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Select Poetry.

For the Inquirer and Chronicle.

THE RAMBLER.

The intellect of the wise is like glass;
it admits the Light of Heaven, and reflects it.—HARE.

To the reflective mind the seasons in their continual change always bring to view the wisdom of that glorious Being, who has so wisely adapted the whole order of nature to the physical, mental and moral wants of man. Winter comes on with rough and solemn aspect, but soon we are disposed to welcome the music of his mighty voice, and often, indeed, seem to forget ourselves in admiration, while the cold blasts are sweeping in wild confusion around us.

Such was the day on which I started out to notice the ways of the world, and thus afford myself some recreation. With no little degree of enthusiasm, I felt that much would depend upon a proper use of my time, in order that I might return with a mind well prepared for energetic action. Without, however, troubling the reader with a long account of the various incidents that occurred, I prefer confining myself to the present occasion to a few thoughts which were suggested to my mind while on a visit to the Quaker City—Philadelphia.

It is true, as Dr. Franklin once remarked, that there are a great many things in such a city that a wise man does not want; yet it is equally true that there are many reasons why a wise man loves to walk leisurely along the crowded streets of a large city. I am one of those, however, who are forever longing to shine in the gay attire with which the majority of those who wander along the prominent streets seem to take so much delight in. "God made the country, man made the town," Cain built the first city, and generally it would seem as if Cain's descendants were busily engaged in building cities; or rather it would seem as if posterity at least some what akin to him were making up a large proportion of the inhabitants. In such large cities where multitudes of human beings are continually going to and fro, the observing mind enjoys peculiar privileges in the study of human character. There he sees the empty headed, and still more empty minded fop. His well oiled looks indicate how much more highly he values the peculiar "our" than the proper dignity of a noble minded young man. Next he notices the flirt—fior, by the way, they, like the Scribes and Pharisees, may be seen at any time, about the corners of the streets; and in all other prominent places. Even now, while sitting quietly in my sanctum, imagination seems to behold one of the fair ones in the distance.

Mark her when she first appears,
Still distant, slowly moving with her train;
Her robe and tresses floating on the wind,
Like some light figure in a morning cloud.
Mark that that smile rise from her parting lips!

Soft smiling her glowing cheek; her eyes
Smiled too.

But I turn from such a scene of nonsense and vanity, which must needs excite pity and regret. Woman, thou wert never created to stoop so low; thy warm, beating heart should enable thee to exclaim, in sweetest accents,

"Nearer, dearer bands of love,
Draw my soul in union to thy breast;
To my Father's home above, lead me;
Thither all my hopes ascend,
There may all my labors end."

Then shall thy noble soul, beaming forth celestial light, illumine this dark world, and then will thy smiles, sweet as the smiles of angel messengers, cheer the domestic circle; then shall the happy day come when the wilderness shall blossom like the rose, and the solitary places resound with the song of universal happiness.

But I find I have dwelt too long on merely incidental affairs. It was my intention to confine myself more directly to a notice of several paintings on exhibition in the "Academy of Fine Arts." First of all I will request the reader to contemplate

DEATH OF THE PALE HORSE.

This world-renowned painting was executed by Benjamin West, and has for its object the representation of the vision of St. John, Rev. VI., 1 to 12. On first beholding this great effort of human genius, the mind is naturally overpowered, and for some time can scarcely realize the presence of such a terrible scene. Indeed to a mind somewhat disposed to melancholy, this overwhelming exhibition of destruction, would doubtless have an alarming effect. Imagine for a moment the dreadful scene. The heavens on fire; the earth melting with fervent heat; the sun blotted from the heavens; the moon turned to blood; the stars wandering in deep darkness; the millions of human beings on the earth all panic stricken; then see far away the glorious light of heaven beginning to

scatter far and wide, the resplendent beams that pour forth from the Everlasting Throne. See "Death on the Pale Horse" coming! The King of Terrors is represented with the physiognomy of the dead, but at the same time may be seen the inextinguishable rage that fires with hellish strength every muscle; and throws a kind of superhuman charm over the terrible being. On his head is placed a crown, and around his body flows the spacious robe. In his right hand he holds a sceptre, but with an outstretched arm grasps the Serpent that first brought death into the world and all our woe, and with merciless cruelty he sends forth his fiery darts in every direction. His horse rushes forward with the universal wildness of a tempestuous element, breathing livid pestilence, and rearing and trampling with the vehemence of an unbridled fury. Behind him is seen an insidious demon bearing the torch of Discord, with a monstrous progeny of the reptile world.

