J. McL. Harrington

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CARTHAGE, N. C.

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A Song of the Four Seasons.

When Spring comes laughing, by vale and hill,
By wind-flower walking and daffodil,
Sing stars of morning, sing morning skies,
Sing blue of speedwell and my Love's eyes.

When comes the Summer, full-leaved and strong,
And gay birds gossip, the orchard long:
Sing hid, sweet honey, that no bee sips;
Sing red, red roses and my Love's lips.

When Autumn scatters the leaves again,
And piled sheaves bury the broad-wheeled wain
Sing flutes of harvest, where men rejoice;
Sing rounds of reapers and my Love's voice.

But when comes Winter, with hail and storm,
And red fire roaring, and ingle warm,
Sing first sad going of friends that part;
Then sing glad meeting and my Love's heart.

A CROOKED SIXPENCE.

One pleasant evening in early spring, a young girl descended the steps of a handsome house in the fashionable suburbs of an English town, and, drawing her veil over her face, walked briskly down the street.

She evidently did not belong to the costly mansion she had just left, and in fact her plain dress, and the little scroll-case which she carried, betrayed that she was a music-teacher.

After walking some distance, the young lady, leaving the street, which had now become a country road, bordered with rustic villas, turned into a more private way, shaded by trees and crossed by a shallow stream.

Here she proceeded more leisurely, and removing her veil, showed a fair, oval face, with delicate features and soft brown eyes, full of sweetness and intelligence.

It seemed a face formed for smiles and sunshine, but just now it wore a shade of of despondency, and more than once her eyes half filled with tears.

On the rustic bridge crossing the stream she paused, and, leaning over the rail, looked down at the crystal ripples, dancing over the white sands. This was what she never failed to do in crossing the bridge, for she loved the murmur and sparkle of the water.

A branch of hawthorn in full bloom hung like a perfumed snow-drift just above her head, and reaching up, she essayed to break off a spray; but the tough stem refused to be parted from its parent branch, and she was about relinquishing the attempt, when she was startled by a voice, close to her, which said:

"Pray allow me to assist you!"

By her side stood a gentleman whom she had never before seen, young and handsome, and dressed in a plain gray suit.

Producing a small clasp-knife, he severed the coveted branch; but the rough treatment to which it had been subjected had shaken off much of the bloom.

"I fear it is quite spoiled," he said. "Will you allow me to get you another?"

She accepted the offered blossoms, and with a few words of thanks, a smile and a bow, they each passed on—the girl with a slight flush on her cheek, and heart beating a little more rapidly at the remembrance of the gentleman's grave, involuntary look of admiration. Not that she was unused to such, but there had been something peculiar in the deep, dark eyes of this stranger—or at least she thought so.

She was just passing the rusty gates of a small park-lodge, when her eye was caught by the gleam of some object in the grass at her feet. She picked it up. It was a silver sixpence, battered and bent, to which was attached a small silver ring.

"Some child's lost plaything or treasure," the girl thought. "Perhaps little Nellie Burns, who just now passed. She will be glad to have it back."

A few moments' further walk brought her to a neat cottage, with a gothic portico, standing a little back from the road.

A pretty young girl at a window nodded a gay welcome, and at the door she was met by a tall, dignified lady, in a widow's cap, who greeted her with a motherly kiss.

"Evelyn, child, what has kept you so late?"

Evelyn threw off her hat, pushed back her nut-brown tresses, disordered by her walk, and sank wearily into a seat.

"I will tell you, mamma, when I have had a cup of tea," she said, smiling, with an effort at cheerfulness. "At present I am almost too tired and hungry to talk."

The little tea-table was al[illegible] set, with its simple but daintily-s[illegible] past; yet, despite her declara[illegible] lyn did little justice to th[illegible] and home-made jam set b[illegible]

"Try the poached [illegible] sister said. "They [illegible] Speckles' own, laid to[illegible] you. And if anything [illegible] you, dear—I dare[illegible] rudeness of that [illegible] —why, forget all [illegible] worth thinking [illegible]

"Ah, but this time it is a matter not so easily forgotten!" replied Evelyn, with a sigh. "Mamma, dear, I am sorry to have such bad news, but I have lost my engagement with the McMullens."

Her lips trembled, despite her effort to smile. Mrs. Chase set down the cup which she was raising to her lips, and Jessie exclaimed, impulsively:

"Oh, Evie, how unfortunate! What shall we do now?"

