

SKETCHES FROM IRVINE SIDE.

BY JOHN MUIR, F.S.A. Scot.

“Irvineside! Irvineside!”—*Burns.*

I.

DOWN in the valley there the village is awakening from its slumbers. Here and there the figure of a villager may be descried out of doors; but the majority of the inhabitants have not yet left their warm beds, for the Sabbath to the working folks, worn out with the labours of the week, is indeed a Day of Rest. Already the blue smoke is ascending in fantastic curls from several chimneys, intimating that the morning meal is being prepared; and the amber haze lying dreamily around the top of the pit chimney yonder bespeaks the suspension of labour. The splashing of the sawmill water-wheel, and the hum and whirr of the circular saw have ceased. The burring of the turning-lathe is still; and the last sound from the joiner's hammer died away in a faint echo early in the afternoon of the previous day. The dizzying sound of the neighbouring factories is hushed; and for one day the Lade flows uncontaminated. In the smithy at the corner of the Knowe the fire is fast smouldering away, and the showers of fiery hail from the ringing anvil are long since cold and have been swept up by the apprentice lad and thrown on the refuse heap; and the smith himself is enjoying his well-earned repose. In the granary stores under the thatch-covered cottages with the deep eaves, the thump and thud of the thresher's flail is no longer heard.

The sun is already high up in the eastern heavens, gilding the cross on the Catholic chapel. The old grey Parish Kirk has a warmer hue; and the newly built Free Church of red sandstone, looks dimmer in the sunshine than after a smart shower of rain, when the stones assume a ruby colour—the emblem, in sacred art, of the Holy Spirit—and the sea-green slates finished with red tile ridges and ornamental tile finials are harmoniously blended into a variety of rich colours extremely pleasing to behold. The river which runs through the strath in its graceful serpentine meanderings gleams in its blue windings like a stripe of ribbon on Nature's

mantle of green brocade. In the shallow places where the gravel causes the water to ripple, it glitters like a caldron of boiling silver in its dancing dazzle under the radiance of the sun. For a dozen miles it has danced and laughed in sunshine and in shade, swelling in volume until it reaches the ocean.

Away high up to the right the purple splendours of the amaranthine moors are dimmed and subdued by the large clouds in trailing orange and amethyst with white and fleecy embroidery that are floating lazily overhead, casting their shadows over the landscape, like a sombre garment of gossamer and perse. The gentle breeze laden with the perfume of wild violets, and the fragrance of the sweet briar brushes, from the grass the dewdrops that hang like pearly beads. The little stream rushing down the brae yonder is spated with the rain that fell overnight, its berry brown waters are rushing impetuously over the linn ; and the fall of the water can be faintly heard where I stand.

Eastward up the valley a lofty eminence looms hazy in the distance. There he sits like a solitary monarch arrayed in his heathery robes of imperial purple, fringed with wild tanglewood and hardy flowers, with a massive rock for his footstool, and the trees and shrubbery on the top for a diadem. The wild conie and the timid maukin are his courtiers, and the birds his court minstrels, and the Irvine his historian, handing down the annals of his decay in the form of stones which the geologists tell us were once part of a volcano. He has been sitting there since before the time when the forests which then surrounded him were converted by the cunning processes of Nature into coal-fields, the working of which employs hundreds of the villagers, and adds greatly to the wealth of the district. But the Black Monster and his captors the steam engine and the locomotive have played sad havoc with the natural beauties of the place, converting the rich woodland into railway tracks, and the holms and beautiful haughs into embankments to facilitate the transit of the dusky mineral.

This "hill of fire," or "beacon mountain," as its name is thought to signify, was an impartial spectator of the battle that took place between our King Robert, the first and greatest of that name, and the English troops under the Earl of Pembroke ; and still further eastward, history has marked with a crimson stain the mossy ground to commemorate the struggle that took place one fine Sunday in June between Cavaliers and Covenanters, in which the

former were defeated, and Claverhose compelled for once to beat a hasty and inglorious retreat. In the vicinity of this same hill a battle was fought in which Sir William Wallace intercepted and defeated the English convoy under Fenwick, who had previously slain his father. On all hands the landscape carries the mind back to the days of feudal sturt and strife, out of which looms the sullen splendour of hardy daring and heroic achievement.

Out of the breast of the brae yonder, eastward from the village, the Holy Well gushes as full and as free as in the days when its crystal waters were believed to possess divine qualities. Sheltered by shady trees, whose leaves, like screens, throw a dull light of green and gold on the glittering waters, suggesting that these trees may be the remains of one of the arborical temples of the ancient Druids, as the stones, forming a circle on the top of Molmunt Hill yonder, are supposed to be. Surrounded by the sweet-scented queen of the meadow and the damask rose, whose fragrance, showered from many a spray, perfumes the air, its limpid waters, gently upheaving the delicate sand, wimple and gurgle as they flow down the gentle slope to join their murmurs to those of the stream that runs through the narrow valley, leaping joyously over its pebbly bed, and singing with liquid tongues its moorland lullaby in bubbling undertones—quiring to its finny denizens whose silver and copper-spotted skins glisten as they sport in the stream. But the practised angler will tell you that the trout in this burn are large and soft, a circumstance due to the fact that the stream springs from, and traverses, a large extent of mossy ground.

The pavilion of green velvety carpet above the Well is whitened with myriads of ox-eye daisies, and starred with the glory of the tiny gowans with their bright yellow discs, set in circlets of indented silver, tinged and tipped with pink and crimson like crystal snowflakes, touched with the blood of fairies, mixed with the creamy-white and purple clover, all sighing for the pattering rain that trips with glassy feet from leaf to leaf and from flower to flower, kissing them with her dewy lips and refreshing them into new life.

The sunshine creeps over the flowers, disturbing the humming bee that merrily buzzes from bell to bell, accompanied by the marching music of his own gauzy wings. Him no apiarian can claim. He is a free denizen of the hills and woods, owing

allegiance to no mortal, and stores not his sweets for the service of ungrateful man, but hides them in the bole of some mighty tree, or in the heart of some secluded bank, where he can securely feed upon his treasures in the winter safe from the ravaging tempests, if not despoiled by the wantonness of the boys from the village. There, too, in his train, comes the butterfly, floating through the air like a winged flower, robed in garments of dazzling hue woven out of the colours of the rainbow and sparkling in the sunshine like an alary violet. Beautiful symbol of the human soul and artistic emblem of immortality, as Dante expresses it:—

Do ye not comprehend that we are worms,
Born to bring forth the angelic butterfly.

The little brook here, which marks the southern boundary of the minister's glebe, was called St. Mary's Burn in the days when the Parish Church was dedicated to St. Peter, the presiding genius of the place, who looks down patronisingly on the villagers, his stately spire, now lyart and grey, appropriately crowned with a brazen cock, the clouds passing overhead like silver-lined curtains drawn between it and the Eternal. But the saints then, as now, were localized somewhat haphazardly. Was not the old inn, which formerly occupied the site of the present hotel, called after the same apostle?—who has now no namesake in the district save the local masonic body. Strange fate for saints and sinners! The June Fair, to be sure, is the modern representative of the festival dedicated to St. Peter; and the massive building yonder of red brick, with freestone dressing, built after the Byzantine style of architecture, is called St. Sophia. In former days a chapel, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was founded in the ancient tower around which the village clustered, and from which it derived its name. In short, never was a village under the patronage of such a distinguished group of reputable saints.

