

HO! WINTER.

Ha! winter, ho! winter,
King of the northern blast!
You meet us all, you greet us all,
With grip that freezes fast.
In regal pomp you've gathered up
Your royal robes of snow,
And by their trailing men shall trace
Whatever ways you go.
Your grim retainers all, a-lack!
Make but a cruel train
Of biting sleet and stinging winds
And ice and frozen rain.
The rich with furs and blazing hearths
Your carnival may scorn,
While Mirth and Cheer may reign supreme
From wassail eye till morn.

But ha! winter, ho! winter,
What about the poor?
Who've no stronghold against the cold,
No bribe or sinure
To set at bay the stinging day,
Or soften down the night,
Who note the thickening window-panes
With sinking hearts affright,
Who draw their babies close and sing
Their shivering lullabies,
Then sleep and dream of steaming feasts
That hunger-sleep supplies,
To wake at morn with shuddering sense
Of lengthened fast and cold,
And find that gaunt-eyed Want hath wrought
Its trace within the fold.
Ha! winter, ho! winter,
Hard your rigors on these,
God pity such! and send warm hearts
To all who starve and freeze.
—Maria Barrett Butler, in *The Current*.

JEAN.

"Ah, how pretty she is!" he said.
"Was there ever such a pretty lass,
d'ye think, Jean?"

"Perhaps not," said Jean; and she took her milking pails, and followed Hulda going on before with a light step and a gay song toward the meadow where the cows browsed. But when she was quite out of hearing of Ned Welton, sitting perched upon the stile, she muttered to herself, "Pretty! pretty! pretty! Ah, they ring the changes upon that, these men! as the old bell-ringer that knew but his one tune used to, down in the church tower. Pretty! pretty! pretty! It's never 'good,' it's never 'honest,' it's never 'true.' It's always 'pretty.'" Then she stopped and looked up, and said, with a quiver of passionate grief in her voice: "Oh, I'd give the world—I'd give half the shortest life that I could have—I'd give half an hour, if that was all I had to live, just to hear Ned Welton call me pretty! What a fool I am! what a fool I am! what a fool I am!" and she went on with her pails toward the cows—Brown Bess and Lily White and Pretty Polly.

Certainly she was not pretty; and what there was in her face the man on the stile would have been the last to see.

Had she been a queen, many would have seen something strangely fair and regular in her face. Had she been only a rich gentleman's daughter, some one might have dreamed of those deep eyes and that pure brow of hers; but red and white, and fat and dimples were the recognized beauties there, as indeed they are all over the world, to such folks as her lot was cast among, and she was spoken of as "plain." Two years before she had taken into her foolish head to like Ned Wilton very much; and he, the farmer's son, had thought well enough of the dairy-maid to say some very pleasant things to her. She had had a sweet dream, but Hulda Britton's coming broke it. Her beauty was very bright and rare, and Ned forgot the nice girl he had been so fond of chatting with, for the pretty one who smiled and glanced at him.

She was not so good as Jean; she had not half her earnestness and constancy; but the face was all to Ned. So Hulda Britton wore a little plain gold ring that he had given her, and had promised to be his wife in mid-summer; and Jean knew it, and outwardly gave no sign that she suffered—only now and then, as at this moment when Ned bade her notice Hulda's beauty—as at the moment when she paused, meadow midst, and said to herself that she would give half of her life, were it but an hour, to hear Ned Wilton call her pretty.

They lived upon the coast of Lincolnshire, and it was years ago. None of them knew how to write more than their names. The farmer's deepest lore was the market price of grain. Outside of them, the great world of letters—great, as that day, as perhaps it never has been at any other time—rolled on without giving them any sign of its existence. And none of them had ever read a novel or a poem, or seen a play. But they acted out the drama just as well, and Ned loved Hulda and cared nothing for Jean, and Jean loved Ned and hated Hulda. And Hulda knew the whole, and triumphed over Jean, and cared a little for Ned, because of his broad shoulders and bronze curls, but not over-much; and many a novelist would have given much to have had the little plot of their daily lives, to touch up and make pretty with his pen.