"We must do our best. Perhaps give up the cottage and take lodgings, and dispense as far as possible with Mrs. Burns' service. Shall we, mamma?"

"Whatever we are compelled to do, my dear," her mother replied, quietly, "we will trust in the heavenly Father, who has never forsaken us since your earthly one was taken away."

There was a moment's silence. The hearts of all were heavy, yet each endeavored for sake of the others to appear cheerful and hopeful. Evelyn's music and drawing lessons had been, since the death of the poor rector, her father, no inconsiderable item in the scanty means of the little family, and they knew that they must sorely feel the loss of her hitherto lucrative engagement.

"The Maplesons have brought with them a first-clsss music-teacher," Evelyn continued; "and Mrs. McMullen fancies that she can succeed in obtaining for her girls a share in his instructions, so she has given me a timely dismissal."

"I daresay Mrs. McMullen's ambition is more to become intimate with the Maplesons than to secure a musical education for her daughters," Jessie said, somewhat saucily.

"My dear!" said the mother, reprovingly.

Jessie laughed.

"I don't mean to be ill-natured, mamma: but I can't admire those McMullens, with their purse-proud airs. And I am glad that the Maplesons have come to live at the Hall, for they are from your part of the country and knew your family; and if Mrs. Mapleson is a real lady, she will recognize you as such, without assuming any vulgar airs of patronage, like the McMullens."

Evelyn had been searching in her pocket for some article, which she now drew forth, together with the sixpence which she had picked up, and until now forgotten.

"I think I have here something belonging to little Ellen Burns," she said. "I found it on the road, just after passing her."

Jessie took the coin in her hand.

"I don't think it is a child's toy," she said. "Here are some mysterious marks upon it, and the date is quite old. 'C. S., 1770,'" she read, slowly. "It may be some charm or amulet, or perhaps a lover's token. Isn't there a superstition about a crooked sixpence?"

"I think," said Mrs. Chase, examining it, "that it must be what is called a 'lucky sixpence.' I remember that my old nurse used to wear one. The superstition is that it brings good fortune to the owner or finder."

"Then, mamma, the charm seems reversed in my case," Evelyn said, with a rather sad smile.

"Never mind," said Jessie, cheerfully. "Remember that your trouble came before you found the sixpence, and this was no doubt sent by some good fairy as a comfort and encouragement. Something good is going to happen to you, Evie, I am sure," she added, laughing; "or perhaps to us all—who knows?"

Jessie thought this prediction verified when, some days thereafter, Mrs. Mapleson drove over to see her mother, and invited them all to a quiet little evening party—"a musical tea," Jessie called it.

The widow declined for herself, but was glad to have Evelyn and Jessie go. There was some difficulty as regarded the question of dress, but with the help of a store of fine old muslin and lace, relics of better days, and some white roses from the garden, the two girls appeared tastefully and becomingly attired.

The Misses McMullen, indeed, visibly sneered, and one of them even remarked that "the Chase girls" looked charmingly like dairy-maids at a masked ball.

But there were others among the guests who cast many a glance of admiration at the two sisters—Jessie so bright and piquant, and Evelyn with her sweet, girlish grace and dignity—and knowing their history, thought what a pity it was that poverty and misfortune should have doomed them to so obscure a life.

"The Chases come of good blood," said Mrs. Mapleson's aunt, the old Scotch dowager, Lady Lumley, who made a boast of speaking her mind freely. "Their father, though only a country parson, was a gentleman, and their mother a lady born. But as to that odious Madame McMullen and her overdressed, underbred daughters, nobody knows who *they* are. And fancy that Blanche McMullen, with her large hands and red nose—fancy *her* setting her cap for my nephew, Mr. John Stuart!"

There was some brilliant music and singing in the course of the evening. Evelyn felt a little shy when it came to her turn, for her voice, though clear and sweet, was not powerful. Nevertheless she took her seat at the piano and sang one of her favorite pieces.

"My dear," said Lady Lumley, "with that voice and touch you ought to know some of our old Scotch songs. Will [illegible]sing 'Bonnie Dundee,' or 'My [illegible]s in the Highlands?' I haven't [illegible] them since I left my own home [illegible]rchy."

[illegible] herself loved the old Scottish melodies, and she n[illegible] sang "Bonnie Dundee," [illegible] lady's great d[illegible] light.

