The Leisure Hour.

A LITERARY AND FAMILY NEWS JOURNAL.

VOLUME I. OXFORD, N. C. SEPTEMBER 30, 1858. NUMBER 34.

From the Atlantic Monthly.

Contentment.

BY DR. O. W. HOLMES.

"Man wants but little here below."

Little I ask; my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone,
(A *very plain* brown stone will do,)
That I may call my own;—
And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;
Three courses are as good as ten;—
If Nature can subsist on three,
Thank Heaven for three. Amen!
I always thought cold victual nice;—
My *choice* would be vanilla ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock,—some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share;—
I only ask that Fortune send
A little more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,
And titles are but empty names;—
I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
But only near St. James;—
I'm very sure I should not care
To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire;
(Good, heavy silks are never dear;)—
I own perhaps I *might* desire
Some shawls of true cashmere,—
Some marrowy crapes of China silk,
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
So fast that folks must stop and stare;
An easy gait—two, forty-five—
Suits me: I do not care;—
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt*,
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
Titians and Raphaels three or four,—
I love so much their style and tone,—
One Turner, and no more
(A landscape—foreground golden dirt;
The sunshine painted with a squirt).

Of books but few,—some fifty score
For daily use, and bound for wear;
The rest upon an upper floor;—
Some *little* luxury *there*
Of red morocco's gilded gleam,
And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
Which others often show for pride,
I value for their power to please,
And selfish churls deride;—
One Stradivarius, I confess,
Two Meerschaums, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,
Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—
Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
But *all* must be of buhl?
Give grasping pomp its double share,—
I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
Nor long for Midas' golden touch;
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
I shall not miss them *much*,—
Too grateful for the blessing lent
Of simple tastes and mind content!

The Fall of the House of Usher.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

[CONCLUDED.]

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch—while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much, if not all of what I felt, was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room—of the dark and tattered draperies, which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and, at length, there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I up lifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, harkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognised it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped, with a gentle touch, at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes—an evidently restrained *hysteria* in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence—"you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life-like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this—yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars—nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not—you shall not behold this!" said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him, with a gentle violence, from the window to a seat. "These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement;—the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the "Mad Trist" of Sir Launcelot Canning; but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac, might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he harkened, or apparently harkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and, with blows, made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarummed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment, paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that, from some very remote portion of the mansion, there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten—

Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin;
Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win;

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement—for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed, as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had, during the last few minutes, taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast—yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea—for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:

"And now, the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now—to night—Etheldred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—"*Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell—the huge antique pannels to which the speaker pointed, threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the "*House of Usher.*"

Eloquence of the Old and New World.

What a pity it was thought when the art of painting or staining glass in the fashion of the middle ages was supposed to be lost. Mankind had known and had forgotten something. There are not many lost arts; but, if you believe old gentlemen, our fathers did certain things which we now do indifferently in a far more complete and satisfactory manner than we, their degenerate descendants, have been able to accomplish. There is that matter of Parliamentary speaking. We have always entertained shrewd doubts as to the virtue of the old traditions upon this subject. We fully admit that in our own times it would be almost impossible for much-enduring humanity to assist at a more dreary amusement than an ordinary debate—but was it so much better 60 years ago? Let us take the greatest traditional example of ancestral oratory. Suppose that we had assisted—as spectators of course—at a duel *a l'outrance* between Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt at the beginning of the century, what kind of impression should we have received from the display? Would our breath have come short? Should we have been conscious that we were in the presence of the Anakim of intellect? We have a very strong conviction that we should have gone away with the impression that we had witnessed a dispute between a stout stuttering gentleman of kindly sympathies and considerable sense, and a man gifted with the assurance and the keenness of a practised advocate. Edmund Burke, as a speaker, was an awful bore; there is no possibility of disbelieving the universal concurrence of contemporary testimony upon that subject. Windham, we should be inclined to think, in the country-gentlemen line, did his work in a satisfactory manner, but then his opinions would not bear a strict investigation. Grattan perhaps, and Plunkett certainly, did supremely well, yet we more than doubt how far the first would have held his own in our time as anything more than a mere rhetorician. By all accounts Plunkett must have done well at any period of the world's history, and in any assembly, save, perhaps, an assembly of Quakers. He was born to talk with dignity, as Mademoiselle Taglion's mission was to dance with grace. Had he been left naked at twenty years of age on Salisbury Plain, he would have made such a speech to the first shepherd he met as would have induced him to lend Mr. Plunkett his greatcoat and conduct him to the cathedral town. He would then have made a speech to the landlord of the Red Lion, and have procured a dinner, and so gradually have talked his way up to the leadership of the House of Commons. He is, perhaps, a singular example of what can be effected by "speaking." With this one exception, we do not believe in the great Parliamentary celebrities of former days. Some were better, and some were worse, but the best of them, even including Mr. Canning, would scarcely have commanded much attention in our time, unless he had very materially altered his note. We do not, then, much believe in the decline of Parliamentary eloquence; it always was a very dull thing, and is a very dull thing now.

