



RAIL-ROAD SONG.

How gallantly we ride
O'er the smooth and even rail,
Flying onward as though tied
To a fire-breathed dragon's tail!
And he springs along the way
Like a free and eager steed,
And, though laboring all the day
Neither fool nor rest doth need—
"Kiss, kiss,"—"drink"—his only cry—
"Give me water—I am dry."
O'er the viaduct we fly,
And it trembles as we go,
And the travellers we espy
Toiling slowly down below;
Then through overhanging rocks
With an arrow's speed we dash,
And we fright the gazing flocks
With the echo and the crash,
"Kiss—kiss," along we fly,
Like the eagle through the sky.

SUBSTITUTE FOR WATER.

In the West Indies, and other hot countries of South America, where, rain sometimes does not fall for a great length of time, a kind of plant called the *Wild-pine* grows upon the branches of the trees, and also on the bank of the trunk. It has hollow or bag-like leaves, so formed as to make little reservoirs of water the rain falling into them through channels which close at the top when full and prevent evaporating. The seed of this useful plant has small floating threads, by which, when carried through the air, it catches any tree in the way, and falls on it and grows.—Wherever it takes root though on the under side of a bough, it grows straight upwards, otherwise the leaves would not hold water. It holds in one leaf from a pint to a quart, and although it must be of great use to the trees it grows on, to birds and other animals its use is even greater. "When we find these pines?"

Dampier, the famous navigator "we stick our knives into the leaves just above the root, and the water gushing out, we catch it in our hats, as I myself have frequently done to my great relief."

Another tree, called the *Water-with* in Jamaica has similar uses: it is like a vine in size and shape, and though growing in parched districts, is yet so full of clear sap or water, that, by cutting a piece two or three yards long, and merely holding it to the mouth, a plentiful draught is obtained. In the East there is a plant somewhat of the same kind, called the *Bajoco*, which grows near other trees and twines around them, with its end hanging downwards, but so full of juice, that on cutting it, a good stream of water spouts from it; and this is only by the stalk touching the tree so closely must refresh it, but affords a supply to animals, and to the weary herdsmen on the mountains. Another plant, the *Nepenthes Disillatoria*, is found in the same regions, with a yet more singular construction. It has natural mugs or tankards hanging from its leaves, and holding each from a pint to a quart of very pure water. Two singular provisions are to be marked in this vegetable. There grows over the mouth of the tankard, a leaf nearly in size and shape, like a lid or cover, which prevents evaporation from the sun's rays; and the water is perfectly sweet and clear, although the ground in which the plant grows is a marsh of the most muddy and unwholesome kind. The process of vegetation filtrates or distils the liquid, so as to produce, from the worst, the purest water. The *Palo de Vica*, or cow-tree, grows in South America, upon the most dry and rocky soil and in a climate where for months not a drop of rain falls. On piercing the trunk, however, a sweet and nourishing milk is obtained, which the natives gladly receive in bowls. If some plants thus furnish drink, where it might least be expected, others prepare, as it were, in the desert, the food of man in abundance. A single *Tupioea* tree is said to afford, from its pith, the whole sustenance of several men for a season.

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TRIPLETS, &c.

BY A CORRESPONDENT.
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What a wonderful labyrinth is Boston! There is nothing straight about it—not a right angle, I do believe!—though as Phil (he's a Philadelphian, by the way,) observes, it is "right tangled enough, and quite without a parallel!" Poor Phil: he has no "notion" of mouse traps, or perpetual motions—wheel within wheel—but comes reeling home ten times a day, "dizzy as a fly within a drum," to unwind his yarn, (street yarn) "make an observation," and proceed upon his "winding way" again. By the by, it would be a curious subject to enquire into

the effects of crooked ways upon character: we all know how much the straightforwardness and right-angularity of a certain city, that shall be nameless, has to do with the "march of mind" of its upright sons—stiff, cold and perpendicular!—and why may not the high-ways, by-ways—ups and downs,—turns and re-turns, [one good turn deserves another,] the broad-ways and narrow-ways of certain other nameless city ways—shuns, with the twistiness of their wise fathers! "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will 'GO IT,'" says Solomon—I say—nothing." Nevertheless, this much I must say for the Literary Emporium, "I like it!" and if they will only fence out their poisonous east winds, and deed me a six feet by two lot at Mount Auburn, I'll make myself a Boston boy again forthwith. To return.—The architectural taste of the Bostonians is exquisite; and a morning walk in any of their streets is a perpetual surprise of picturesque—every turn forcing some new beauty upon the eye, or new-lighting the old; till they seem no longer familiar. The soft gray scintilla, always cool, and harmonious to the sense; the ever gay shops, and their glittering crowd of gazers; the far-reaching bridges, threading the busy bay, and the "silver shield of the sea" shining in the horizon, and blending, oh, so softly with the sky above. Reader, I wish, I was a painter, for your sake—for then should these pen and ink-drawings "blush in colours not their own!"