"Thank you, my [illegible]" she said, as Evelyn gave place to Miss McMullen, who had volunteered an Italian *bravura*. "I am sure you sing most beautifully. How I wish that my nephew, John Stuart, were here to enjoy it! He does so delight in those old Highland songs."

"My dear aunt, I have returned just in time to enjoy the pleasure," said a voice which caused Evelyn to start, with a confused thought of rippling water and fragrant hawthorn blossoms, and of dark eyes whose look had haunted her ever since that [illegible] on the bridge.

And now, glancing up, she met the same eyes bent upon her, as Lady Lumley introduced, "My nephew, Mr. John Stuart;" and, blushing with more embarrassment than she had ever in her life experienced on so simple an occasion, she allowed him to lead her to a seat.

When Miss McMullen, having finished her brilliant Italian piece, turned to inquire of Mr. Stuart whether she should sing "Will you come to the hills, my Mary?" or "My Highland Laddie, O!" she beheld that unappreciative Highland Laddie in a distant part of the room, absorbed in what was evidently a very interesting conversation with her little sister's former music-teacher, Miss Chase.

"I never imagined she was such an artful piece," she whispered, to her mother, an hour later. "Only see how she manages to almost monopolize him, and all the while pretending to look so innocent and unconscious. It's disgusting!"

A while later, with another effort to ingratiate herself with Mr. Stuart and his aunt, she sang:

"There's nae luck about the house,
Since Jamie's awa'."

"Your country people think a great deal of luck, Mr. Stuart," remarked a lady, like himself a guest in the house. "Do you believe in it, may I ask?"

At the simple question, a sort of shadow passed over his face; but he answered, readily:

"I certainly ought to believe in it, considering how assiduously the doctrine was impressed upon my youthful mind by my grandmother and my nurse. Those excellent women believed in it almost as firmly as in their religion; and indeed, some things have occurred in our family which might convince many, not too skeptically inclined, that there is such a thing as luck."

"Would you mind telling us about it?"

"I fear I should not interest you. But, until recently, there has been in my possession a sort of charm, or talisman, solemnly presented me by my grandmother, and which she assured me had, for more than a century, brought good-luck to its successive owners in our family."

"How delightful! A jewel, wasn't it?"

"No; only a silver sixpence! The story runs that once upon a time it was found upon the person of an ancestor of mine, just after a battle, bruised and doubled up, having broken the force of a bullet which must otherwise have proven fatal. From that time the crooked sixpence was preserved as a talisman, and eventually came into my possession, after having, according to family tradition, worked various wonders in the way of bringing good-luck to the owner—especially in love affairs."

"And you still have it?"

"Unfortunately, no. It is not a week since I lost it, though how or where I cannot imagine. I regret it very much, partly because it was the gift of my kind kinswoman, and partly"—he hesitated—"partly, I confess, because I am just sufficiently superstitious to fear that it may be ominous of ill-luck at a time when I am particularly desirous of meeting with good-fortune."

Evelyn had heard all this. So the crooked sixpence which she had found was the property of that handsome stranger who had given her the spray of hawthorn. He had lost his luck and she had found it.

Jessie's prediction occurred to her, and she felt herself blushing at the new and strange thrill which the thought awakened in her heart.

On the day following, Mr. John Stuart and his aunt called at the little cottage with the gothic portico.

Jessie felt a little mortified that they should behold the homeliness of their surroundings; but Evelyn and her mother received them with as much dignity and self-possession as though the cottage had been a stately hall, like that old, ancestral mansion which somebody had told them belonged to John Stuart, away in one of the loveliest districts in Scotland.

"I hardly think he will visit us again," Jessie said, "now that he has spied out the nakedness of the land and discovered how miserably poo[illegible] are. Mamma may talk of being co[illegible]nt—and she is always right, of cour[illegible] but it is hard to be young and pretty [illegible]u need not smile, Evie—and feel o[illegible]lves deprived of a thousand pleas[illegible] and advantages, all for want of a lit[illegible] money."

Jessie was mistaken as re[illegible]ded Mr. Stuart. He did come again [illegible]d came so often that the McMullen[illegible] who had recently taken to driving in [illegible]t direction, declared that "they did[illegible]t know what to make of it;" an[illegible] that Mrs. Chase "ought to know bet[illegible] than to allow of such an open flirtati[illegible] with her daughter."

One day, when Evelyn ha[illegible]en singing Scottish songs in the l[illegible]e parlor, she turned round on the pian[illegible] and said, half shyly:

"Mr. Stuart, I overheard you, at the hall, telling Mrs. Herries of your having lost something—an 'amulet,' you called it—a crooked sixpence."