"All prodigious things,
Abominable, unutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire,"
These are the "Ministers of Hell," who had "power given to them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with disease, and with the beasts of the earth." Accordingly man and all living things are thrown into the wildest scene of confusion, and on all sides there is nothing but ruin and destruction.

"The powers of Hell follow on the clouds behind;" or rather, the powers of Hell come bursting through the deep darkness and clouds that seem to envelop the whole scene. "An image of the devouring mortality is seen in the sudden death of a young mother and her infant son. She is supported by her husband, who at the same time extends his arms, as if were, to stop the galloping of the Pale Horse."

Her daughter, a beautiful child, in a pathetic attitude, endeavors to succor her. The destruction by wild beasts is represented by a lion and a lioness rushing upon a tumultuous group of men on horseback and on foot, who are endeavoring, in turn, to destroy their assailants. A wild bull is seen attacking the crowd behind, and tossing a youth in the air. The furious animal is himself assailed by the dogs. In the clouds an eagle and heron are engaged in mortal combat; and on the foreground a dove lamenting over its dead mate. Near the bull, but somewhat farther in the picture, a young man is struck dead by lightning, on the supposed day of his marriage; his brother is supporting his lifeless body, and a young female, his intended bride, gazes wildly upon him. A number of figures are seen in confusion, terror, and astonishment at this awful visitation. Over their heads the firmament is rent; the clouds are broken; the thunder and lightnings let loose; and the heavens rolled together as a scroll. The destruction by famine is represented by a sorrowful, emaciated man, with a wrinkled visage and hollow eyes, on his knees, endeavoring to dig up some wild roots with his long nails, to appease the ravenous cravings of nature. His empty cup lies beside him. Close to this the destruction by Pestilence is figured by a woman with an expression of pain and malady in her wan countenance and crouching attitude. The destruction by War is represented by a figure in helmet and armor, mounted on a red horse, with his sword raised in the act of charging, and the clouds of battle raising before him.

I have now briefly noticed one leading character in this painting. In my next paper, I will ask my readers to contemplate the second.

SIGMA.

FREDERICK INSTITUTE,
January, 1857.

Hoop skirts, said old Roger to Miss Sophraphina, as she was dressing to go out, are indicative of the extent of a lady's acquaintance.

She playfully turned and demanded an explanation, calling him naughty man, for meddling with that which did not belong to him. How does it indicate her acquaintance, sir?

Why, said he, pulling down his white waistcoat and looking pleasantly at her voluminous habit, it indicates that she has a large circle about her.

Seraphims went out with a smile, like the mouth of June.

A distinguished writer says—There is but one passage in the Bible where the girls are commanded to kiss the men, and that is the golden rule. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

From the N. Y. Tribune. A Letter from Bayard Taylor.

AN HOUR WITH HUMBOLDT.

BERLIN, Nov. 25, 1856.

I came to Berlin, not to visit its museums and galleries, its magnificent street of lindens, its operas and theaters, nor to mingle in the gay life of its streets and saloons, but for the sake of seeing and speaking with the world's greatest living man—Alexander von Humboldt.

At present, with his great age and his universal renown, regarded as a throned monarch in the world of science, his friends have been obliged, perforce, to protect him from the exhaustive homage of his thousands of subjects, and, for his own sake, make difficult the ways of access to him. The friend and familiar companion of the King, he may be said, equally, to hold his own court, with the privilege, however, of at any time breaking through the formalities which only self-defense has rendered necessary. Some of my works, I know, had found their way into his hands: I was at the beginning of a journey which would probably lead me through regions which his feet had traversed and his genius illustrated, and it was not merely a natural curiosity which attracted me toward him. I followed the advice of some German friends, and made use of no mediatory influence, but simply dispatched a note to him, stating my name and object, and asking for an interview.