The scenery about Boston is the prettiest possible, (the Wissahicon and thereabout always excepted,) and a drive through Dorchester, Brookline, Jamaica Plains, Cambridge, &c. is exquisite! the worst of it is, that no one seems to feel how fine it is, or to perceive

"That this fair scene, unsought by human eye,
Wasteth like light when clouds obscure the sky."

We met not a solitary equestrian during the whole afternoon! These lazy omnibuses are ruining the health, and therefore the happiness of the world!—There has been so little rain of late that all "green things look red,"—and even the "common" looks most uncommon common—and the mall, mangle its mal apropos little iron fence, [no comparison to that round Washington Square] is quite deserted by the fair—sweetsouls!—perhaps it is "unfashionable!"

A stranger may now and then see a troop of what appear to be children, creeping slowly round the frog pond or big elm, but as they laugh not, [it would not be lady-like!] neither do they roop, [it might mash their "stiffeners,"] he is soon undeceived: they have put away childish things—and are now serving as the "walking advertisements" of some fashionable boarding school. Growing up thus, and neglecting all physical culture, what wonder if the Boston belles are not (let go my hair) "pretty." They lack taste, style, symmetry; you see the oddest mixture of incongruous colours. (paired not matched) in a single dress—without regard to season, comfort, or the complexion of the wearer. A hurried, unsteady gait—the reverse of grace or self-respect;—[Phil swears there is not a pretty foot down east!] and a miserable mania for *little waists*,—that seems totally at war with the fine intellectual forehead every where observable, and the fair fame of the Literary Emporium. As to the "gentlemen," I say—nothing: to the pale, narrow-chested stooping *Peter Schenpiss*, who pulsates through Washington street, I should say, "go to a gymnasium—go!"

Thus much for *externals*—the day-light mood of things: by and by, as there are here "No close shuttered windows, that tell, Of the selfish, the distant, the frightened: Of the tortoise encased in his shell."

That the letters of man or the man of letters cannot open, I will seat you by a fire-side, and scan the little "warlike world within."

The "Lions" here are such very tame animals that they are hardly worth the hunting;—I will not worry you with their anatomy.

Visited the picture galleries yesterday—the Athenæum is not particularly attractive this year, and a less number of tickets than usual have consequently been sold. Still between two and three thousand season tickets, and a crowd of visitors, indicated no lack of "patronage." The old masters still occupy the sides of the room with their "glorious obscurities," and hidden excellencies. Trumbull's best—the (*sortie*) is as good as ever—and West's *Leary*, (worth a dozen Pale Horses,) holds its own in my affections. Neagle's "Lyon" and Sully's "Perkins," still grace the walls—but I see nothing new from the pencil of either—what are they about! The Landscapes by the young masters are only so so—trees produced by pitching hay into a stubble,

and water, made nobody know how, are not particularly refreshing. One or two portraits were very good—one by young Shelby, (now in Paris) first-rate—there is an air of ease, and a cool, quiet colouring, worthy of all praise. As no one pretends to study the *figure* in these benighted regions—Historical and cabinet Pictures are out of the question. Alexander has done well in one *head*: (the best is bad,) but by far the finest thing we saw was at his own room—was a Roman girl. It was no picture, but life itself!—Others were clever, [a gay laughing face of miss I—, wicked and witty, particularly so,] but *this*—I have not the organ of language, reader, so pray excuse the climax—it was "right nice."—Courteous reader!—thou who hast borne with me thus far without a frown—turning neither to the right, [to the column of deaths and marriages] nor to the left, [to the more *leaded* matter!] verily thou shalt have thy reward—wilt thou *fetch* a ride with one whose soul clingeth to thee, as clingeth a story teller to a button hole!

My gig is at the door,
And my hand is on the "V,"
And before I go—once more—
There's a welcome seat for thee!

And now for Mount Auburn—(all Boston goes there, sooner or later,) we will take the free bridge—Charlestown route. There, to the right, is Bunker's Hill, with its "Monument," looking for all the world like a snuff box diable upon a green pumpkin. Charlestown is nothing particular, Yonder is the hill where the "most intellectual people on earth" set fire to the convent, "just for fun!" Its scorched walls still stand—and long may they—a "glorious monument" to our FREE institutions! Pretty houses these in Cambridge—and old Harvard amid its shadowy old walks—(when will people learn that *all trees* are beautiful!) looketh right venerable. And so this is the Mount!—and its still wooden granite gate way, ("the sham thing.") Ten, twenty, thirty carriages—plenty of company—and gay enough for the occasion, "considerin'." Beautiful!—what taste—what variety—the very store house of nature—and these quiet little pools—the mirrors of earth, and air, and sky—no storgus can reach them here. In these sheltered retreats one might well feel that he

"Could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away this life of care."