"Yes," he answered, with a smile; "and, though *only* a crooked sixpence, I am sorry to have lost it. Do you know," he added, more gravely, "that my 'luck' deserted me in almost the very hour in which I first met you? When I saw you on the bridge that day I had just lost my crooked sixpence."

"Suppose," she said, still shyly—"suppose that *I* found your 'luck'?"

"You cannot mean it, surely?" he said, eagerly.

She held the little battered coin before his eyes.

"I will give it back to you, with the wish that you may never lose it again," she said, playfully.

He grasped not only the little silver token, but the hand which offered it.

"Evelyn, will you not make the gift complete? Shall not my little talisman be indeed, to me a token of good fortune? an assurance of the blessing which I covet beyond any that the world can give?"

What her answer was we are not prepared to say, but she did not withdraw her hand; and when, an hour after, Jessie entered the room, thinking that the visitor must by this time have departed, she saw two figures seated very near each other in the twilight, and heard Mr. Stuart's voice, saying:

"Our 'talisman' shall henceforth belong to us both, my dearest, and bring us equal 'good luck.'"

Jessie retired rather hastily, under pretense of sending lights—which, by the way, she forgot to do. But that evening the mother and daughters, seated together in a close group, talked together in a low tone of subdued happiness; and Jessie, kissing her sister's flushed cheek, said:

"Did I not tell you, Evie, that some good luck was about to happen to you and to us all? I shall hereafter believe in crooked sixpences."

Art in Home Decoration.

Large towels have borders worked in Roman patterns.

Pretty window curtains are made of cheese cloth and edged with lace.

Plush draperies are as effective painted in oil as embroidered. A very handsome design for a screen is a dark-blue plush decorated with apple blossoms.

Piles of cushions, luxurious divans, sofas and easy chairs, into which one can sink and rest, are the rule, and the Queen Anne seats are wisely kept for show.

Oblong mirrors are now hung crosswise. They have plain wood frames four inches deep, sloping backward, and are painted in different ways. Snowballs, sprays of golden rod, yellow crocuses, peacocks' feathers and boughs, on which perch snowbirds, are pretty designs for the frames. Some are covered with bright plush, and on one corner is placed a band of old gold.

New mantel mirrors are square, with smooth frame.

Large wooden Russian bowls are used to hold nuts or fruit.

Window lambrequins are heavily trimmed with wide borders of plush.

Scrim curtains edged with antique lace are more stylish than expensive lace ones.

Handsome carpets have olive-colored grounds, with small bright figures on them.

Porcelain table ornaments are in imitation of open fans, and the cupids standing or disporting on them, make them charming enough.

A screen on exhibition in New York is hand-painted on the natural wood, with woodbine, blossoming lilac branches, and hollyhocks on the three separate panels.

Some of the new and handsome doors to cabinets have panels used as inserted pieces, painted in the Persian style. The foundation is a hard and fine-grained wood made as smooth as possible, and covered with a black grounding on which a Mosaic of colors, quaint scrolls and arabesques, flowers of beautiful hues, or birds of wonderful plumage are placed with all the grouping of Persian art.

Flowers at Eight Times Their Weight in Gold.

The cut-flower business, another phase of horticulture, is perhaps greater in the United States than in any other part of the world. Certainly the use of cut flowers in New York for bouquets, baskets and other designs is far greater than in either London or Paris, and the taste shown in their arrangement here is vastly superior. It is estimated that $3,000,000 were paid for cut-flowers in 1880, one-third of which was for rosebuds. Immense glass structures are erected in the suburbs for the special purpose of growing cut-flowers to supply the bouquet-makers of the city. Not less than twenty acres of glass surface is devoted to the purpose of forcing roses alone, during the winter months. At some seasons the prices paid for these forced rosebuds are perfectly astounding. One grower, of Madison, New Jersey, took into New York three hundred buds of the crimson rose known as "General Jacqueminot," for which he received, at wholesale, $300, and which, no doubt, were retailed at $1.50 to $2 each. A flower dealer in Fourteenth street, a few days before Christmas, received the only four of this same variety of rose that were offered in the city, and found a customer for them at $60, or $15 apiece, or eight times the value of their weight in gold.—*Peter Henderson in Scribner.*

Every Girl Her Own Beau.