Standing at the confluence of St. Mary's Burn with the Anne Burn, which seems to have lost its saintly prefix—for the district, as we have said, is teeming with saints—the eye rests on a great oblong tower, from one of the windows of which John Knox thundered the reformed doctrines at the admiring populace. Here also Wishart preached; and in the old Kirk, which formerly occupied the site of the present structure, he proclaimed the Gospel at a time when its precepts were little understood, and the practice these inculcate almost forgotten and wholly neglected. “Auld

Father Grub," the priest of the parish, addressed *The Laird of Changuie*, in the ballad of that name, in these terms :—

You've been with that apostate Knox,
While preaching at the *Bar* ;
But soon I'll scatter your bonnie flocks,
And boil your beuk in-tar.

Early in the present century the wave of controversy which was raised by the Erskines had reached the quiet retreat of this village, and the burghers worshipped in a tent in summer and in this old castle in winter. At one time it was contemplated as a safe asylum for a somewhat dangerous lunatic; then it served as a prison; and John Wright, the author of the *Retrospect*, has often recited his verses within its walls. Latterly it was used as a granary, and now, as if to complete its mission, it has been turned into a meeting-place for the "Sons of Light," the very flattering designation given by our National Poet to his masonic brethren, so that Wright's wish, expressed in the poem referred to above, is likely to be gratified, that

These walls should ring with minstrel lay,
These turrets fall not to decay.

The villagers will gravely inform you that this old castle, known in history as Lockhart's Tower and Barr Castle, and locally as the Barr Alley, was built by the Pechs (Picts); but the old woman in the ivy-clad and straw-roofed cottage close by maintains that it was built of quicklime in one night by the Brownies, famous in Scottish folklore as great builders and hard drinkers :—

"Long ago there were people in this country called the Pechs; short wee men they were, wi' red hair, and long arms, and feet sae braid, that when it rained they could turn them up ower their heads, and then they served for umbrellas. The Pechs were great builders; they built a' the auld castles in the kintry; and do ye ken the way they built them? I'll tell ye. They stood all in a row from the quarry to the place where they were building, and ilk ane handed forward the stanes to his neebor, till the hale was biggit. The Pechs were also a great people for ale, which they brewed frae heather; sae, ye ken, it bood to be an extraornar cheap kind of drink; for heather, I'se warrant, was as plenty then as it's now."

Whether this was one of the auld castles built by the Pechs or Brownies, or by people of more muscle and less spirit, they have

no reason to feel ashamed of their handiwork, which has existed since before the dawn of authentic Ayrshire history, and will probably outlive all the other buildings in the district.

Proud edifice ! no annals tell
 What thou hast brooked, what thou hast been,
 Who reared thee in this lovely dell,
 What mighty baron—lord, I ween,
 Of hardy Kyle : no bordering tower
 Possessed more independant power.

To-day being the Sabbath, the forecourt is deserted save by the chirping sparrows hopping and chattering round a crust of bread, the tame pigeons that are picking up crumbs, and billing and cooing where in days of yore a chivalrous knight, his armour flashing through the rustling leaves of the forest, has whispered the tale of love in the ear of the high-born ladye whose scarcely audible response is taken up by the passing breeze, and whistled through the woods. On the week days the court is monopolised by the youth of the town engaged in the ancient and classical game of hand-ball, which is said to have been a favourite pastime of Virgil. It is against the northern wall of the castle that the game of hand-ball, for which Galston has been long famous, is played. John Wright refers to this in his *Retrospect* :—

To Lockhart's Tower now flocked we forth—the prey,
 The wreck of ages, and the pride of song ;
 Where many a gambol circled round the grey,
 Dark, feudal vestage, and its dells among ;
 But o'er all sports athletic, nimble, strong,
 Was handball pastime ; young, mid-aged, and old,
 As equals mingled, after practice long ;
 And scarce a neighbouring village was so bold
 As struggle with our own, the sovereignty to hold.

There is a tradition that Sir William Wallace, when pursued by his enemies, leaped out of one of the windows of the castle, and escaped by means of a huge elm tree which grew close to the north wall till within a few years ago, when the local Goths and Vandals, in the vaunted name of "progress," had it taken down ; probably because it was a nuisance, and certainly because it was of no use, except, of course, for making railway sleepers or coal trucks, ever so much more profitable than merely standing to feast the gaze of crack-brained artists and becobwebbed antiquaries. And the strange thing is, that no one ventured to protest against this bar-

barism. By the oldest leases on the estate on which the castle is built, the tenants were bound to plant at least twelve ash trees yearly. This excellent agreement, which might, with satisfactory results to both parties, be imitated by other landlords and tenants, accounts for the beautiful appearance of the farm-houses on that property, which are in general surrounded by trees.

A note to Wright's poems states that, "till of late years (1843) a beautiful spreading plane-tree grew out from the upper part of the wall, and proudly overlooked its broad and moss-grown battlements—the glory, the delight of the village." At no great distance from the castle is an ancient oak-tree, known as the "boss-tree," from its being hollow in the centre with age; and among the branches of this tree also our national hero is reputed to have hidden from his enemies. But this does not complete the story of Wallace's connection with Irvineside. Everybody has read the story, in Blind Harry's *Wallace*, of his hero, when a youth, being fishing in the Irvine one day when three English soldiers came up to him and demanded the trout which he had caught. Wallace was not disposed to give up the whole of the fish, but offered to share them with the Southerners. This did not satisfy the men, however, and they would have seized the spoil, had he not, with his fishing rod, struck one of the soldiers so hard a blow on the ear that he dropped dead. Seizing the dead man's sword, Wallace speedily put the other two to flight. The scene of this exploit is said to have been on the banks of the Irvine, near Galston. We know that Wallace's uncle lived at Riccarton, and what is more natural than to suppose that the young man was on a visit to his relative, and that he was having a day's fishing in the stream which flows at no great distance from what was once his uncle's residence? After this affair, Wallace had to keep in hiding, and it may have been then that he took refuge in Barr Castle.

As was to be almost expected, the mighty sword of the great Scottish patriot is preserved in Loudoun Castle, on the other side of the Irvine from Galston, whose lordly towers rise grey from out the sylvan scenery immortalized by Tannahill in that most melodious of all his strains, commencing

Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes.

The Bard of Paisley was in the habit of fitting an existing tune with words; and in some instances not very satisfactorily. In

this song, however, he has been most successful, the tune selected having been an old marching air of the Campbells, one of the many names borne by the illustrious house of Loudoun, a daughter of which was mother of Wallace. Although the number of swords said to have belonged to Wallace, like the relics attributed to Burns, are a trifle numerous, we need not grudge this claim now that the illustrious warrior has ceased to use any of them.

Tradition says that from this old tower there were secret subterranean passages connecting it with Loudoun and Cessnock Castles, the latter being once the seat of a branch of the Campbells, one of whom suffered in the cause of religion during the dark days which preceded the Revolution.