The girls slept together in an upper room of the house, and on her wedding eve Hulda spread out gown and shoes and cheap white veil, and dancing about them, boasted that when the morrow's sun set she should be mistress of the house, and Jean her servant. And Jean, thinking of the old grandmother who had begged her not to lose so good a place, said nothing, but stood silent, white-faced and wan, and felt a bitter hate rising in her heart. Ned was away at the town, and would not be back until next morning, the morning of his wedding. The old folks were asleep below. How easy it would be, in the dead of night, to do this beautiful boasting creature some harm—to mar her beauty, or even end her life.

The thoughts grew so, and were so horrible, that she could not be sure of

relief. Hulda, watching her, saw only a deadly whiteness creep over her lips, and with the first touch of pity in her heart, folded her veil away, and said, unwisely enough, but meaning it kindly.

"No doubt, the next wedding will be yours, Jean."

Then Jean, without a look, turned from her and left the room. She sought to be safe from herself, for fiendish thoughts possessed her; and longing for solitude and quiet, she climbed a ladder that led to the tiled roof, and seeking the shelter of the great chimney, sat down in its shadow and looked up at the sky. It was calm and full of stars. Its peacefulness had an instant influence on her. Repentant tears began to flow. She prayed as simple children pray; "Please make me good!" And all the hate for Hulda left her breast, and her love for Ned—her yearning, aching love for him—softened into a sort of tender memory. She was still sad. A painful humility crushed her heart; a longing for love oppressed her; but when she had prayed for herself, when she had striven with herself, the evil spirit had departed. Soon, with her white, well-developed milk-maid's arms under her head, she slept upon the mossy roof, under the canopy of the stars.

At last she began to dream. They were going to church—Hulda and Ned—and she heard the wedding bells; but going in at the door she saw, instead of gayly dressed guests, mourners all in black and a coffin before the altar, and gave a scream and wakened. Bells were ringing, but not wedding bells—the bells that tolled if there were any need of the men of the place—if fire broke out, or robbers were heard of, or there were any rioting in the town. What could it mean?

Jean listened. A strange sobbing, surging sound fell upon her ears. Lights gleamed in all the houses of the town. The truth flashed upon her. Years before, her old grandmother had told her how the old sea wall had been washed away, and a tide had risen and swept in upon them on that wild coast of Lincolnshire, carrying with it, as it went out, kine and flocks and little dwellings, and even land itself; and how there was mourning throughout the land for those that it had done to death—men and women and children, young and old—so that many a household long remembered it with woe. This had happened again. The sea wall was down, the floods were sweeping in. The bells were ringing as they had rung before in the ears of those who lay in their graves—ringing to tell the same tale to those who were then unborn.

The house in which she dwelt was old, and near the sea; far from all human aid too; and its occupants very two very old people and two girls. The only one who could have aided them was far away. But for this Jean could have thanked Heaven, for he was safe, and the waters were rising even now above the windows of the lower rooms. She could see the starlight reflected in it in gleams and sparkles, and she knew that the old people must be drowned in their beds if she did not waken them. She went down into the room where they slept, and cried out, as she shook them, "The tide has risen again! The tide has risen again! Hear the bells!" Then she led them, trembling and weeping in their helpless old-age, to the roof, and found Hulda already crouched there. She was crying also, and she turned to Jean and clutched her arm.

"Will the water rise so far?" she asked. "Will I be drowned? I who was to be married to-morrow? Oh, it can't be, Jean!"

"Others will go with you, if you are," said Jean. "There are four of us."

"But no other besides I would have been so happy and so proud to-morrow," said Hulda, and bemoaned herself. The old people shook and prayed, and cried softly.

Jean, calm and silent, kept watch. The lights floating about told that boats were out. Help might come even yet, but the water was creeping up. It filled the house. It lapped the very eaves. Still it rose, higher and higher and higher. Those upon the roof climbed to the very apex of its slope, and clung there, but the water reached their feet, and Hulda was quite mad with terror, when a light glimmered close before them, and a voice cried:

"Good folks, there's room for some here. How many of you are there?"

"Four," said Jean.

"We've room for three," said the voice. "Is it Welton's folk?"

"Yes," said Jean.

Then a stout fellow strode over the roof and carried away the old woman, and then the old man, and came back. "We'll return for the other as soon as we can," said he; "keep up courage," and seized Jean's arm. "In with you, he cried, "There's little time to spare."

And Hulda gave a scream, and cried, "Don't leave me! don't leave me!"