It will be owned that the coming young woman has taken a long stride in advance—if so forcible a figure is admissible in speaking of a sex which of course does not stride—when she feels herself at liberty to take her larks abroad without the inevitable young man to guide, protect and pay her scot. This is the very thing that Vassar college has been teaching its fair girl students to do, and from the testimony the quick-witted young women don't need much teaching. The New York papers Saturday were abreeze with a delicious idyl of the jaunt of two of the classes up in the mountains. The junior class girls—sweet fifteen, it may be supposed—took it into their charming heads to give the senior class—sweet seventeen, let it be supposed—a surprise picnic of a novel sort.

Destination and details were kept profound secrets. The cock's shrill clarion at five o'clock on Friday morning was to be the signal for the feminine merry-makers to keep the tryst. Even in so small a detail as this you see the advantage of being independent of the young man. How many youths could have been depended on to meet the maidens at such an hour? Whoever heard of a college boy up with the sun, unless under certain contingencies which would tend to debar him from setting out as escort at that pure and poetic hour? But the girls went up with shining eyes, rosy cheeks and the spirit of the mothers of Israel in them. What a fascinating picture it suggests! Bevies of well-shod metatarsal terminations dancing over the dew; no necessity for the evasions and subterfuges inevitable when impatient youth stands by, nagging and querulous; no covert sneers about the length of time taken to adjust refractory "bangs;" no disaster to be apprehended from recalcitrant curl papers; no anguish over the better fortune of a rival in securing the sweetest young man of the company!

Superior to all the trivial heart-burnings that beset the picnic engineered by the male, the Vassar girls set out in force. A boat was waiting on the Hudson. The senior girls, torn by a wild curiosity to learn their destination, were held in expectation until the boat drew up in a sylvan bay. The party were thence transported to the railroad, and after an hour's ride took stages to ascend the mountain. At the summit a new hotel starting for the season was ready to receive this vision of fair girlhood, where baked meats and the joys of the flesh had been provided by these female merrymakers. Then there were poetry and speeches and kissing, that discomposed no one and shocked no susceptibilities. Not a man marred the serene joy of the reunion from the beginning to the end, save the host, who appeared furtively on the scene of the festivities to direct the banquet.

What could be more rational than this? It is a moral education in itself, the indoctrinating of the feminine youth of the land with the idea that a coat-sleeve is not essential to the blooming beauty who has a notion to take her walks out of the beaten path. Of old it was the notion that sex ruled in pleasure as in business; that the joys of life were stripped of their keenest zest without the dominating presence of a moustache to serve as the complete fulfilment of the ecstacy of osculation. No grave community, interested in the development of girlhood, but will look with devout joy upon this early emancipation of the fairy sisterhood from the tyranny of coat-sleeves, moustaches and "escort." —*Philadelphia Times.*

Matrimonial Errors.

The man and woman who marry together are bound for life by a solemn compact. If you strip marriage of all its sentimental language what is it but a simple binding arrangement between two persons for the mutual advantage of each other? Apart from the natural instinct that brings the sexes together, the one is looking for a helpmeet to add to his comforts, and the other for some one to sustain and protect her through life. With these they take all the attendant risks, and trusting in the love they bear to one another, take each other for better for worse. Unfortunately, the warmth of the honeymoon cannot always be maintained; and abiding love must be based on mutual respect. Nothing can be more trying to love than the little faults which crop out after marriage; but as, in a most literal sense we must take one another for better for worse, we should try to look as kindly and leniently on those traits that give us annoyance as we can, knowing that the better we are able to bear them, and the less we are able to think upon them, the better will it be for our peace of mind and happiness. Many marriages have turned out unhappily because of the lack of this mutual forbearance. Young people think they have made a mistake in marriage, when the mistake is only in their own behavior since they were married. Good husbands make good wives, and good wives make good husbands; and the scolding or intemperate or slatternly partner often has but himself to blame for the misery that clouds the life and desolates the home. Multitudes who feel that their marriage was a mistake, and who make their existence a life-long misery, might, by a little self-denial and forbearance, and gentleness, and old-time courtesy, make their home brighten like the gates of Eden, and bring back again the old love that blessed the happy golden days gone by.

"Are you mate of this ship?" said a newly-arrived passenger to the cook. "No, sir; I am the man that cooks the mate!" said the Hibernian.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

"Fritz" Emmett says he has signed the pledge hundreds of times. It's no use, however. "All signs fail in 'dry' weather."

