

The Torch-Light.

DAVIS & ROBINSON, Editors and Proprietors.

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE, THAT GIVES IT ALL ITS FLAVOR.

TERMS—\$250 per Annum, in Advance.

VOL. 2.

OXFORD, GRANVILLE COUNTY, N. C., TUESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 11, 1874.

NO. 11.

Nearer Home.

One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I'm nearer Home to-day
Than I've ever been before.

Nearer my Father's home,
Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the jasper sea.

Nearer the bound of life
Where we lay our burdens down;
Nearer leaving the Cross—
Nearer wearing the Crown.

But lying darkly between,
Winding down through the night,
Is the dim unknown stream,
Which leads me at last to the light.

Closer—closer—my steps
Come to the dark abyss;
Closer Death to my lips
Presses the awful chrym.

Father, perfect my trust;
Strengthen the might of my faith;
Let me feel when I stand, as I must,
On the Rock of the shore of death.

Let me feel, as I would when my feet
Are stepping over the brink;
For it may be I'm nearer home,
Nearer now than I think.

Married Over a Grave.

A MIDNIGHT SCENE IN A CEMETERY.

Among the arrivals on the 8:55 train from New York on the night of the 13th, were four persons, evidently strangers in Pittston, who formed a party by themselves. One was a lady, the others gentlemen. After alighting from the coach they passed into the ladies waiting-room in the depot building, while two of the gentlemen returned and made inquiries regarding the procurement of a carriage to convey them to West Pittston. In due time a carriage arrived, and the quartette entered it, and the driver, who had instructions where to go, proceeded in the direction of the bridge, which he crossed, and in a short time pulled up at the house of a prominent resident. The occupants of the carriage at once stepped out upon the walk, opened a little gate, proceeded to the front door and pulled the bell. The summons was answered by a servant, to whom a card was given, after which the party were shown into the parlors and left there while the servant went to announce their presence.

The driver of the coach outside, after being relieved of his load, did not return to the east side, but drove off to a neighboring livery stable, and placed his animals under shelter, but did not unharness them. After throwing robes over the animals, he found a seat by the side of a warm fire in the office, and chatted with a couple of stable boys who lodged therein.

In meantime the minutes flew by, and when the clock over the door was ticking within half an hour of midnight, a light step was heard outside, and there was a rap at the door. The driver responded with alacrity, and after a seconds conversation proceeded to his team, drew the robes from the horses, mounted the box and backed out of the stable, turning about when outside and going in the direction of the river. He had driven a short distance when he caught sight of a little group gathered at the intersection of Exeter and Wyoming streets. Here the carriage stopped, and the same quartette that had alighted from the 8:55 train at the depot entered and the horses were turned and started towards Wyoming.

In a very short time, for the animals were driven rapidly, that quiet city of the dead, Wyoming Cemetery, with its white shafts and crosses and slabs, gleamed in

view. As the main entrance was approached, the driver turned and halted directly in front of it. As soon as the carriage stopped, the four occupants got out, and passed slowly and solemnly to the gate, which admitted them, and preceded by two gentlemen, the lady following with the other and in this way the singular quartette moved forward among the tomb-bordered paths to a distant part of the cemetery. Here they halted directly in front of a grave, at the head of which stood a white marble cross. Presently the lady and her companion separated, each taking a position on opposite sides of the grave, and near the centre. They then joined hands. At the same time the two who were left took positions, one at the head and the other at the foot of the grave, each facing the other. At this moment the bell of a distant church tower tolled out the solemn hour of midnight, and almost before the reverberations had died away among the distant hills of Wyoming, a marriage ceremony had commenced above the quiet grave in the cemetery. The service was a short one: and a few moments later the four returned to the carriage, and were driven back to the place from whence they started.

Hand-Shaking.