Then Jean, in whose heart jealousy had lighted the fires of hell but an hour or so before, felt that the angels had quenched it with the waters of love. She wrenched her strong, white arm from the grasp of the man who held it.

"Leave me, and take her," she said, "I'm not afraid. I'm able to bear more. And she is to be Ned Welton's wife to-morrow. Save her for his sake."

She commanded; she did not implore, or seem to speak from duty.

The man who listened hardly thought of her sacrifice. He obeyed. Hulda was in the boat.

"Keep courage until we come back," he shouted, and rowed away.

Jean clung to the chimney side, and kept her feet firm on the roof; but they were ankle deep now.

The water was rising still. She knew that there was little hope, but she was very happy.

"O, dear old fellow—dear, dear Ned," she said aloud, for there were none to hear her, "there'll be no blight, for you know you'll have your love safe and sound to-morrow. What's plain Jean to any one? Who'll miss her but a poor old woman who'll follow her soon? But she, Hulda, is half your life, Ned. Oh, God be thanked that I can give myself for Hulda, for your sake!"

And in the starlight her face shown calm and sweet and happy, with more than martyr's happiness, as the water arose toward it.

And at last her feet lost their hold, and her strength was gone. She was lifted and whirled away; the long brown hair, unloosened, swept far behind her; the marble face gleamed through rings of water that the starlight made a halo of. A voice sobbing through it, said: "Ned! Ned! darling Ned, good-bye!" and there was nothing to be seen but the flood still rising, and the sky spread out above it.

On the morrow Jean Abbot's body was found lying close to the old church, whence by that time the water had retreated. And Ned and Hulda, among others, came to see it. Hulda wept. Ned stood quiet, but with a strange regret in his blue eyes. The story of her sacrifice had thrilled his heart. He looked down at her face, on which the beauty of her beautiful love and unselfishness had rested in her dying moments, leaving an angelic smile upon the marble lips, and said in a dreamy way:

"Hulda, she was pretty. I never knew Jean Abbott was pretty before." And then he kissed her.

The Lop-Sidedness of Genius.

It is an unfortunate truth that genius is not domestic, nor, as a rule, amiable. Men who are great in intellect are small in emotions; like a Russian sunflower, they all run to head, and what is not flower is litter. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, Dickens, Bulwer and Carlyle. Brain and heart always in inverse ratio; eyes always gazing out at the misery of the world to the neglect of the misery at their own hearthstones. From Socrates, with his aggressive nose in every stew pot but his own, to Goethe, with sympathy for every suffering but that caused by himself, the history of genius is the history of woman's suffering, the husband's triumph and the wife's grief—the apotheosis of brains and the degradation of heart. Where talent flies, love creeps; and genius, with its head in the sky, has its feet in the desolation of its own home. It would seem as if great talents were destructive of the domestic virtues; that with man, a perfectly rounded life were impossible; that what feeds talent is robbed from the emotions, while symmetry is lost in lop-sidedness. Hero worshippers rather admire this lop-sidedness in their heroes, and the philosophic Germans, for example, have written many erudite treatises to prove that the development of Goethe's genius was due to Goethe's immorality; but to simple people who are not philosophers, and who have no theory to defend, the vices of genius are the most inexcusable of all vices.

It is a sad fact, that the world's heroes are anything but heroic; and if they are angelic as to thought they are coarse as clay as to flesh; and it is only what is left after the grave closes over them that is deserving of admiration. Had biography been an art in Elizabeth's reign, Shakespeare would doubtless have been a sufferer; were biography not an art in Victoria's reign, posterity would be grateful.

Liquor in the Army.

Gen. McClellan found it difficult to prevent the sale of liquor to soldiers, and finally gave orders that the stock of any one violating the regulations should be, summarily destroyed. The next night the provost guard visited Springman's hotel, on Pennsylvania avenue, and destroyed nearly \$2,000 worth of liquors of various kinds. The guard went into the cellar of the establishment, where most of the liquor was stored, and stove in the heads of the casks and barrels, pouring their contents upon the floor, forming a pool deep enough to float a bateau. The Columbia restaurant, kept by Joseph Platz, situated on the square below, was next overhauled by the guard, and the liquor found on the premises served in the same manner. The atmosphere in the neighborhood of the Springman house was fragrant with the odor of whisky, brandy, gin, and cordials, and was sniffed up by the several old toppers standing near with peculiar satisfaction.—Ben Perley Poore.