That the "Implore Pace" could not here be uttered in vain.

This "garden of graves" is the very loveliest of this lovely globe. But it must be seen—no description can convey a just impression, and it were useless to attempt it. The monuments are already quite numerous—some painfully interesting. Who can stand beside the tomb of Spurzheim, and not feel indeed that

The good die first, and they whose hearts
Are dry as summer dust, burn to the socket."

Yours, &c. Z. E. B.

OLD MAIDS.

The old maid looks upon her youthful desires and hopes as upon the memory of an intoxicating dream, filled with visions of happiness and unutterable delight, and which the waking realities of life have long since convicted her were indeed but visions. She looks abroad upon those who entered the career of existence with her, and she beholds a mingled picture of joy and woe. On the one hand—the emaciated cheek, the tottering step and the hollow and sunken eye, proclaim the victim of indulged happiness. On the other—the compressed lip, and the contracted brow speak of blighted affection, or dispised love. On a third—the young mother hangs over the couch of her first-born, and best loved—wearing heaven, with vain prayers, that the innocent sufferer may be spared to her dotting heart, till she is borne away frantic and insensible from the death-bed of her darling child. On another—she beholds love turned to the most inexplicable hatred, her friend converted into a fiend, the husband into a cruel and tyrannous master; or dark suspicion and unfounded jealousy riving both heart and brain, and rendering love a horrible curse—

"Oh jealousy—thou raging ill,
Why hast thou found in lovers' hearts!
Afflicting what thou canst not kill,
And poisoning Love himself with his own darts."

If she does not taste those delights which flow from happy marriage, (and there are many such,) when two individuals with moderate desires and virtuous and well-tempered wishes, combine to produce "one harmony of bliss," she invariably shows how correctly she estimates so delightful a consumption—for, where household harmony *does* reign, there may the oldmaid be found in all her glory, mingling sweet with sweet,

and her kind and affections expanding beneath its genial influence.—Domestic strife is a Tartarus from which she flies, it is a plague-spout, warning her to depart—but if a father or mother has reached the extreme verge of senility, there she may be seen hovering like a guardian angel; developing in this trying emergency all her treasured affections, and lavishing them on insensible or querulous old age, with all the vigour, the tenderness, and devotedness of a young bride, watching over the shattered health of an adored husband.

Dear amiabilities! can you wonder that you are kind nurses—or that you are fond of cats, dogs, parrots, and Chinese monsters! Is it not thus that you are forced to display your pent-up sensibilities? Something you must love—your hearts are overflowing with milk and honey; but mankind, blind to your amiable qualities, meet your advances, as if their most deadly enemies were making covert approaches to destroy their sanctuaries.

This is prejudice—fatal and perverse prejudice—and it is our task to display you in your natural colours; we will show you as beings to be loved and cherished; the screen that has separated you from the world shall be removed—you shall assume your place in society stainless and pure as you are, "*les soeurs de la charite*;" old and young shall welcome you, and henceforward, no tinge of shame shall steal over your cheeks at being greeted as old maids.

Does a voluntary old maid hear of some unhappy friend, whom the fates have unkindly driven to destitution, her innocent temper suggests no inquiries as to whether the sufferer is the victim of her own faults, or the faults of others; but she waxes upon her, relieves her condition, goes abroad into society, details her account of the unfortunate, and is met with exclamations of wonder and uplifted hands—and hears, to her dismay, a history of improprieties, and is lucky if she escape *invidios* herself. Again, some one of her early admirers, whom her dignity and pride of self had rejected, having married another less high-minded and chaste, has fallen into distress—a young family, a sick wife, a ruined fortune, and impending poverty threaten to crush him to the earth, and scatter his family as outcasts and miserables upon the cold and calculating world. She learns all this, visits the houses of woe, sees him who in the days of his prosperity deemed himself little less than a god, now grovelling in the dust, and embraces the entire family. The beautiful woman becomes a saint—she was worshipped once as a creature of clay, fitted for earthly love—she is worshipped now as a superior being, possessing angelic attributes. But, again, society upbraids her and imputes false motives to her actions. Base slander her motives are as pure as unsummed snow, and originate in the impulses of "the spirit of love, which exists in undiminished splendour within her."

"—To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue, with contemptuous words,
Against the sun-clad power of chastity,"

we throw down the gauntlet of moral defiance—and tell him to his teeth that he knows nothing of the "high mystery" of old-maidism.

"So dears to heaven is saintly chastity,
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lucky her,
Driving far off each thing of guilt and sin;
And in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear.
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants,
Begins to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the souls' essence,
Till all be made immortal."