But, hark!—the church bells have begun to ring. The Parish Church rings out a deep sonorous peal, accompanied by the lighter but not so musical chimes of the Free Church bell, whose sharp ting, ting-il-ling-ting dies immediately on the ear, while the bang, bang, of the “big Kirk” floats away in the distance, being heard by hundreds of people miles away from the village. People are wending their ways to the various places of worship; and unless one desires to be stigmatized a heathen and sunday-breaker, they must betake themselves to some one of the sanctuaries, or at least keep within doors until the service is over. The auld kirk presents the most attractions. In the old churchyard by which it is surrounded there are many notable tombstones; and in the inside, the burial vaults and monuments of former grandees of the place. With our readers accompanying us we will follow those of the parishioners that are adherents of the National Church, which we now enter.

SKETCHES FROM IRVINESIDE.

BY JOHN MUIR, F.S.A. SCOT.

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II.

Much has changed in this old parish church called the church of St. Peter. Its hard, bare, wooden seats, with strait backs so narrow that you had to sit at an angle of forty-five degrees to the ledge, have been replaced by others equally hard and almost as straight. The cushions were scant, and of hassocks and footstools there were none. You put yourself into a box-like pew and securely snibbit (fastened) the door, just as if you had been in a cab and were ready to drive off. This crucifixion of the flesh was supposed to make you more open to the things pertaining to the soul: pretty much as if you starved a man to put him in good humour for listening to the Fifth Symphony. As if it were not much better to listen to a discourse when in a happy, contented, and comfortable frame of mind, and sitting at ease, than when incommodated. We were a peculiar people and strange, which was almost to have been expected, if, as Walter Shandy maintained, names exercise an influence on character; for the name of village signifies “stranger’s town.” Demurely Presbyterian, with a considerable tincture of Calvinism, and, I fear, not a little hypocrisy.

On the not unsolvable problem of heating, lighting, and ventilating a building to accommodate a thousand worshippers, we had the strangest notions in the world; and our methods of carrying these out were as antiquated as a historian, who was not an adherent, could well have wished. Two long, thin pipes, turned at the top like a ship’s ventilators, ran up the wall on either side of the pulpit, and were supposed to emit heat. Whether they did or not I have never to this day been able to learn. Perhaps they did; perhaps they didn’t (which is my own opinion); but nobody could or would say. Of the principles of ventilation we knew of course that the correct way to get fresh air was to open the doors and the windows and so cause a draught. I used to think that some of the bald-headed men, and elderly and rheumatic ladies near the doors

did not quite relish this mode of airing the church. But they seemed resigned to their fate, just as they would had they been suffering from a complaint for which there was no cure. Of lighting, it was an established rule, never questioned by the most sceptical, that perfection had been obtained when you got the gas as near your nose as it was possible to get it. We were a little peculiar, I say.

It was not possible not to envy the spacious and luxuriously furnished pews in the front of the gallery, reserved for the heritors and parochial grandees, who showed their appreciation by seldom sitting in them. These pews contained nicely cushioned chairs and seats, and one could pass his neighbour without causing him to rise and contract his vest. In the common pews this was impossible. The occupants of the pew turned out into the passage and so allowed you to get to your accustomed corner. The difference between the heritors' pews and those of the common parishioners was as great as that between the gallery and the private boxes of a theatre. Facing the heritors' pews there was an equally spacious and luxuriously furnished ledge on which the gentlemen could place their silk hats and lavender gloves, and the ladies their bouquets and scent-bottles. You could also rest your body by turning it in any direction you pleased. In the ordinary pews this could only be done when standing during the prayers, which, as a small boy, I used to think just lengthy enough, all things considered. To forget your hardships, however, it was permissible to snooze so long as you did not disturb the congregation by your snoring; and like a good number of older worshippers, I took full advantage of this generous concession to the weakness of human flesh; and I used to think, sinner that I was, that this was the best part of the service. Not that I would have dared to say so, but when my old bachelor uncle frequently confirmed my opinion, both by precept and example, I felt that we were right. There was an excuse for this old uncle's sleepy notions of ecclesiastical propriety, as the women folks took care to tell me when revising my Sabbath-school lessons. Having lived abroad for a long time it was to be expected that he would be a little heathenish in his habits.

To-day I look up to the "cock laft" (a corruption of clock loft), but the old lady who sang in a wheesy tremolo no longer annoys the old, crusty, spectacled precentor, who drove on the bawn (choir) furiously to overtake the good dame's concluding crescendo. She

has vanished. Her deeply wrinkled face and olive complexion, with the silver ringlets hanging down past her ears; her velvet snood and black mutch ornamented with jet beads and little bugles, with a rosette of black ribbon to set off the front, have all melted away. The old, crusty precentor who led the bawn, and changed the placard on which the name of the tune to be sung was printed and held up to the gaze of the congregation by a brass clip, are not to be seen either. They have passed away—these into the limbo of parochial antiquities, and the old precentor has now taken his place in another choir, not as leader of the psalmody, but as one of the singers. His place in the church is now occupied by an expert musician, and his bawn has blossomed into trained choristers, who sing from the staff notation and the sol-fa, and do not pay that attention to the old precentor's "slurs" and "canny ways," which he would consider himself entitled to, could he listen to the bright airs of the Scottish Hymnal, finely harmonised by modern masters, which have displaced the old drawling psalm tunes which gave such splendid scope for exercising the lungs of the worshippers, and trying the patience of the boarding-school young lady who sang from the music.

Much curious lore of a half-superstitious nature was packed in the dark chambers of the head of the old lady, whose finishing crescendo so effectively accelerated the measure of the bawn and its enraged leader. On matters relating to the rearing of children and the herbal treatment of sundry complaints, young mothers were glad enough to avail themselves of her skill. She was, indeed, Buchan and Culpepper rolled into one, and might have made a very good Mrs. Hornbook, had there been a poet in the locality equal to the task of making her as immortal as the famous dominie of Tarbolton. But no such fate was reserved for her. John Wright had completed his *Retrospect*, and his successors had not the inclination or the power, or perhaps lacked both, to rescue her name from oblivion. Hence it comes that her grave is unknown, and the infants she saved from death, now men and women grown, thoughtlessly trample over her last resting-place as they loiter in the churchyard after the services are over.

An unpleasant complaint which afflicts most children in the night time at certain stages of their existence, was to be cured by the sufferer being plunged bodily into a tub of the coldest water. Just fancy the beneficial effects of a compulsory cold bath on a nervous

and delicate child, half awake and all unconscious of what was taking place! Curiously enough, this same system of hydropathy was tried, but with what result we are not told, by the man who etched for us the inimitable literary vignette of John Wilson in his capacity of village Esculapius.