How did the people get into the habit of shaking hands? The answer is not far to seek. In early and barbarous times, when every savage and semi-savage was his own lawgiver, judge, soldier, and policeman, and had to watch over his own safety in default of all other protection, two friends and acquaintances, or two strangers and acquaintances, when they chanced to meet offered each to the other the right hand—the hand alike of offence and defence—the hand that wields the sword and dagger, the club, the tomahawk, or other weapons of war. Each did this to show that the hand was empty, and that neither war nor treachery was intended. A man cannot well stab another while he is in the act of shaking hands with him, unless he is a double-dyed traitor and villain, and strives to aim a cowardly blow with the left while giving the right hand and pretending to be on good terms with his victim.

The custom of hand shaking prevails more or less among all civilized nations, and is the tacit avowal of friendship and goodwill—just as a kiss is of a warmer passion. Ladies, as every one must have remarked, seldom or never shake hands with the cordiality of gentlemen, unless it be with each other. The reason is obvious: It is for them to receive homage—not to give it. They cannot be expected to show to persons of the other sex a warmth of greeting which might be misinterpreted, unless such persons are closely related to them by family or affection; in which case hand-shaking is not needed, and the lips do more agreeable duty.

Adversity exasperates fools, dejects cowards, draws out the faculties of the wise, puts the modest to the necessity of trying their skill, awes the opulent and makes the idle industrious. Much may be said in favor of adversity, but the worst of it is, it has no friends.

Sam says his mother's comb resembles his father's fowling piece, both being used for hunting purposes.

A man displeased with the world is never satisfied with himself.

Reminiscences of a "Tramp."

BY A TYP.

Once upon a time—in the year 1866—when the din of war had passed away, and the people looked forward to a "better time coming," the farmers were tilling their ground and the bright gay butterfly flitted over the green sward and the humming bird culled the honey from the sweet, dew covered flowers.

Amid such scenes as these, our "tramp" started out to make a living. He went his ways across the rich hills and through the fertile valleys of North Carolina. He continues his route until he reaches the State of Arkansas—where our scene lies. Traveling in the rural districts of the above, our "tramp" sees a printing office, when the following ludicrous conversation ensues:

"Mr. Foreman, can you give a poor tyro some work?" says the tramp.

"We hav'n't an extra case, but you can get down upon the floor and chalk you out a case," says the foreman.

The tramp, "chalked" out a case, and commenced throwing in his type; when he finished, he called upon the foreman for his pay. The foreman says: "You see that barn over yonder?" pointing a few rods off. "Well call upon the editor and see what he can do for you."

The tramp did as directed, and the editor "went up on the loft" and brought down some *coon skins*, which he gave to the tramp.

The tramp asked the editor if that was the kind of *money* that he paid off with. The editor informed him that it was.

He takes the "coon skins" and goes to a saloon, thinking that he will get an opportunity of exchanging them for money.

Says the tramp to the saloon keeper:

"I want a drink, sir."

The saloon keeper supplied his demand.

The tramp gave him a "coon skin," and waited for his change.

The saloon keeper threw him out two mole skins, as his change.

The tramp left that portion of the country as soon as possible, saying it was too much trouble to carry change with him.

It is to be hoped that such is not the condition of the printing business in that part of the country now.

An Irishman's Letter.

Here is an Irish gentleman's letter to his son at college: "My dear Son: I write to send you two pair of my old breeches, that you may have a new coat made out of them. Also some new socks which your mother has just knit by cutting down some of mine. Your mother sends you ten dollars without my knowledge, and for fear you may not use it wisely, I have kept back half, and only send you five. Your mother and I are well, except that your sister has got the measles, which we think would spread among the other girls if Tom had not had it before, and he is the only one left. I hope you do honor to my teachings; if not you are an ass, and your mother and myself your affectionate parents. "J. D. McC."

An Irishman was seen killing a large snake. He had bruised his head, and there was no life save in his tail, which it is said does not die till the sun goes down. He was asked why he continued beating the reptile, when he replied, "Fa' th, I know the crater is dead, but I want to make him sensible of it."