Three days afterward I received through the city post a reply in his own hand, stating that, although he was suffering from a cold which had followed his removal from Potsdam to the capital, he would willingly receive me, and appointed a clock-to-day for the visit. I was punctual to the minute, and reached his residence in the Oranienburger-strasse, as the clock struck. While in Berlin, he lives with his servant, Seifert, whose name only I found on the door. It was a plain two-story house, with a dull pink front and inhabited, like most of the houses in German cities, by two or three families. The bell-wire over Seifert's name came from the second story. I pulled the heavy porte-cochère opened itself, and I mounted the steps until I reached a second bell-pull, over a plate inscribed, "Alexander von Humboldt."

A stout, square faced man of about fifty, whom I at once recognized as Seifert, opened the door for me. "Are you Herr Taylor?" he asked; [and added, on receiving my reply: "His Excellency is ready to receive you." He ushered me into a room filled with stuffed birds and other subjects of natural history; then into a large library, which apparently contained the gifts of authors, artists, and men of science. I walked between two long tables heaped with sumptuous folios, to the further door, which opened into the study. Those who have seen the admirable colored lithograph of Hildebrandt's picture, know precisely how the room looks. There was the plain table, the writing-desk covered with letters and manuscripts, the little green sofa, and the same maps and pictures on the drab-colored walls. The picture had been so long hanging in my own room at home, that I at once recognized each particular object.

Seifert went to an inner door, announced my name, and Humboldt immediately appeared. He came up to me with a heartiness and cordiality which made me feel that I was in the presence of a friend, gave me his hand, and inquired whether we should converse in English or German. "Your letter," said he, "was that of a German, and you must certainly speak the language familiarly; but I am also in the constant habit of using English." He insisted upon my taking one of the green sofas, observing that he rarely sat upon it himself, then drew up a plain cane-bottomed chair and seated himself beside it, asking me to speak a little louder than usual, as his hearing was not as acute as formerly.

As I looked at the majestic old man, the line of Tennyson, describing Wellington, came into my mind: "Oh, good grey head, which all men know." The first impression made by Humboldt's face is that of a broad and genial humanity. His massive brow, heavy with the gathering wisdom of nearly a century, bends forward and overhangs his breast, like a ripe ear of corn, but as you look below it, a pair of clear blue eyes, almost as bright and steady as a child's, meet your own. In those eyes you read that trust in man, that immortal youth of the heart, which makes the snows of eighty-seven Winters lie so lightly upon his head. You trust him utterly at the first glance, and you feel that he will trust you, if you are worthy of it.

I had approached him with a natural feeling of reverence, but in five minutes I found that I loved him, and could talk with him as freely as with a friend of my own age. His nose, mouth and chin have the heavy Teutonic character, whose genuine type always expresses an honest simplicity and directness.

I was most surprised by the youthful character of his face. I knew that he had been frequently indisposed during the present year, and had been told that he was beginning to show the marks of his extreme age; but I should not have suspected him of being over seventy-five. His wrinkles are few and small, and his skin has a smoothness and delicacy rarely seen in old men. His hair, although snow-white, is still abundant, his step slow but firm, and his manner active almost to restlessness. He sleeps but four hours out of the twenty-four, reads and replies to his daily rain of letters, and suffers no single occurrence of the least interest in any part of the world to escape his attention. I could not perceive that his memory, the first mental faculty to show decay, is at all impaired. He talks rapidly, with the greatest apparent ease, never hesitating for a word, whether in English or German, and, in fact, seemed to be unconscious which language he was using, as he changed five or six times in the course of conversation. He did not remain in his chair more than ten minutes at a time, frequently getting up and walking about the room, now and then pointing to a picture or opening a book to illustrate some remark.