A Texas Doctor.

Dr. Blister is one of those physicians who do not take any nonsense from their patients. One day he presented his bill to Mose Schaumburg.

"One hundred and fifty dollars!" exclaimed Mose. "Vy, mine Gott, two funerals in dot family would not haf cost me so much as dot."

"It's not too late to have a funeral in the house yet," replied Dr. Blister, drawing an army-size revolver. Dr. Blister heels himself whenever a patient feels indisposed to settle.—Texas Sitings.

MEN OF LETTERS AS PREACHERS.

The Habitual Tendency of Certain Authors to Moralize.

Our own age differs from those that preceded it not least in the peculiar character of its moralists. In former times the minister of religion was usually the sole recognized moralist. Here and there scientific moralists have had considerable influence upon the moral practice of small groups of educated men. Both these classes of moralists we still have with us, although at present under an eclipse. Neither the clergy nor those whom they address are quite clear as to the bias of theological doctrine presupposed in all moralizing from the pulpit. The scientific moralist can not directly address a public so enormous, so ill-educated, so scant of leisure, and so eager for excitement as the public of modern Europe. Nevertheless, mankind continue to have an appetite for that moral exhortation which they denounce by rote as dry and insipid, while consuming it in great quantities, and with little regard to quality. They have found new preachers among the people who write essays, novels, and poems, who have long been accustomed to make remarks upon life and conduct, but have been esteemed not very successful in the conduct of their own lives. By common consent these gentlemen have been inducted into the vacant cure of souls. The literary man has become the one universal and impressive moralist, so that it is well worth while to trace the effect of literary modes of thought upon ethics, as well as the effect of constant ethical purpose upon literature.

Our literary moralists have naturally imparted to modern morals a literary tinge. The most fashionable virtues are the virtues of the literary spirit. Thus tolerance is pre-eminently a literary virtue; and our age is very tolerant, tolerant not only in the domain of thought, but also, if in a less degree, in the domain of action. Another literary virtue is humor, a quick and scornful perception of what is ugly, exaggerated, and insincere. This virtue has passed from books into our conscience, has made us feel the vices that cling to our very virtues, and has made the best of us almost weakly shy of avowing their own goodness. The openness and flexibility of mind, the delicacy in discriminating, the patience in hearing all sides, the indulgent kindness in judging which, above all other good qualities, complete a finished literary character, can never indeed be of much account in popular morality; but they are of more account now than they ever were before. All this, of course, is due to many causes, such as the social changes of the last hundred years; but it is in part due to the literary influence upon conduct, the influence of such writers as Thackeray and Carlyle, Victor Hugo and George Sand.

On the other hand, some of the most notable weaknesses of our generation are literary weaknesses. Morality as taught by literary men has lost as much in definiteness as it has gained in expansion. Being practical, it should speak forcibly, unless it speaks clearly. It may speak clearly in one or two ways. It may lay down in dogmatic fashion a series of short, sharp rules, apparently without vital connection or ground in reason—rules which are not to be questioned simply because the questioner will be punished. Again, it may express the net result of serious and scientific thought about the universe and man's place in it—that is to say, it may be definite because it is philosophic. Now, the literary moralist is usually not definite either in the one way or in the other. His wisdom flashes out from time to time in brilliant intuitions, in the intervals too often emitting nothing but unsavory smoke. His teaching is a series of acute observations, searching parables, or moving pictures. Such teaching exactly suits the palate of an age too critical for dogma, too impatient for philosophy; but it wants unity, it wants consistency, it wants force—wants very ill-supplied by passion of feeling and glow of imagination. So that when we read the literary moralist for anything beyond literary pleasure we commonly end in downright bewilderment.

Thus every serious reader of Carlyle's writings must be a good deal perplexed by his presentation of virtue, now as purity and now as power. Is the great man always the good man? In what sense can it be honestly said that might is right? Carlyle nowhere clearly answers these embarrassing questions, or, at most, gives us in equally positive terms two answers which seem to contradict one another, and are really very difficult to harmonize. Turn and twist the matter as we may, the ideas of Calvin are not the ideas of Goethe, nor can the modern scholar look upon this world with the eyes of one of the apostles. Carlyle would no doubt have admitted this; and yet he would have gone on exhorting us to do the thing the most angrily and righteously denounced, to close our eyes to facts and masquerade in the old clothes of the Cromwellian republic.