The Playful Grasshopper.

A western paper gives the following account of the peculiarities of the playful grasshopper:

The grasshopper has indeed become a burden in Iowa and Illinois. He eats the crop, fence-rails and any old clothes laid around by accident. He comes up with his vast army of fellow-soldiers, going carelessly with the wind, settling down at evening spending a few days in a locality and leaving nothing behind when he departs. Gate-hinges he doesn't like but takes them as a matter of duty when they come in his way. Grindstones are particular contempt, but he eats a hole in them just to show that his abstinence is a matter of taste, not inability. He has been known when hard pressed to eat the shoes off a kicking mule; and it is recorded in Iowa that one flock settled in a graveyard and labored very effectually with a granite monument. A Des Moines paper narrates that a half dozen were sent to its office as samples, and got loose in the building during a moment of carelessness. About fifteen minutes after, one of them was heard shouting up the tube from the press room: "Hi boys, come down hyar! Here's the juiciest old set of cogwheels you ever saw!"

Seriously, they are becoming almost as great a pest as locusts of old. They strip a field of its growing crop in a night, leaving it bare as if swept by fire. Their numbers are not limited to a few armies; but they are residents of but few years, and may, for aught any one can tell, extend as rapidly as the Colorado potato bug, which started for the sea coast from the Rocky mountains only a few summers ago, and is now known from ocean to ocean, and already considering the wisdom of a trip to Europe. Between chinch bug, potato-bug, grasshopper, and the innumerable other members of the bug family, the farmer stands a fair chance of having to give up the field to superior numbers.

Left Her Pipe at Home.

Some time since a gentleman who lives in this county, says a Florida exchange, was traveling on a railway train that had but the passenger coach attached. The gentleman is addicted to the bad habit of smoking. He had but the one cigar at the time, and longed for a smoke, but hesitated, thinking that smoke might be unpleasant to a fascinating lady passenger—the only one on board. Finally he could endure the privation no longer, and taking out the cigar and reaching towards the seat where she sat, asked if she objected to smoking. "O no," said she, reaching for and taking the cigar, "I left my pipe at home."

Melting Away.

The Seneca tribe of Indians has "melted like the April snow," until it now consists of one old horse, one chief, and three gallons of whiskey. The chief, after drinking the whiskey, and singing pathetically, "O why does the white man follow my path?" will probably break the jug and depart for the happy hunting grounds, leaving but an old horse behind. We trust that we are not irreverent, hard-hearted, unromantic. We are sadly afraid, however, that our red brother is a legendary humbug. But, then, there are a good many such in literature, and they serve a purpose. They make novels, poetry, and history very pretty reading.

This fine fills out.

A Man of Few Words.

"Waiter!"
"Sir!" replied the waiter.

"Waiter, I am a man of few words, and I don't like to be continually ringing the bell and disturbing the house; I'll thank you to pay attention to what I say, and to remember that although there are three ways of doing things, I only like one way in those who have subordinate stations and minds. In the first place, bring me a glass of brandy and water (cold,) with a little sugar, and also a teaspoon; wipe down this table, throw some coals on the fire, and sweep down the hearth; bring me a couple of candles, pen, ink, and paper, some wafers, and a little sealing-wax; tell the hostler to take care of my horse, dress him well, stop his feet, and let me know when he is ready to feed; order the chambermaid to prepare me a good bed, take care that the sheets are well aired, and a glass of water in the room; send the boots with a pair of slippers that I can walk to the stable in; tell him I must have my boots cleaned and brought into the room to-night, and that I shall want to be called at five o'clock in the morning; ask your mistress what I can have for supper; tell her I should like a roast duck, or something of that sort; desire your master to step in, I want to ask him a few questions; send me the directory; change this five dollars' worth of stamps into bills, none of them to be worn; when does the mail arrive with the letters, and what time before midnight does the mail leave?—just tell me what time it is by the clock on the landing, and leave the room."