The application of water as a remedial agent bulked very considerably in the good lady's medical repertoire. Country children take to the water like ducks; and if they have a partiality for any one form of amusement in preference to another, it is to roll in the gutter and splutter for a whole day at a pump—more especially if they happen to have on a clean daidly (pinafore), and were charged by their mothers "within an inch of their life" (such was the terrible threat) not to bake mud pies or go near the wells. When any child had a failing for aquatic sports of this description, the old dame strongly recommended as an effective cure, that the bairn should be caught in the act of disobedience and held under the mouth of the pump while the water was mercilessly pumped on its head! If one got stung by a nettle (*urtica urens*) they were recommended to rub well with the leaves of the docken or sorrel (*runcex crispus*) the part affected. This, however, did not always bring relief, as the sufferer could testify. Children were encouraged to eat sourocks or common sorrel (*runcex acetosa*), a plant belonging to the same species as the docken.

For the kink-hoast (whooping-cough), again, the mother was advised to take her child down a coal-pit for an hour or so. The change of air (?), it was averred, would do it good—in fact, would cure it. Children who were much exposed to the weather suffered a good deal during the winter months from frost-bitten heels. For this the old lady had a cure. The refined reader, brought up in the belief in dainty nostrums and scented pomades, may think it a little barbarous. I am assured, however, that it was universally effective, differing in this respect also from modern pharmacy. The remedy was to draw a red-hot poker across the part affected. Of course, no child would willingly face the ordeal—the ruse adapted was to have the poker in the grate in readiness, and request the child to kneel on a chair with his back to the operator, on the plea that the sore might be examined; then, as opportunity afforded, to apply the instrument deftly and swiftly.

Stepping into the session-house, we have just time to extract a few notes from the records of the kirk-session, a heterogeneous

collection of material, in which, for most part, the seamy side of human nature is painted with the careless freedom and naive simplicity of the various session-clerks. First of all, however, an introductory word or two on the ecclesiastical origins of the parish may help the reader to appreciate the sequence and significance of the facts chronicled.

In the Romish Calendar the 29th of June is a festival in honour of St. Peter the Apostle. It is familiarly known that St. Peter, the son of Jonas and brother of Andrew, who afterwards became the patron saint of Scotland, obtained the name, signifying a rock, from the Saviour, in place of his original name of Simon, on becoming an apostle. For that reason the village fair is called after St. Peter, and is held on the Thursday nearest to the date of St. Peter's Day. The parish church was dedicated to that Saint, having been founded by the monks of Fail, and in Catholic times it was occupied by a vicar who was in connection with Fail Abbey. In pre-Reformation times the villagers might have been seen wending their way to the church with their *Denarius St. Petri*, or Peter's pence, which, in the middle ages, was a payment of one penny from every family to the Pope, paid on the Feast of St. Peter. About the same period, too, a visitor to the locality might have observed a pilgrim leading her little girl by the hand, and bent on visiting the spring, situated about two miles from the village, in that reverential and devout spirit which gave birth to its name—the Holy Well, fully described in the first sketch. Producing a linen bandage, she dipped it in the sacred water, then wound it round the child's head, weeping gently all the time. Then she attached a piece of the child's pinafore to a bush growing by the side of the spring; and after looking around her in a strange, bewildered manner, bent her way homeward. Poor, sorrowing mother of the "back-gane bairn," thou and thy tender offspring have long since been laid to sleep on the bosom of Mother Earth!

We are not told whether the clergy of St. Peter's were as jolly as their brethren over at Failford. I suspect they were, as a part of the village once belonging to the church still retains the highly suggestive name of Brewlands. The monks of Fail never relished the ballad of which the following, which still lingers in the locality as an echo from a far off time; and we do not wonder at their lack of appreciation—of the ballad, we mean, not of the viands enumerated therein:—

The Friars of Fail

Gat never ower hard eggs or ower thin kale
 For they made their eggs thin wi' butter,
 And their kale thick wi' bread ;
 And the Friars of Fail, they made gude kale
 On Fridays when they fasted ;
 They never wanted gear enough
 As long as their neighbour's lasted.

The Friars of Fail drank berry-brown ale,
 The best that ever was tasted ;
 The Monks of Fail they made gude kale
 On Fridays when they fasted.

The rude sarcasm of these lines throws more light on the causes that brought about the Reformation in Scotland than the stately pages of more ambitious historians.

Turning over the session records we find, under date 1724, that a farmer named John Craig is accused of consulting a *wizard* for the purpose of recovering stolen property. John, with commendable Scotch caution and a euphemism which does him great credit, admits that he consulted a *woman* in Glasgow on the subject. Moreover, he had the audacity to add that he could see nothing wrong in so doing, despite the attempt of the minister to show him the sinfulness of such action. Public intimation of this is to be made to the congregation, and the congregation warned against such wicked practices.

In the same records, under 1746, a doctrix was consulted about the recovery of a sick child. She attributed the child's illness to a neighbour who "had a bad eye." This neighbour was summoned before the session, and commanded to say, "God bless the child," and to surrender some of her hair to be used as a charm, which she did, truly thankful that, living in a more enlightened age, she was not doomed to die the barbarous death of some of her less fortunate predecessors, who were burned as witches.

It was formerly the custom in the village for women to attend funerals dressed in black or red cloaks. The *cortege* was headed by the sexton, who rang the morte-bell when a change of bearers was wanted. This curious instrument, hanging in the session-house behind me, bears date 1722. The church-bell used to be rung at funerals, presumably to call the people to attend, or as a sign of mourning. This custom is still followed at Hawick. In 1762 the village sexton was allowed to charge two pence per mile going,

in ringing the small bell—never to ring the small bell under two pence; and he was allowed two pence each burial for ringing the big bell, that is, the large bell in the belfry of the parish church. The deceased was borne feet foremost to the churchyard. Burns, in his song, *The Weary Pund o' Tow*, alludes to this custom:—

At last her feet—I sang to see't,
Gaed foremost o'er the knowe.

There was a Presbyterian prejudice against burying in churches, and the *blame of kirk burial* had not only been a subject for the pamphleteer, but the legislature, and was probably a reaction of popular feeling against the Romish custom of burying notable persons within the precincts of holy places. Nevertheless, the laird of Sornbeg, a barony in the parish, on the death of his wife, resolved to insume her corpse in the parish church in spite of all the minister and session could say or do to the contrary. Accompanied by his brother and his bailie, and attended by a numerous party, “all bodin in feir of weir,” he came to the kirk, broke up the door with forehammers, and dug a grave in which he deposited the remains of his spouse. It is some satisfaction to learn that he was afterwards glad to make public repentance for this act and pay twenty pounds to the box-master of the kirk, besides which the Privy Council ordered him to appear again as a penitent, and solemnly promise never again to attempt to bury any corpse within the church.

The same local potentate, as we learn from an entry in the records of the kirk-session, gave that demure body no end of trouble. Doubtless their interference in the above case rankled in his aristocratic blood. But in those days even a local grandee and principal heritor had to bow to the ruling of the session. In a second rencontre the result was equally mortifying:—

December 24th, 1676.—The which day the minister, according as he was appointed, did, openly from the pulpit, before the whole congregation, declare John Shaw of Sornbeg a contumacious, disobedient to church discipline, and scandalous person.

But our excerpting, with which we might fill *Caledonia* to the exclusion of other matter, must here end. Besides, the church-officer is anxious to lock up the building. Stepping out into the open air, I am soon in my little study putting on paper the article which the reader has just perused.