For the Leisure Hour.

The Beautiful.

[The following "graduating composition of a young lady" was sent to us for publication without her knowledge. We think that the reader, if judicious and tasteful, will agree with us that it is a highly creditable performance. It appears to us really superior to the productions of certain female writers whose names have been recorded in the "Cyclopædia of American Literature.—ED. LEISURE HOUR].

There is in the soul of man, an essential, inherent love of "THE BEAUTIFUL." When Adam awoke in the garden of Eden, bewildered by the novelty of being, and vainly wondering who, and whence, and where he was, a blaze of beauty burst on his enraptured vision. A subtle essence pervaded the air, irradiated the earth, tinted the flowers, and glistened in the pendulous dew-drops. God had said "Let there be light, and there was light." The gloomy reign of Chaos was ended; and darkness no longer mantled the face of the deep. The delicious fragrance of millions of as yet unsullied flowers, disclosed to the Lord of Eden, the possession of yet another faculty keenly alive, to other delightful manifestations of *the beautiful;* while the rapturous warbling of beautiful birds, and the mellow music of rippling waters, enchanted an ear, allured by Deity to delight alone in celestial harmonies. In that fair land of living streams and balmy groves, and never-fading flowers, eternal summer reigned, or else,

"The seasons four knit in one flowery band,
Were dancing ever."——

Regarding "THE BEAUTIFUL," in its largest sense as "that which pleases;" no one can even for instant doubt, that man's own happiness, was the end of his creation. Eden was beyond conception beautiful! Within its blest domain, there was no gloom, no death, no sorrow, no decay. Loving, and loved of God, no sin had as yet blackened the soul of man;—no deadly blight had fallen on that fair colony of heaven. Atlength alas! the subtle tempter came;—man yielded;—death entered; and all was lost, save that inherent "love of THE BEAUTIFUL." Planted there by the hand of Deity: nurtured, cherished, and developed in Eden, this immortal principle,—however deteriorated—survived the fall; the purest,—the brightest relic of the past;—the pledge and keepsake of his higher nature. *In this alone* is centered the hope of humanity, and *here alone* is based man's every endeavor, to regain his lost estate. Mercy appeased the wrath of Jehovah, and with "the promise," came the first gleam of hope to the guilty exiles. Yet Earth was cursed with the cure of barrenness. The rose was no longer thornless; and "the sweet sisterhood of flowers," retained but dim and shadowy tints of their primeval splendor. Their fragrance too had fled, or else was now but faintly perceptible. The deadly upas and the noxious Nightshade, grew rankly everywhere; and harmful weeds, unknown in Eden, flourished in wild luxuriance. The bright and "THE BEAUTIFUL," now required the most careful culture, and man was still doomed to see them pine in the sultry heat of summer, and die beneath the blighting touch of ruthless Winter. Alas! the *immortal* had put on *immortality.* Disease—decay—desolation and DEATH held carnival on earth. And yet, was the world a noble ruin. Much—oh! how much, of *beauty* yet lingered. How much of hope,—how much of promise—how much of glory still remained, to cheer the weary wanderers! The sun still shone;—the silvery moon and the scintillant stars yet glowed in the firmament;—the birds still sweetly sang, and the balmy flowers bloomed. Scattered on every hand, the eye of man discerned, sweet *souvenirs* of the golden past;—mute memorials of Paradise Lost:—pale, yet lovely—sad, yet hope-reviving. How many sweet assurances of attaining at last "a bright and a better land," did the eye of faith behold, as each returning spring, smiled earth into beauty, awoke the slumbering flowers, and clothed the leafless trees in liveries of green! While every leaf, and every bud, and every flower, were fraught with bitter memories, how full were they of immortal hopes! I have said that "the love of THE BEAUTIFUL," was inherent in man's nature; and hence how natural is it, that he should choose all that is pleasing and lovely, as emblematic of good,—of happiness,—of holiness, and of heaven; while using *the converse,*—the gloomy,—the ungainly, and the repulsive, as appropriate types of sin, and of sorrow,—of despair and of death? Never do we associate with the idea of hope, aught that is gloomy; or that of happiness, with aught that is displeasing. Light is everywhere typical of hope,—darkness of despair. The Bible—the revealed will of God, is replete with images the most alluring and enchanting, as symbolic of holiness; while those, the most loathsome and abhorent, are ever and only used, as expressive of guilt. It is said that man is an imitative creature, and this is abundantly proven by the existence of the mimetic arts,—poetry—painting—sculpture, and music in every age of the world. All of these had their common origin in "the love of THE BEAUTIFUL." The have everywhere necessarily arisen,—involuntarily emanated, *from this*—or from what is the same,—man's unflagging desire for the attainment of still greater happiness. It was this sleepless aspiratian after unknown *beauty,*—this ceaseless toil and endeavor *to create,*—"to give to the airy nothing a local habitation and a name," and thus to reveal to others yet nobler and diviner glimpses of ideal loveliness; which fired the hearts and tuned the harps of Homer and of Milton;—which blended the colors of Zeuxis, of Apelles, and of Raffælle; which gave to the world the matchless creations of Canova's chisel, and awoke the weird, unearthly symphonies, that slumbered in the souls of Handel, of Beethoven, and of Mozart. In every age—in every clime, this love of beauty, has bidden the marble breathe—the canvas glow, and the poet,—