This portrait is from life.—
Rockland (Me.) Globe.

A Touching Story.

A drunkard who had run through his property returned one night to his unfinished home. He entered his empty hall. Anguish was gnawing at his heart-strings and language was inadequate to express his agony as he entered his wife's apartment, and there beheld the victim of his appetite, his loving wife and a darling child. Morose and sullen, he seated himself without a word; he could not speak; he could not look up then. The mother said to the little one by her side:

"Come, my dear, it is time to go to bed;" and that little baby, as usual knelt by her mother's lap, and gazing wistfully into the face of her suffering parent like a piece of chiseled statuary, slowly repeated her nightly orison.

When she had finished the child (but four years old) said to her mother:

"Dear mother, may I not offer one more prayer?"

"Yes, yes, my sweet pet, pray."

And she lifted up her tiny hands, closed her eyes and prayed:

"Oh, God, spare, oh spare my dear papa!"

That prayer was lifted with electric rapidity to the throne of God. It was heard on high; it was heard on earth. The response "Amen!" burst from the father's lips, and his heart of stone became a heart of flesh. Wife and child were both clasped to his bosom, and in penitence he said:

"My child, you have saved your father from a drunkard's grave, I'll sign the pledge."

"Poe's Raven?" exclaimed Mrs. Partington the other evening, as she threw down the paper. "I knew all poets were mad, but did not think they ever showed such violent exacerbation as that."

A Sell, Not a Sale.

Amiable shopkeepers deserve to be canonized. Here is the illustration of the trials to which they are constantly subjected. One midsummer day, *Aeolus* slept, and the thermometer stood in the nineties, a lady entered a store not a thousand miles off, and inquired for parasols. The obliging proprietor spread out before her samples of a large and varied stock.

"Have you any of this shade a size larger?" said the lady.

The size was procured.

"I think on the whole I prefer the size smaller."

The size smaller was presented.

"Have you any of this size a light shade of blue?"

The required shade was brought out.

"Haven't you any of this kind with a crooked handle?"

The shade with a crooked handle appeared.

"Have you any with the crooked handle not quite so heavy?" said the lady, and so continued her inquiries for every conceivable size, shade and weight possible in line of parasols.

After nearly an hour had been consumed, the fair shopper gathered up her handkerchief and moved for the door.

"Can't I sell you a parasol?" inquired the exhausted proprietor.

"Oh, dear, no," replied the lady, "I was merely inquiring the prices. I am going in mourning myself and have one for sale."

There has been a gun standing behind a cupboard in a Pine street residence for the past eight years. It belonged to the occupant's father, and was set up there in a loaded condition. Its presence was always an eye-sore to the occupant's wife, who shared fully with the sex their fear of fire-arms. So, the other day, she induced her husband to take it down and fire it off. He had never fired off a gun that had been loaded eight years; in fact, he never had fired off a gun at all, so he poked it out of a window and took aim into the garden, without the faintest shadow of fear. His wife, being afraid of fire-arms, stood behind his back and looked over his shoulder with her eyes tight shut. He shut his eyes, too, and then he pulled the trigger. What immediately followed, neither appears to have any settled idea. He says he can vaguely remember hearing a noise of some kind, and has an indistinct impression of passing over something which must have been his wife, as she was found behind him, and the window, by the neighbors who drew him out of the fire-place. The fact that one of his shoulders was set back about two inches, and that three of her teeth were imbedded in his scalp, seemed to indicate that in stepping back from the window he had done so abruptly, and this conclusion, we are glad to say, was verified by both on being restored to consciousness.

Educational Advantages.

An Irishman found a Government blanket recently, and rolling it up put it under his arm and walked off, saying: "Yis, that's moine—U for Patrick and S for McCarty; be me sowl, but this learnin' is a foine thing, as me fayther would say; for if I hadn't an education I wouldn't have been afther findin' me blanket."

Our good actions are often worth more than their motives.