A Kentucky boy while playing base ball, Sunday, was struck by lightning. He was very fortunate that it wasn't the ball that hit him.

A Frenchman in business here advertises that he has a "chasm" for an apprentice. He had looked up the word "opening" in the dictionary.

The Philadelphia *News* says: The demand for planks two inches thick is now very active. They are to be sawed into bottoms for strawberry boxes.

Ingersoll draws larger crowds than any other lecturer, and the Louisville *Courier-Journal* says he will bob up serenely with the largest crowd hereafter.

Princess Stephanie going into hysterics at her wedding over an American "masher" is a little the thinnest of all the thin things of the day. Roscoe Conkling hasn't been near Vienna.

Salvini presented his "Macbeth" dagger to his friendly critic of the Traveler, and the scribe's fellow-workers now address him with great respect, for they know it is a dagger that they see before them.

The man said he couldn't hire the applicant. Said the young man: "I can prove that I'm perfectly honest." "Yes, I know," said the other. "That's the trouble. You see I'm in the coal business."

Bro. Gardner's Lime-Kiln Club.

"When a man axes me who libs nex' doah," began the old man as the triangle sounded to order, "I answer him Brown or Jones or White, or whatever de name may be, but when he goes beyand dat an' axes what salary de man airns, how often his wife changes bonnets an' how dey make seben dollars a week go furder dan I kin fo'teen, I become a clam. I has no business to know, an' when I do know I won't tell. I used to have some curiosity in dis direcshun, but I has got ober it of late y'ars. When I know dat a sartin man, receivin' a salary of $12 per week, kin give parties, hire carriages an' dress his wife in silks, it makes me glum; dat is, it used to. I used to wonder why I couldn't do de same thing on de same money, but I nebber could. When de ole woman used to tell me dat sartin women had new silks, new hats, new close an' new shoes once a month de y'ar roun', an' we havin' to lib clus on de same money, it made me mad; dat is, it used to. When I saw men who owed for deir washin' struttin' aroun' like lords, while I had to work seben days in a week an' pay my debts, I felt like smashin' frew de sidewalk. But I has got ober all dis. When I meet a woman who kin dress like a banker's wife on de $10 or $12 per week paid her husband, I doan' 'low myself to eben fink about it. When I see a man buyin' twenty-five cent cigars, sportin' a cane and takin' champagne, while his chillen at home am bar'fut, I try to believe dat it am all right. When a lady wid $300 worf of close on axes me to do a job of whitewashin' in a parlor whar' de bes' pictur's come from a tea store an' de bes' cha'r am under chattel mortgage, I doan' stop to wonder who she thinks she am foolin'. Nayburs ob mine who owe all de butchers widin a circle of a mile kin pay fo' dollahs cash fur a libery rig on Sunday an' I shan't criticize. Wives may go shoppin' ebery day in de week an' gin parties ebery night, an' my ole woman will keep de cabin jist de same. Since we quit wonderin' an' speculatin' ober dese fings we feel much better. We know fur a fact jist how we kin make money go. If odder folks kin lib like lords on a salary of $600 a y'ar it's a streak of good luck an' none of our bizness. My advice to you am to let such fings pass. Dey are mysteries wid which we have no bizness, an, de mo' you ponder ober dem de less you will enjoy what you have honestly airned by ha'd work an' saved by good company."—*Detroit Free Press.*

The Age of the Earth.

The age of the earth is placed by some at five hundred million years, by others one hundred million years; and still others, of later time, among them the Duke of Argyll, place it at ten million years. None place it lower than ten millions, knowing what processess have been gone through. Other planets go through the same process. The reason that other planets differ so much from the earth is that they are in a so much earlier or later stage of existence. The earth must become old. Newton surmised, although he could give no reason for it, that the earth would at one time lose all its water and become perfectly dry. Since then it has been found that Newton was correct. As the earth keeps cooling it will become porous, and great cavities will be formed in the interior, which will take in the water. It is estimated that this process is now in progress, so far that the water diminishes at about the rate of the thickness of a sheet of writing paper each year. At this rate in 6,000,000 years the water will have sunk a mile, and in 15,000,000 years every trace of water will have disappeared from the face of the globe. The nitrogen and oxygen in the atmosphere are alsa diminishing all the time. It is an inappreciable degree, but the time will come when the air be so thin that no creatures we know could breathe it and live; the time will come when the world cannot support life. That will be the period of old age, and then will come death.—*Prof. R. C. Proctor.*