"Who through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies,"—

to "wake to ecstacy the living lyre," and touch the world to tears! It was this which reared the magnificent temple of the Ephesian Diana—the beautiful Acropolis of Athens, and the stately Coliseum of Rome. But above all! it is "*this love of the beautiful,*" which bears the blood-stained banner of THE CROSS, triumphantly aloft; and gives to the religion of JESUS its redeeming power. Deprive the Bible of its central attraction—THE CROSS OF CALVARY—veil its supernal loveliness,—dim—darken, or dispel the unearthly glories which cluster there! or extinguiseh the light, of the love, of the beautiful, in the sin-polluted temple of the soul; and earth will be one vast charnel-house; a sky, without a sun;—a prayer without a hope—a grave,—without a resurrection! Upon the careful nurture, education, and developement of *this love of beauty*; depends the happiness and prosperity of individuals and of nations. The history of the world firmly establishes the truth, that the growth of any people in power, in refinement, and in civilization; is always heralded by the resuscitation of this principle among the masses. And wherever it lies dormant, ignorance, superstition, and barbarism prevail. *Poetry is either the creation, or the most beautiful expression of* "THE BEAUTIFUL." Thus, music may be styled "the poetry of *sound*"; it being the most beautiful expression of sound. And as no one can become a true poet, unless endowed, with the most enthusiastic adoration of "THE BEAUTIFUL." wherever visible; so neither can any one be either great or good, without a cordial, *emulative* appreciation of the great and good characteristics of others. Hence it would seem that to *this love of beauty, for beauty's sake alone;* the world is indebted for all its illustrious names. If *this* be true,—if upon the enlargement and gratification of this immortal instinct; man's true happiness, glory and greatness, *alone* is founded; need I, in conclusion, urge upon all in future, to cherish and to foster it?—to search for hidden treasure;—to seek still nobler attainments;—to overleap each frowning barrier, and onward—upward ever to press their arduous way, towards "things of beauty which are joys *forever*"? Nay! I will merely add in the language of the sweet singer Keats;

"*Beauty is truth, truth beauty*—that is all
Ye know on earth, *and all ye need to know.*"

The Author of Home, Sweet Home

A paragraph has been floating through the columns of the newspapers for several weeks past, announcing that the author of the touching and tender balled, 'Home, Sweet Home,' is Washington Irving. Soon after the first appearance of this statement, Mr. Irving, indignant that so foul an attempt should be made to strip this beautiful wreath of poetry from the dead brow of him who twined it, wrote a letter denying the authorship of the song, and re-affirming the fact that it was the composition of the gifted John Howard Payne.