He began by referring to my Winter journey into Lapland. "Way do you choose the Winter?" he asked. "Your experience will be very interesting, it is true, but will you not suffer from the severe cold?" "That remains to be seen," I answered. "I have tried all climates except the Arctic, without the least injury. The last two years of my travels were spent in tropical countries, and now I wish to have the strongest possible contrast." "That is quite natural," he remarked, "and I can understand how your object in travel must lead you to seek such contrasts, but you must possess a remarkable healthy organization." "You doubtless know, from your own experience," I said, "that nothing preserves a man's vitality like travel." "Very true," he answered, "if it does not kill at the outset. For my part, I keep my health everywhere, like yourself. During five years in South America and the West Indies, I passed through the midst of black rot and yellow fever untouched.

I spoke of my projected visit to Russia, and my desire to traverse the Russian Tartar provinces of Central Asia. The Kirghiz steppes, he said, were very monotonous; fifty miles gave you the picture of a thousand, but the people were exceedingly interesting. If I desired to go there, I would have no difficulty in passing through them to the Chinese frontier; but the southern provinces of Siberia, he thought, would best repay me. The scenery among the Altai Mountains was very grand. From his window in one of the Siberian towns, he had counted eleven peaks covered with eternal snow. The Kirghizes, he added, were among the few races whose habits had remained unchanged for thousands of years and they had the remarkable peculiarity of combining a monastic with a monadic life. They were partly Buddhist and partly Muslem, and their monkish seclusion followed the different clans in their wanderings, carrying on their devotions in the encampments, inside of a sacred circle marked out by spears. He had seen their ceremonies, and was struck with their resemblance to those of the Catholic church.

Among the objects in his study was a living chameleon, in a box with a glass lid. The animal, which was about six inches long, was lazily dozing on a bed of sand, with a big blue fly, the unconscious provision for his dinner, perched upon his back. "He has just been sent to me from Smyrna," said Humboldt; "he is very listless and unconcerned in his manner." Just then the chameleon opened one of his long tubular eyes, and looked up at us. "A peculiarity of this animal," he continued, "is its power of looking in different directions at the same time. He can turn one eye toward heaven, while the other inspects the earth. There are many eurygmen who have the same power."

After showing me some of Hildebrandt's watercolor drawings, he returned to his seat and began to converse about American affairs, with which he seemed to be entirely familiar. He spoke with great admiration of Col. Fremont, whose defeat he profoundly regretted. "But it is at least a most cheering sign," he said, "and an omen of good for your country, that more than half a million of men supported by their votes a man of Fremont's character and achievements." With regard to Buchanan, he said: "I had occasion to speak of his Ostend Manifesto not long since in a letter which has been published, and I could not characterize its spirit by any milder term than savage." He also spoke of our authors, and inquired particularly after Washington Irving, whom he had once seen. I told him I had the fortune to know Mr. Irving, and had seen him not long before leaving New York. "He must be at least fifty years old," said Humboldt. "He is seventy," I answered, but as young as ever. "Ah!" said he, "I have lived so long that I have almost lost the consciousness of time. I belong to the age of Jefferson and Gallatin, and I heard of Washington's death while travelling in South America."

Humboldt's recollections of the Altai Mountains naturally led him to speak of the Andes. "You have travelled in Mexico," said he, "do you not agree with me in the opinion that the finest mountains in the world are those single cones of perpetual snow rising out of the splendid vegetation of the tropics? The Himalayas, although loftier, can scarcely make an equal impression; they lie further to the north, without the belt of tropical growths, and their sides are dreary and sterile in comparison. You remember Orizaba," continued he, here is an engraving from a rough sketch of mine. I hope you will find it correct."

He rose and took down the illustrated folio which accompanied the last edition of his Minor Writings, turned over the leaves and recalled, at each plate, some reminiscence of his American travel. "I still think," he remarked as he closed the book, "that Chimborazo is the grandest mountain in the world."