SKETCHES FROM IRVINESIDE.

By JOHN MUIR, F.S.A. SCOT.

“Irvineside ! Irvineside !”—*Burns.*

III.



THE seven ages of the ordinary man, as acted on the little stage of this village, are hardly what one would term Shakespearean. Not because the ordinary man does not sufficiently violate the unities, which Shakespeare, dramatically, knew so well how to set at naught; but because the factors that go to make up the striking features of the ordinary man's existence do not lend themselves to dramatic representation—at least, not on paper, which is the only medium we can command here. The ordinary man, in some instances as I have known him, could violate more unities in the space of a single day than Aristotle and his learned successors at Alexandria could invent in a month. The life of this type of ordinary men is one long drawn discord grating on the ear of everybody within hearing of it, and intolerable to live with even for an hour, unless you are able, as some appear to be, to pretend not to hear the discord, or in reality to be so dull as actually not to hear it. Of ordinary men like this, there are, unfortunately, too many. He sings the Psalm of Life to the wrong tune pitched on the wrong key; and with his wife and children singing the same wrong tune on the same wrong key, with the additional disadvantage of being out of harmony with each other, the result is a combination of screeches and unmelodious noises and wailings enough to enkindle the rage of gods and men alike.

The transplanting and dibbling of leeks, for example, is not a very tragical occupation, even for a man whose nervous system is more susceptible of the subtle influences of life than the ordinary man's. Neither is coal digging anything of a comedy as the miners would be glad to tell us, could we spare the time, which, unfortunately, we cannot, to listen to their plaint. We need not unnecessarily open the flood-gates of centuries of pent-up feelings, grievances unheard of in the annals of industrial history; and some things perhaps calculated to disturb one's vanity, of which

most people now-a-days have enough and to spare. Weaving, again, is perhaps as little conducive to poetry as building dry dykes, although Shakespeare thought differently, when he wished to be a weaver that so he might sing. But then Shakespeare never was a weaver; and that, believe me, makes all the difference. John Wright, the Galston Spencer, as I like to think of him, was a weaver; but neither his weaving nor his singing brought him much good, although his contemporaries have told me that his abilities as a wabster were unquestionable; and his *Retrospect* gives evidence of more faculty, in the musical way, than the half-dozen volumes produced by his townsmen and successors. But, alas! for the anacreontic flavour of his lyrics. The goblet may have been of gold, but there was death in the liquor for poor Wright.

On many a winter evening by the fire, the red flames dancing fantastically and repeating their capers on the dark walls of the kitchen, have I heard McSpurkle remarking that "Weavin's din, man; clean din."

"Aye, an' dyke biggin's no muckle better, if no waur," has McCroudie answered, emphasizing his observation by taking the pipe out of his mouth, which was never otherwise removed, not even to expectorate, except when it required to be replenished. On these occasions I was an attentive listener. It is worth while hearing what a man has to tell who has been travelling along the path of life, say, forty years in advance of you, and who has laboured during the best part of his life at an occupation entirely foreign to you, and in a part of the world with surroundings wholly unfamiliar to you. It is like exchanging experiences in a mountaineering party with one of the number who is a long way ahead, and on a different part of the hill. For there is not a man living who has not some knowledge to communicate if he or we could only get at it. But this is precisely the ticklish point. We are so little interested in each other, and so wholly absorbed in our own concerns, that we cannot afford the time to give our fellows a fair hearing. Before we have done more than merely exchanged the usual civilities, we have to separate; and brief as the interview has been, we have probably succeeded in giving mutual offence and are consequently further from understanding each other than if we had never met. One man wished to thrust on you an obligation, which you refused. Hence your pride, which it was predicted would bring you to the dust. Another would have liked

to do the cheap patron. Him you repelled, as Johnson did Chesterfield. Therefore you are a saucy fellow, whom it is no use trying to push forward. A third invited you to his table, but the invitation took away your appetite, and you stayed at home. It is evident that you are too big for your boots, and that these are wearing out rapidly. A fourth may have thought his table a great attraction, and the chief reason for your visits, and that any little thing you could do would help to keep the debt within reasonable bounds. Him you cut off as unworthy of your friendship; but you have not starved since, which we shall be very glad if you will kindly explain.

In the battle of life you are bound to give and to take blows. You cannot escape, even if you would. Were you but the most insignificant drummer-boy your duty compels you to protect your person and your instrument; and your life is as precious to you and as dear to your kindred as the General's to his Duchess-mother. You want to meet natural men, but you will not find them. They are simply not to be found outside the region of Sunday School literature, search as you may. Every man is cased in armour, so that you cannot feel his heart beat, even were you sure that its action denoted anything but the propulsion of the blood.

Under ordinary circumstances a miner's calling is the least engaging of all the occupations followed by men. Dangerous and unhealthy in the extreme, and not without a demoralising tendency, his whole life is spent in grim wrestlings with a black, treacherous monster, which he hardly sees through the thick atmosphere of smoke and dust pregnant with pollution and disease, faintly illuminated by a tiny lamp which he carries hooked on to the front of his cap. A dull grey and olive haze encircles him for days, until he is forced to retreat from the struggle with a pneumonial complaint, if not previously laid aside with rheumatic cramp, brought on by working daily in several inches of water, with the same element raining down on him from the roof, and spouting out from the sides of the coal seam.

Many thousands of tons of coal the miners have wrung from the niggardly grasp of Nature; but these bear a small proportion to the ship loads lying unclaimed in the back parlour of the Sparrowhawk Inn, Penny Wheep's public. I never tasted Penny Wheep's beverages, but I have heard them described as "unco guid" by one whose judgment I would not care to put to a practical test. Penny

Wheep, as becomes his profession, is a considerate man, and so long as his customers respect his plaster he is indifferent about the quantity of coal dug, so long as it is moderately well moistened, "jist to lay the stour a wee." Inspired by bold John Barleycorn, the miner for the time forgets all about black and choke damp, and the other fiery and throttling giants, the dread of his work-a-day life. Throwing every consideration to the winds, he will produce during the consumption of a little liquor sufficient coal to outlast most strikes; and it is not until the following morning that the muddled condition of his head reminds him that he dug and dipped not wisely but too well, and that the dust and smoke he created sufficiently account for his empty pockets and parched tongue.

Most of my readers have heard of Tam Glen. Ask any school-boy the question and he will answer with a ready affirmative. He will tell you that Tam Glen is the hero of one of Burns's best songs bearing that title. This is true enough, but my Tam Glen was a more substantial man than any of the shadowy heroes that flit intermittently across the Elysian fields of poesy and romance, for he was none other than Thomas Glen, pit-headman at No. 6 pit, belonging to the Coalgum and Riddlings Colliery Company, Ltd., and lived in a little house near the banks of the Irvine. His duties as pit-headman occupied that portion of his time not spent in his small garden, or in wrangling with his guidwife, a woman with whom it was almost impossible to live in harmony, unless you had infinite good humour, or could frustrate her erratic movements when these threatened to come into collision with your own mode of existence. Unluckily, Tam was woefully deficient in these qualities. Hence he was driven to adopt what he fondly hoped would prove to be remedial measures, but which, ochon! proved quite the reverse.