The details of Mr. Payne's history are very interesting, and should be better known than they are to his countrymen. He was born in the city of New York, on the 9th of June, 1702, but was soon after taken to Boston, to which place his father removed to take charge of an educational establishment. His precocity displayed itself in various forms, and when, about the year 1805, he returned to New York, and entered a counting house, he amused himself by publishing a little periodical entitled "The Thespian Mirror." Some of his articles thus disseminated attracted so much attention, and argued so favorably in behalf of his ability, that a benevolent gentleman of that city, Mr. John B. Seaman, volunteered to defray the youth's expenses at Union College. The offer was gladly accepted, and Payne took his departure for Albany in a sloop, in company with his friend and kind adviser, the celebrated American novelist, Charles Brocken Brown. The bankruptcy of his father led young Payne to insist upon trying the stage as a means of support; and inasmuch as he had already displayed histrionic capacities, he obtained the consent of his parent and patron, and leaving college, made his first appearance at the Park Theatre as Young Norval, on the evening of February 24th, 1809, in his sixteenth year. The performance, like those of the whole engagement, was highly successful,—He subsequently fulfilled engagements in the principal cities of the United States. In January, 1813, he sailed to England, where, and in France, he remained until the year 1832, when he returned home. Of the varied scenes in which his life was passed on the island and on the continent, we have not the space to write. An account of the transaction which resulted in the composition that is sung wherever the English tongue is spoken, must not, however, be omitted.

When Charles Kemble became manager of Covent Garden, he, like his predecessors, applied to Payne for aid. Payne offered the new manager a number of manuscripts for 330l. The odd thirty was the value set opposite the piece afterwards called "Clari." Kemble closed with the offer, and produced this piece, which, at his request, an author had converted into a opera. It made the fortune of every one prominently connected with it, except the usual exception in these cases—the author. It gained for Miss M. Tree, (the oldest sister of Mrs. Chas. Kean,) who first sang "Home, Sweet Home," a wealthy husband, and filled the house and treasury. Upwards of one hundred thousand copies of the song were estimated, in 1832, to have been sold by the original publishers, whose proffits, within two years after it was issued, are said to have amouted to two thousand guineas.

After his return to the United States—Payne issued the prospectus of a periodical which was to appear simultaneously in England and the United States. The prospectus, of eight pages, was the only part of the work that ever saw the light. He subsequently became a contributor to the Democratic Review, and having twice received the appointment of consul to Tunis, died there in 1852. The song by which he is best known appeared originally as follows:

HOME, SWEET HOME.

'Mid pleasures and palaces, though we may roam,
Still, be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;
A charm from the skies seems to hallow it there,
Which go through the world, you'll not meet elsewhere.
Home, Home,
Sweet Home.
There's no place like home—
There's no place like home.
An exile from home, pleasure dazzles in vain,
Ah! give me my lovely thatched cottage again,
The birds singing sweetly, that came to my again;
The birds singing sweetly, that came to my call—
Give me them, and that peace of mind, dearer than all,
Home, home, &c.

Many songs, on whose composition far more time has been employed than was ever spent on this, have faded from recollection, not that they were destitute of merit, but because they failed to awaken that thrill of the heart which is the true measure of the power of music. How different the fate of this ballad! Written with nothing of the delights of home about him but the recollections of its homeliness, its cottage thatch, and its birds, the author strung the song with chords whose tones find a response in every heart that ever had or dreamed of a home. This simple lyric is known all over the world, and doubtless saluted its author's ears in far off Tunis. He once heard it sung by a fellow captive while in London prison, and sighed for the freedom of the birds of which he had written. In the parlors and *salons* of the great, the rich, and the fashionable; in the simple abode of the humble, the poor, and the afflicted; by the wayside, in the concert room, at midnight in the serenade, at morning and at evening in the street, and through open windows, is heard this song, which will be remembered as long as the language remains in which it was written. Still its author wanted the leg of mutton while London was dissolved in tears by his lyric; and he not only lost the twenty-five pounds which was to have been paid him for the copyright of the opera in which the song appeared on the twentieth night of its performance, but was not even complimented with a copy of his own ballad by the publisher.—*Troy Whig.*

Parliamentary Eloquence.