I have repeated but the smallest portion of his conversation, which flowed on in an uninterrupted stream of the richest knowledge. On recalling it to my mind, after leaving, I was surprised to find how great a number of subjects he had touched upon, and how much he had said, or seemed to have said—for he has the rare faculty of placing a subject in the clearest and most vivid light by a few luminous words—concerning each. He thought, as he talked, without effort. I should compare his brain to the Fountain of Vaucluse—a still, deep and tranquil pool, without a ripple on its surface, but creating a river by its overflow. He asked me many questions, but did not always wait for an answer, the question itself suggesting some reminiscence or some thought which he had evident pleasure in expressing. I sat or walked, following his movements, an eager listener, and speaking in alternate English and German, until the time which he had granted to me had expired. Seifert at length reappeared and said to him, in a manner at once respectful and familiar, "It is time, and I take my leave."

"You have traveled much, and seen many things," said Humboldt, as he gave me his hand again: "now you have seen one more." Not a ruin, I could not help replying, but a pyramid. For I pressed the hand which had touched those of Frederick the Great, of Foster, the companion of Capt. Cook, of Klopstock and Schiller, of Pitt, Napoleon, Josephine, the Marshals of the Empire, Jefferson, Hamilton, Wieland, Herder, Goethe, Courier, La Place, Gay, Lussac, Beethoven, Walter Scott—in short of every great man whom Europe has produced in three quarters of a century. I looked into the eyes which had not only seen the living history of the world pass by, scene after scene, till the actor retired one by one, to return no more, but had beheld the cataclysm of Atures and the forests of the Assiniboine, Chimborazo, the Amazon, an Popocatepetl, the Altai Alps of Siberia the Tartar steppes and the Caspian Sea. Such a splendid circle of experience will befit a life of such generous devotion to science. I have never seen so sublime an example of old age—crowned with imperishable success, full of the ripest wisdom, cheered and sweetened by the noblest attributes of the heart. A ruin, indeed! No; a human temple, perfect as the Parthenon.

As was passing out through the cabinet of natural history, Seifert's voice arrested me. "I beg your pardon, Sir," said he, "do you know what this is?" pointing to the antlers of a Rocky Mountain elk. Of course I do," said I, "I have helped to eat many of them." He then pointed out the other specimens, and took me up the library to show me some drawings by his son-in-law, Muhlbach, who had accompanied Lieut. Whipple in his expedition to the Rocky Mountains. He also showed me a very elaborate specimen of

head-work, in a gilt frame. "This," he said, "is the work of a Kirghiz princess, who presented it to His Excellency when we were on our journey to Siberia." "You accompanied His Excellency then?" I asked. Yes said he; "we were there in '29." Seifert is justly proud of having shared for thirty or forty years the fortunes of his master. There was a ring, and a servant came in to announce a visitor. "Ah, the Prince Ypsilanti," said he; "don't let him in, don't let a single soul in; I must go and dress His Excellency. Sir, excuse me—yours, most respectfully, and therewith he bowed himself out. As I descended to the street, I passed Prince Ypsilanti on the stairs.

MRS. KELLY IS ASKED FOR HER NAME.

Among the arrests made recently, was that of Mr. Kelly, for intoxication. Mrs. Kelly is a talkative little body, and shockingly given to one idea. We give her examination:

"What is your name?"
"As dacent a woman as ever the sun shined upon. I've lived in Albany twelve years coming next michelmas—I know it by the token, that the Sunday before, we walked O'Neil."

"What is your name?"
"Me character is as good as any woman's in the State. If you think I'm lying call on Mrs. Manning—a divil a nicer woman than Mrs. Manning iver flirited a house cloth or peeled a pratie."

"Stop that rignarole and giv me your name."

"Stop what! my rignarole! And what's my rignaroles done that you should throw slurs on a dacent woman? Would ye take advantage of my wakeness, ye ga hedded gold coin, ye!"

"Will you give me your name?"

"Me what?"

"Your name."

"And perhaps you think I've not got one. Bedad, I've as good a name as iver came till Ameriky, and I'm not ashamed of it."

"Will you give it to me?"

"I'd see you to the divil first! I'd not becom the Kelley's to that degree as to tell yees I'm one of 'em."

"Then your name is Kelly?"

