emperor.'

'Well and good. Our potatoes ought to be done by this time; there are the two largest ones, the rest I'll eat myself.'

The Emperor sat down and ate his potatoes and then returned with Berthier to his tent, merely remarking, 'The rogue is a good soldier, I'll wager.'

Two months afterwards Napoleon the Great was in the midst of a brilliant court at the palace of the Tuileries, and was just sitting down to dine, when word was brought that a grenadier was without, trying to force the guard at the door, saying that he had been invited by the Emperor. 'Let him come in,' said his Majesty. The soldier entered, presented arms and said to the Emperor:

'Do you not remember once having supped with me off my roast potatoes?'

'Oh, is that you? Yes, yes, I remember,' said the Emperor; 'and so you have come to dine with me, have you? Rustan, lay another cover on your table for this brave fellow.' Again the grenadier presented arms and said:

'A grenadier of the guard does not eat with lackeys. Your Majesty told me I should dine with you—that was the bargain and trusting to your word I have come hither.'

'True, true,' said the Emperor, 'lay a cover here near me; lay aside your arms, mon ami, and draw up to the table.'

Dining over, the grenadier went, at his usual pace, took up his carbine, and turning to the Emperor, presented arms and said:

'A mere private ought not to dine at the table of his Emperor.'

'Ah! I understand you,' said Napoleon. 'I name you Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and Lieutenant in my company of Guards.'

'Thank you heartily. Vive l'Empereur!' answered the soldier, and withdrew.—New York Evening Post.

'In Auburn, a short time ago, an Irishman walking along one of the streets, saw a thermometer hanging at the side of the door on the front of the house. Stopping a moment, he looked at it, then approaching it, raised his shako, and exclaimed, "An' faith, an' you're the little oratur what keeps the weather so coid, are ye?" and with a terrific blow accompanied with the usual Irish oath, brought it in a thousand pieces to the ground.

To MAKE MOCK STRAWBERRIES.—A lady, in Chicago, Ill., says.—Cut up ripe peaches and soft mild eating apples, in the proportion of three to one, into pieces the size of strawberries; and mix them with a proper proportion of sugar, and after they have stood together a few hours, add mingled, their flavors, even an amateur, if he will not look at the hash, might mistake it for strawberries.