Look, gentle reader, on this picture of an old maid. Acknowledge that thou hast done her great injustice in viewing her as a selfish, envious, ill-natured, affected, credulous, and curious creature, a fit object for mirth, a standing family jest, and having none of the finer sympathies which thou supposest to be locked up in thine own breast. Look upon her in future as one who has become freed from the grosser passions and influences of common mortality: and who year after year, is lifted nearer and nearer to angelic perfection.

THE FAMILY DINNER.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE IN VIENNA.

"I wish you would come and dine with me some time in a friendly way," said continually to me, a young man whom I used to meet at the coffee houses and at the theatres, and who fastened himself upon me in every place, offering me civilities which I did not feel much inclined to accept.—He was just such a personage as we see hundreds of every day; and therefore I shall not describe him more particularly,

lest my readers should fix upon some one of their acquaintance as the original of the portrait. "You must" said he, "come to my house, and be acquainted with my wife,—there are not ten like her in the whole world; and my children, too—though I say it who should not say it—such children as mine are real blessings. I must shew you how I live. I am the happiest master of a family alive, and a proper example for young men who don't like matrimony. Come and dine with me once. We shall treat you without ceremony, and give you only a family dinner; but I will answer for it, you will be pleased."

Although I am by no means averse to splendid tables, sumptuous viands, and numerous guests, yet there is nothing which I enjoy more than a quiet family dinner, particularly when invited by an old friend, for the purpose of having a little tranquil conversation. It is refreshing to the mind, to leave for a few hours the tumult of the great world, to be a transient partaker of the unostentatious pleasures of domestic intercourse—and in such circumstances, a glass of old Rhenish tastes better than the Bourdeaux, Sauterne, and Champagne at tables where I hear no conversation but that relative to the opera of yesterday, and see nothing but artificial faces, and still more artificial manners.

I met my above-mentioned friend in the street a few days ago. The moment he saw me he ran up to me, laid hold of my arm, and asked me where I was going. "To dinner," was my reply.—"Good! good!" replied he: "now I have caught you, and I shall not let you go; you must take a family dinner with me. It was in vain that I pleaded a prior invitation as an excuse—my too hospitable friend would not admit it, and I was obliged to follow. I consoled myself with the hope that perhaps I might fare better than I expected, and that my host might really have a pleasant wife, well behaved children, and a good table.

We reached the house, which was in the suburbs, and ascended to the third story.—As we went up stairs, we were greeted by the noise of children crying and fighting. "Ah!" said my conductor, laughing, "do you hear my little darlings! The poor sweet fellows are hungry, and have been waiting for me." Now, thought I, if the little darlings make as much noise during dinner, I shall have to repent my weakness.

We knocked: a thin, sallow-faced woman opened the door, and on seeing me, started back, with marks of no very agreeable surprise. "My dear," said my host, "this is Herr C—, my old friend whom I have so often mentioned to you—he is going to take his chance with us of a family dinner."—The lady's long visage became still longer at these words; she made me a courtesy which resembled a contortion of anger, and drew out, "Happy to see you," in so gloomy a tone, that it sounded very much like "I wish you were hanged." Nothing can be more disagreeable than to feel ourselves unwelcome in houses whither we came against our inclinations. I wished myself ten miles off; but my new acquaintance said "Now let us leave the mistress to make her preparations," and led me into an adjoining room, to shew me his dwelling. "I have not many apartments," continued he, perfectly self-satisfied, "but every thing is neat and orderly." I was then obliged to stoop to get into a cabinet, which two dirty little brats seemed to have been turning topsy-turvy. The floor and furniture were covered with snips of paper, knives, spoons, pictures, and toys of all kinds. "This is the only true happiness—to be a father!" said my host, while he cleared a chair to offer to me. "Hey, Charles! Louis! come and ask the gentleman how he does."—"I shant," said Charles, and the father whispered in my ears, "Full of spirit; quite a character.—Come to me directly," continued he to the boy, somewhat more severely. The boys laughed, and remained still. The father went and pulled them towards me by the ears, assuring me all the time of their obedience. "Now Charles, have you learned your lesson? repeat your fable. The boy muttered—

I was resolved one day to go,
To see the wild beast at the show,
And ran off directly to his play. "Very well," said the father; "Now it is your turn Louis. Ah! you shall see the boy's a genius: he says such things, they are quite surprising. Tell me, Louis, what is the greatest wonder in the world?" "A mince-pie!" answered the boy pertly. The father laughed long and loudly. "Did I not say so? you did not expect such a witty answer, did you? I shall bring him up to politics."

At last the pale-faced mistress thrust her head in at the door, squeaked out, "Dinner's ready!" and immediately shut the