Mrs. Glen was perhaps twenty years younger than her husband, to whom she had been married for about five years at the time the incident took place which I shall relate. She was a good enough woman, according to her lights, only that these were, like the will-o-the-wisp, zig here, zag there; leading her into all sorts of bogs and marshes, ending in trouble to herself and annoyance to everybody concerned. The good woman, in short, was afflicted with a mania for practical joking. Not that she was inattentive to the duties of her home or its head. By no means. But her time not being fully occupied, and being of a sprightly nature, she contrived

to leven the staleness of existence with a spice of humour, which took a turn that only can be pleasing to one party—that is, the humorist. Her jokes, when successfully perpetrated on some unsuspecting neighbour, were much appreciated by Tam; and he and his spouse often chuckled in secret over the success which attended her *canards*, and the discomfiture of her victims. But when Tam himself was victimised by his spouse his wrath knew no bounds.

Matters had gone on in their course for five years: Tam attending to his work, and filling up his spare time by attending to his garden. Mrs. Glen looked after her domestic affairs, but found time to develop the faculty which was the sole cause of all their strife and bickerings. Tam grew daily less and less inclined to relish her jokes. In short, with the aid of a neighbour to whom Tam related his grievances over a tappit-hen in the Sparrow-hawk, our hero had conceived a plan against the approaching first of April which he fondly hoped would be the means of curing his spouse of her eccentricities.

“Man, Tam,” said this neighbour, Baldy Bane, as they sat smoking their pipes in the back parlour of the Sparrow-hawk,—“Man Tam, I wud droon mysel in the big watter afore I wud alloo ony wife to cairy on at sick a rate. My certy, if she had me to dale wi’ she would fin’ a mighty difference. But I’ll tell ye whit,” continued Baldy, who took the little black cutty he was sucking out of his mouth to spit, at the same time emptying the beer-pot—“gif ye tak my advice, I wud say: pay her back in her ain coin, and that ’ill sort her.” Here Baldy very sturdily rapped the table with his horny fists; in response to which the landlady’s niece, Christy Swagger, having replenished the source of inspiration, the rustic oracle continued: “Try this plan, Tam. The nicht afore Hunt the Gowk gang tae yer bed at yer usual time, merely saying, in a kin’ o’ indifferent way, ‘I dinna jist feel atehgither weel the night.’ Keep waking till its Tuesday mornin, and then let on that yer unco din, and groan like a bear wi’ a burnt fit, and cry out for the doctor. When the mistress gets up and gaes awa for the doctor, rise and bar the door and keep her out a’ nicht, and see hoo that ’ill dae.” Here Baldy burst into a loud laugh, as he finished the recital of his rudely concocted plan.

“I’ll dae’t, Baldy! I’ll dae’t! sure as death I’ll dae’t, man!” cries Tam, whose eyes gleamed with the certain triumph he anticipated.

Monday evening the 31st of March came, and with it Tam’s

resolve was firmer than ever to try the experiment which had looked so plausible through the media of Barleycornian fumes. He went through his usual Monday evening routine; delved a bit of his garden; read the *Weekly Mail*; smoked his pipe, and interchanged the gossip of the hour with the innocent Mrs. Glen. About nine o'clock, Baldy, on his way home, looked in upon his neighbour. "And hoo dae ye think yer noo, Tam," Baldy enquired in his careless way, leaning his shoulder against the door-post, as he held the door half open and looked in towards the inmates who were sitting at the fire—Tam in his big chair, and his wife on a stool. "Lod, man," returned Tam, "I think I'm gaighlies." "An' whit's wrang wi' ye," interjected Mrs. Glen, who heard of his illness for the first time. "O jist a bit pain in the stamack, I dinna think it's worth bothering about" added the heroic Tam, who certainly bore up bravely under his load of imaginary affliction. He continued: "I'm jist gaun to my bed as soon as I finish this smoke, an' nae doot it'll be a' richt in the mornin',"—with a significant wink to Baldy, who, feeling that all was going well, shut the door, and made for his own home, which was about a quarter of a mile distant.

About one o'clock on Tuesday morning Mrs. Glen was rudely awakened from her slumbers by Tam, who, uttering a most unearthly groan, and giving his bed-fellow a punch on the arm, caused her to rise on her elbow and exclaim: "Whit's wrang wi' ye, Tam! Whit in a' the worls wrang wi' ye!—Is yer stamack waur?" "Aye! aye!" groaned the poor, afflicted sufferer; "rin an' get the doctor or I'll dee!" and he threw his arms about in an agony of despair, which plainly indicated that he would be as good as his word. He had scarcely given this muscular proof of the intense pain he was suffering, when his wife was on the floor; and in less than half a minute afterwards was hurrying on her way to the house of Dr. Druggs, one of the two practitioners of the Æsculapian art in the district. Leaving her message, she ran home at a trotting pace; for, besides the urgency of the case, the night was cold, and a drizzling rain was falling, making the air feel raw, conditions least of all favourable to a person hurriedly and scantily clad, who a short time before was lying snugly in bed.

Returning to her house, she made to open the door, but in vain. Thinking that she had perhaps locked it, she applied the key, which she turned and returned in the lock, but without effect. Then she

tried the window, but it also refused to be moved. She was therefore reluctantly compelled to call upon Tam to try and muster as much strength as to relieve her from the predicament in which she found herself. No sooner had she made known her request, than Tam, with a long pent-up laugh, cried, "Hunt the Gowk!" The whole situation flashed on her at once, and she inwardly cursed herself for having been so easily duped; and after expressing her outraged feelings with her voice, emphasizing her remarks with her hands and feet with which she battered on the door, she was reduced to a women's extremity. But the tears which have been known to trickle into the hardest heart, melting it with the dews of human pity and sorrow, causing a responsive stream to well up and bubble over with the tiny rills which set it in motion, produced no effect on our hero, who, although he could not but hear his wife's piteous sobs, did not see the copious flow of tears by which these were accompanied. And it would have mattered little even if he had. Tam, with a nonchalance which suited his unemotional nature, smoked his pipe, cosily enjoying himself and grinning from ear to ear with unbounded satisfaction.

After a lapse of half-an-hour, Mrs. Glen went away in the direction, and for the purpose of asking a night's shelter from Mrs. Baldy Bane. She had not taken many steps before a brilliant idea struck her. Why not pretend to commit suicide by throwing into the water a log of wood that chanced to be lying on the bank? A satanical smile crept over her face as she stooped to raise the end of the log and throw it into the stream. Uttering a farewell cry, she hid behind the gable of the house to observe what the result would be. Tam heard the splash. In an instant a shiver crept over his frame, and the cold sweat started from his forehead like pearl beads. His brow assumed the colour of the pale grey ash which flew from his pipe as it fell on the hearth in a thousand pieces. Without thinking what he did, he rushed from his chair. One bold leap carried him through the window, and another, with a desperate plunge, into the river, which was considerably swollen with the recent rain. He struggled lustily in the direction of the figure floating on the surface of the water a few yards ahead. Just as he, in breathless agony of despair and joy, clasped the log in his arms and pressed it to his panting breast, his better half, coming out from her hiding place, saluted him with "Hunt the Gowk!" adding, with biting irony, that she hoped his bath would do him

good. Hearing the doctor's hasty footsteps approaching, she flew into the house by the ingress Tam had made in his hurried exit, leaving our worthy to explain to his medical adviser how he came to take the treatment of his "awfu' sair stamack" into his own hands.