The article in another column from the London *Times*, on Parliamentary debates, is interesting only in so far as it illustrates a prevalent opinion. The intelligent reader will at once recognize, in these cursory remarks, a close resemblance, if not a perfect similarity, to views which he has frequently heard expressed in this conceited age. Far be it from our purpose to question the accuracy of the *Times'* commentary on the apparent decline of British Parliamentary eloquence. For aught we know the discussions of that august assembly may be the very quintescence of dullness and stupidity. Certainly the published proceedings, as we find them recorded in the London papers, are far from being enticing to the literary palate and would scarcely serve for specimens of oratorical style and diction, to be studied and imitated by the rising generation. Indeed, we do not remember to have read a Parliamentary speech within the last five years or more, which could furnish an excerpt worthy a place in the next edition of Dr. McGuffey's Eclectic Reader. But, what if that be so; does the simple fact of itself justify the inference of our English contemporary? Is it proper or reasonable to conclude from the prosy prolixity, somnolent stupidity and general insipidity of Parliamentary sayings and doings at this day, that there never has been any improvement upon the present uninviting round, and that all the old traditions of British eloquence are the fabulous creations of historical romance? Or must we adopt the other suggestion, and believe that the progress of civilization, the extended cultivation of the fine arts and the diffusion of intelligence, have rendered the present generation less susceptible to the exquisite touches of genuine oratory, have in a wonderful measure emancipated the common mind from its acknowledged bondage to the loftier developments of intellect, have, in fact, destroyed the race of *homines centurionni* and lifted the majority of mankind up to the same elevation of mental capacity?—Neither explanation is warranted by a philosophical analysis of the subject. No student of English history, nor, indeed, any person of ordinary information, will for a moment believe that the great examples of English eloquence are so many myths, or that their recorded exploits on the arena of public debate are the exagerated fantasies of fictitious story. They cannot be induced to think the less of CHATHAM's unapproachable excellence, because forsooth the Hon. Mr. GLADSTONE does not wield the *telum oratoris* with the same effect. They will not infer from Mr. BRIGHT's failure to carry the House by storm in a denunciation of British aggression on American commerce, that FOX's grand speech on the rejection of BONAPARTE's overtures, fell like Lethean dews upon a slumbering auditory. It is scarcely probable they will assent to the proposition that Mr. D'ISRAELI's flippant platitudes and pedantic conceits, while treating the matter of the Indian rebellion, afford a good illustration of the character and effect of SHERIDAN's magnificent philippic against WARREN HASTINGS, which all contemporary authority pronounces to have been eloquent beyond conception. Nor will they be at all inclined, because Mr. JAMES made about as good a speech in defence of Dr. BERNARD from the charge of conspiracy against the life of LOUIS NAPOLEON as we are in the habit of hearing from first-class advocates now-a-days, to depreciate MACINTOSH's "powerful and wonderful speech" for JEAN PELTIER, which a greater than he considered as one of the most splendid monuments of genius, literature and eloquence.

Respecting the second intimation, it may be true, as many shrewd foreign observers have remarked, that the English people are growing every day more deficient in enthusiasm and demonstrative susceptibility to the ordinary impulses and emotions of humanity. John Bull has long had a constitutional predisposition to stoical indifference, where his personal aggrandisement was not concerned, and perhaps his "shopkeeping" habits and huckstering propensities have aided not a little to stifle all generous sentiments in his breast and make him sublimely callous alike to the pathetic appealings and the terrific fulminations of matchless oratory. We do not question the plausibility of this statement; but, then, what bearing does it have upon the argument? While it does to some extent relieve the living generation of English orators from the general imputation of inefficiency, by referring the decadence of Parliamentary eloquence to another cause, yet it proves absolutely nothing as to the comparative excellence in this regard of different eras of British history. In any aspect of the case, the whole theory of the *Times* is erroneous, its reasoning fallacious, and its deductions contradictory of the obvious teachings of experience, and at variance with the established canons of the critical judgment. For all that, the article is extremely entertaining, chiefly on account of the novelty of the subject and the remarkably ingenious and felicitous manner of its treatment.—*Richmond South.*

LADIES who wear hoops in traveling should not make them more than two yards in diameter, as that is the greatest width with which they can be conveniently seated.