"And who slattered that out! Show me the blackguard and I'll dust his coat with a poker."

"Never mind all that. Mrs. Kelly, you were found intoxicated."

"And who paid for the rum? Not you, you could vilyan."

"It matters not who paid for the rum.—You drank it, and then committed a breach of the peace, for doing which I sentence you to jail for ten days."

"And dare you send a Kelly to jail for taking a little wake gin to get the wind from her heart?"

"Certainly, a Kelly or any other person, if they violate the laws. Clinton take her off!"

Clinton undertook to do so, but got so entangled with Mrs. Kelly's legs, that the pair fell down stairs, breaking officer Clinton's watch, knee-pen and suspenders. Mrs. Kelly is now in jail, but threatens to take it out of the "ould vilyan's" skin, the first time she meets him with a mop handle.

A SPOONFUL OF "PUNCH."—HOME TRUTHS, BY A HOME-SPEAKING PHILOSOPHER.—As sure as there happens to be cold meat or a poor shabby dinner of scraps and make-ups, so sure is the husband to take some one home to dinner with him.

No child ever makes a noise; and as for babies, it is a well-known fact that every blessed baby that ever was born was the "quietest little thing in the world."

It is rare indeed that you can get two mother-in-laws to agree upon any domestic matter, more especially upon any treatment connected with the rearing of children.

One thing is indisputable—servants take care generally to answer the mother-in-law's bell the first time it is rung.

The kitchen chimney only catches fire on festive occasions, and no cook ever thinks of having a nervous fit, such as necessitates her being carried up stairs in a state of insensibility, but on some grand solemnity, when you have distinguished company to dinner.

As the mothers grow older so the daughters grow younger; for if the mother is only thirty-two it would be absurd and contradictory to give out that her grown up daughters were more than fifteen or eighteen at the utmost.

From the want of this simple management, ridiculous cases have been known, in which the mother, by deducting one, or more, off her age every year and neglecting to make the same deduction with her youthful beauties, has at length arrived to be of the same age as her daughters.



NIGHT.

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

The day is done and the darkness
Falls from the wings of night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
That my heart cannot resist.

A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come read to me some poem,
Some simple and heart-felt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old matters,
Not from the birds and bees,
Whose distant foot steps echo,
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And to night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gush from his heart
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start.

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoted to care,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasure volume
The poem of the choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet,
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

RIDING IN A SLEIGH.

Gliding down the hillside
O'er the frosty snow—
Sliding through the valleys,
Jingling as we go—
Happy voices joining
In a noisy lay:
Bless me, how delightful,
Riding in a sleigh!

Girl whom you invited
Is certain she shall freeze—
Nestles closer to you,
Gives your arm a squeeze
Hints at old school friendships,
As any maiden may—
Says it's very pleasant
Riding in a sleigh!

Driver gets excited,
Thinks he's very smart—
Snaps the whip a little,
Gives the reins a start,
Girls and gallants mixing
In an awkward way—
Bless me, how delightful,
Riding in a sleigh!

Round the corner rushing
At a speed to rash,
Suddenly upsetting
With a horrid crash,
In a snow bed tumbled
All the lovers lay—
Ha, ha! how delightful,
Riding in a sleigh!

Beavers sadly battered,
Bonnets all awry—
Some the girls laughing,
Others want to cry;
Careless drivers swearing,
Says the driver's to pity:
N'er "dumpty" load before
Riding in a sleigh!

Matters once more righted,
Jingling on we go,
Through the woods and meadows,
O'er the frosty snow,
Jingling, laughing, kissing,
All the merry way,
Bless me, how pleasant,
Riding in a sleigh!

GIRLS AND BEARDS.—Two young misses, discussing the qualities of some young gentlemen, were overheard thus:
No. 1.—Well, I like Charley, but he's rather girlish; he hasn't got the least bit of a beard.
No. 2.—I say Charley has got a beard, but he shaves it off.
No. 1.—No, he hasn't either, any more than I have.
No. 2.—I say he has too, and I know it, for it sticks my cheek!