SKETCHES FROM IRVINESIDE.

By JOHN MUIR, F.S.A. Scot.

“Irvineside ! Irvineside !”—*Burns.*

IV.



U^P in the valley here we are not wholly an illiterate people. Most of us can read a little, and sign our names, which function we are called upon to perform perhaps once or twice in our lives. Some of us have books which we endeavour to persuade our neighbours we understand; but this is fully more difficult than reading the books, even without understanding them. The majority of us, however, find the weekly newspapers sufficient to satisfy our curiosity regarding earthly matters; and for religious literature, the liberal distribution of tracts by the various bodies who adopt that method of converting sinners, more than gratifies the longings of the most pious. Those of us who like, occasionally, to get a taste of the poetry of life, and live in the ideal world of romance for a time, find an easy method of transporting ourselves, through the medium of the “Penny Horribles.”

Up in the Institute, on the Deuck Island, we have collected a very considerable library of perhaps four thousand volumes of general literature. For the extremely modest sum of one shilling a year, we have free access to its shelves; and, for double that sum, the privileges of the entire building, which includes the usual suite of apartments appropriate to such institutions. There we can smoke; play a game at the dambrod (draughts), summer-ice, or carpet bowls; while the very intellectual gamesters play chess. In the reading-room, we can look at the papers if there is a good breach of promise or aristocratic scandal worth reading; and, if not, then we can take a nap without infringing the rules, or incurring a fine. Those of us, whose thirst for knowledge is not so unquenchable as for stronger waters, spend our shillings in procuring the liquor that best agrees with our taste. Some of us drink too copiously, and have to answer for our drouth by appearing before the magistrates. I notice, however, that the young men

who drink deeply of the Pierian spring are rather respected by the magistrates, and are never asked to appear on a Monday morning before their Honours. Some of us profess not to see this fact very clearly, but it is a fact all the same, and need not be discussed here.

The better class young men, as becomes their social standing, find an outlet for that portion of their intellectual energy, not exhausted by their business or profession, in the Literary Society, which meets during the winter months. We meet to read, and listen to papers being read, on almost every subject under the sun. I was going to say beyond the sun; but, considering the temptations to write about Mars and its supposed inhabitants, and the wealth of subjects suggested by every branch of human learning, we have been uncommonly modest, considering our age. For most of us have just reached that period of life when a young man will write an essay on Newton's *Principia*, Stellar Evolution, the Migration of the Aryans, or the Homeric Epic, with the confidence of newspaper reviewers. The New Woman not having appeared in our midst, at least not with that aggressive distinctiveness which emboldens her to seek admission to what are conventionally thought to be the peculiar arena of the males, we are quite a bachelor society. But we are not entirely devoid of chivalry: for, when any of us attempts a paper on "Is Marriage a Failure," or any such subject, we always invite the young ladies to come and listen to our wisdom: and although they giggle and titter a good deal, especially at the heckling of the essayist, we attribute this not to any lack of good breeding (for which the locality is famous), but to their good nature and desire to encourage our efforts for the enlightenment of mankind. We sometimes ramble, in more senses than one, into the country, and fancy we are solving the deepest problems of geological science by looking at a fossil; and Linnæus himself might have learned from us much that would have helped him in his system of classification. But, of course, we pride ourselves, as most literary societies do, on our essay writing. Most of us take bookish subjects, for obvious reasons. It is easier to write about Gæthe, Shakespeare, or the invention of the steam-engine, than about the old customs of the place, the children's rhymes, or any other subject lying at our door, so to speak. At least, we seem to think so, and so does the librarian who has to supply us with the literature bearing in the subjects we take up.

The old customs and rhymes are fast passing away, never to return. It will be time enough to record them for the benefit of posterity when everybody has forgotten all about them.

Some of our members like to be original; and when a man has an itching after originality, he is sometimes driven to sore straights, and not unfrequently forces the same circumstances on others. Frank Leman, the philosopher of our little society, found himself and us in this predicament. We called him the philosopher, not because of the profundity of his ideas, or on account of his absent-mindedness, which we have heard are characteristics of the philosophic mind, but for the plain reason that he is the gravest of our members. And a philosopher without gravity is no philosopher at all. Frank had been attending the magnetism and electricity class, taught in the Institute during the winter months. Even at school, the master had the greatest difficulty to confine Frank's attention to his text-books. Times innumerable he was caught drawing men's faces on his slate, where he should have had a compound sum; and the inside cover of his copy book clearly demonstrated that all the golden head lines he had written, in all the various styles of handwriting, from full text to civil service, had sunk no farther into his heart than to make him rebellious. We anticipated, therefore, that intangible manifestations of energy, like magnetism and electricity, were certain to lead his mind in curious directions, which nobody could foretell. When the following session came round, instead of giving the title of his paper, like an ordinary Christian, to be printed in the syllabus, he was entered thus: "Dec. 22, Essay, by Mr. F. Leman." Every artifice to elicit the nature of the mysterious "Essay" having failed, there was a large attendance of members to hear the following paper:—

SCIENTIFIC LOVE.

An old schoolfellow of mine, presently residing in Paris, knowing I possess a smattering of French, and mindful of our boyish days, has sent me two volumes of *Essais par de la Badine*, containing a rather miscellaneous collection of essays on all sorts of subjects, some of which are whimsical enough, others again original after a fashion, and a few of a more serious turn, mostly on religious and kindred topics, but all conceived and written in a style which we should expect from an author bearing the highly

suggestive name which figures on the title-page. Further, notwithstanding an essay on *Comment on peuvent faire poète*, which may be translated, "How to become a poet," there are several pieces of verse; and although I have never been a great admirer of the Gallic muse, I may say that the verses of Monsieur are in no way inferior to some effusions I have read in that language.

Thinking that the members of our Society might be interested in the speculations of Badine, I have attempted to translate one of his pieces—the twenty-first essay of the second volume, bearing the somewhat strange title, *L'amour selon de la science*, which is rendered in the words of the title of my paper.

Jean Jacques de la Badine is not entirely unknown to students of French literature. He is known also as a linguist and a deep student of English literature, and I confess to have felt not a little gratified on finding that the last essay of the first volume is entitled *La Fontaine et Burns le poète écossais*. With this formal introduction, I may now, in political phrase, call upon M. de la Badine to address himself to his subject.

"Those who have been in the habit of interesting themselves in the general topics of the day, as mirrored in the newspapers, but more especially the columns devoted to the law reports, must have been struck with the great increase of breach of promise and divorce cases. These occur in every rank and condition of life; and as they are not confined to one nation, but grow apace with civilization, it may be worth while enquiring into the cause of this unhappy and dishonourable termination of matrimonial felicity.

"Although many reasons have been adduced to account for the origin of infidelity between the sexes, a moment's reflection will suffice to convince us that there is only one explanation, and that is, a want of love between the parties concerned; or a gradual diminution of mutual affection. This is so painfully evident, that we may safely state, that to remove this would be the only effectual means whereby a sure and satisfactory remedy could be effected.

"It is strange, that while science, art, and literature have been throwing light on almost everything bearing on human life, that these, as yet, should have contributed little or nothing towards the solution of this most important question. We are of opinion that it is to science (not moral science) that we are to look for an early settlement of the difficulty.

"The development of magnetism and electricity, and their

application to the useful purposes of life, must have aroused the admiration of the most unthinking. The unscientific, and even the illiterate, are aware of the curative properties of magnetic belts, magnetic feet-warming apparatus, etc. In electricity the progress has been greatly augmented of late, and this phenomenon bids fair to become one of the most potent factors in modern civilization. Nor are its wonders confined to the mechanical world; for, since the days of Galvani (whence our word Galvanism) down to the present time, its practical application to the pathological treatment of rheumatism, paralysis, lock-jaw, epilepsy, chorea, etc., electricity is already known as a remedial agent.

“It would be strange if the human body did not contain the electric fluid, seeing that almost everything in nature is susceptible of being magnetized or electrified. Bodies which are magnetized, or electrified, are well known as having very pronounced attractive and repulsive properties. Our theory then is, what we may call, for want of a shorter and more expressive, title:—‘Decayed love restored in the hearts of either sex by electricity and magnetism.’

“To convert our Divorce Courts into laboratories. These to be furnished with magnetic and electric machines. People who feel their love decreasing go to these laboratories, and get themselves magnetized or electrified, as the case may be, thus making themselves more attractive to others: in the same way that a magnet attracts iron-filings, pins, needles, etc., or a piece of common brown paper, warmed at the fire, and then rubbed with a common clothes-brush, if held over the hair of the head, will cause many of the hairs to stand on end, presenting a very curious phenomenon, so also will the unfortunate people attract their wife or husband, or even sweetheart.

“It is not necessary for the persons suffering from the malady in question to be always under the treatment. Bodies magnetized to the point of *saturation*;—that is, have as much as they can contain, remain magnetized for a long time.

“It is especially worthy of note, that the hardest bodies capable of being magnetized, steel, for example, retain their magnetism much longer than bodies of a softer nature. This is noteworthy, as some very hard-hearted people would gladly avail themselves of this means of increasing their love. But care would have to be taken, lest, by mistake, the male and female were alike magnetized

or electrified; in which case, instead of attraction, we would have violent repulsion: as bodies charged with like electricity repel each other; bodies charged with unlike electricity attract each other. This same, of course, applies to magnetism.

"People who have been deceived by the semi-quack apparatuses already referred to, will probably have little faith in our theory, and will be disposed to doubt the efficacy of our system. But novelties are always condemned; for the world hates nothing so much as innovation, much and loudly as it cries for progress.

"I may state, that so far as I can understand the writings of Badine (who has a peculiar quality of vagueness), he seems to have a profound contempt for everything metaphysical; in this resembling the late Matthew Arnold. In short, he is a kind of modern Montaigne, astonishingly independent in his way of thinking; but, unlike the ancient Montaigne, wonderfully stupid in his *modus operandi* for the propagation 'de la moralite.'

"In concluding, I have to express my regret at not being able to advise the members whether the foregoing is meant to be taken seriously; or whether M. Badine is not satirising our corrupt social system and its nauseous discussion of such subjects as: 'Is Marriage a Failure?' 'Is Life Worth Living?' or 'How it feels to be Assassinated.'"

After finishing his paper, Frank took his seat with a self-satisfied air. During its delivery I was every now and then saying to myself: "Well, if ever we had a grand set-to, it will surely be to-night." I am no orator myself, although holding the post of secretary, and so I confine my elocutionary powers to the calling of the roll. The president, however, and some other members, have a guid gift o' the gab, and, as may be conjectured, are not averse to displaying it, as, indeed, we are all too prone to do with our gifts.

After the essayist had finished, the president filled out half-a-tumbler of water and drank it off, and sat wiping his moustachios longer than was necessary, considering the amount of liquor he consumed, and the not over-luxurious growth of hair on his upper lip. He sat with his eyes fixed on the toes of his boots, and his hands plunged deep in the recesses of his trouser-pockets, like a man in a brown study. He made no attempt to speak, and neither did any of the other members, which seemed strange, as, on every other occasion, it seemed to be who should be first and longest

on their feet. I felt inclined to break the silence, but my natural diffidence prevented me. We sat in this enchanted manner for perhaps ten minutes, Frank twisting his manuscript nervously, raising his head and looking around the room several times. I could see that his face was flushed, and his eyes shone as I never remember to have seen them before. At last, he put his papers in his pocket, rose, and as he passed down the passage leading to the door, the whole meeting, as if by tacit consent, burst into a loud laugh and followed him. When we got to the door he was nowhere to be seen.

Next morning at breakfast, as I was entertaining the family with an account of the previous night's strange doings, the postman brought a letter which read:—

“SIR,—Please delete my name from the roll of the Junior Literary Society, and oblige,—FRANK LEMAN.”

Not long after this Frank got a situation in a provincial town, in which he has made a very creditable figure. He has published a complete translation of Badine's works. I enquired for it at the Institute Library, but the librarian had not bought it, thinking that the author, mindful of old times, would have presented the Institution with at least one copy containing his autograph. But, as this has not yet, and probably never will, come to pass, I have been obliged (with reluctance, fearing there may be many errors) to give the foregoing from my official shorthand notes.



Mary Stewart's Farewell.

(Translated from the French—Beranger).

*Adieu, charmant pays de France,
Que Je dois tant cherir !*

Les Adieux de Marie Stuart.

Adieu, thou charming land of France,
Which I must cherish ever !
Mine all thro' childhood's happy dance,
'Tis death to make us sever.

Oh, country, I have chosen thee !
From which I'm banished now ;
Hear the sad farewells of Marie,
Oh, France ! and guard her vow.
Fair winds are blowing, anchor weighs,
And must we quit the shore ?
O God ! thy waves thou dost not raise,
My sighs thou heed'st no more.

When in my loving subject's eyes
The glowing lilies shine ;
Much less the queenly rank they prize
Than beauty's charm divine.
In vain do sovereign honours wait,
On sombre Albyn's shore ;
I'd only wish for royal state,
To reign o'er France once more.

Love, glory, talent and *esprit*,
Too much enchained my youth :
In Caledonia's wild countree
My lot will change with ruth.
O mercy ! terrible presage !
A dread assails my heart ;
In dreams, what does my sight engage ?
A scaffold set apart.

France, from the midst of sudden fears,
Thy royal child, Marie,
As on this day which sees her tears,
Will turn her eyes to thee.
O God ! too swift the vessel's flight,
Too soon we sail 'neath other skies ;
Aton, the misty veil of night
Blots out the coast from yearning eyes !

Adieu, thou charming land of France,
Which I must cherish ever !
Mine, all through childhood's happy dance,
'Tis death to make us sever.

J. G. CARTER.