Or, listen to Thackeray's perpetual denunciation of worldliness. On every other page he exhorts men and women to marry without much consideration of ways and means. On every other page he twits them with their base greed, with their anxiety to get on, to make money, and to rise in the world. He might as well exhort the wolf to have cubs and not prey for them. For the stupidest reader who reflects can see that all this tugging

and lugging, all this shoving and scrambling to get a subsistence, comes from the difficulty of subsisting, and all the difficulty of subsisting from the multitude of those who compete with us and of those who depend upon us. How often do men and women bow the proud neck and silence every generous beating of the heart in order that those whom they love and who will despise them may be spared the long-suffering and humiliation that have filled their own lives? Ah, it is because so many lives are starved and shriveled up that here and there a few have space to bloom and spread themselves in the sun. It is the degradation of most that makes possible the self-respect of some. It is the score of niggards who make possible the one generous man.

The moralist who declines to face facts may denounce sentiment, but is sentimental still. His doctrine, being sentimental, can be reduced to no plain or intelligible principle; and as it does not consist with itself, it would fain make amends by being angry like an illogical man or tearful like an illogical woman. But no tears or curses tell so much as a lucid indication of facts. All of us feel the mystery of our situation, and all would like to have even the least light thrown upon it. Mercy to show us an enormous specter of the Brocken which mimics all our struggles is not showing us the way over the hill. Anybody who is good for anything has quite enough fermenting in his inside. It is wisdom, not excitement, that he wants from a teacher.

Sentimentalizing always tends to paradox, and the moralizing done by men of letters is no exception to the rule. Like other preachers, they must live; they must live by moving their hearers, and they can best move their hearers by means of the fresh and wonderful to which their own eager and mercurial temperament inclines. Thus the new priesthood is not less sorely tempted than was the old; and less than the old, if less conceivable, is the new priesthood expected to practice what it preaches. How often of late have we seen men, themselves the artificial luxuries of a most luxurious and artificial society, advocate innovations which would make all Britain a less comfortable place than any Benedictine monastery! As these men do not lack imagination, they must needs lack seriousness. Nor is it a light matter that we should read their discourses merely as we would listen to a prima donna. Nothing more demoralizes than a sermon delivered by a man who is sure that it will not be acted upon to men who do not mean to act upon it, and know that, if they did, the person most confounded would be the preacher himself.—*Fall Mall Gazette*.

What Felix Did.

Years before there was a society for checking cruelty to animals, an Irishman living in London, used to distinguish himself by defending horses from ill-treatment. Felix McCarthy, for that was his name, stood six feet five inches in his stocking feet. Though priding himself on his giant's strength and that the purest blood in the *Mae's* and *O's* flowed in his veins, yet he put both blood and brawn at the service of dumb, defenceless animals.

Meeting one day a carter, who was beating his horse because the poor beast could not draw the over-loaded cart up a steep hill, Felix ordered the man to desist. The carter replied by striking Felix over the head with his heavy whip.

In an instant a blow from the giant's fist laid the human brute in the street. The Irishman then seized the carter, lifted him up, tossed him into his cart, and drove to the police court, where the man was fined.

In defending his favorites, Felix knew neither high nor low. He once saw a noble lord beating the fine horse he was riding about the head with a stick. The indignant Irishman seized the horse and raising his right arm in a threatening gesture, said:

"Desist from bating your horse, or I'll make you!"

The nobleman jumped off in high anger demanded to know "the name of the scoundrel who dared to dictate to him."

Here is my card," said Felix, thrusting one into the nobleman's hand, "and if you will step aside, I'll give you any explanation you may require; but you shall not bate this animal as long as I have an arm to defend him."

Felix was a parliamentary reporter on a London paper.—*Youth's Companion*.

She Enjoyed Cold Weather.

The recent spell of weather calls attention to a recent article in *Littell's Living Age* called "A Lady's Life in Manitoba." The writer says she bought frozen milk by the pound all winter; mustard froze in the mustard pot, which stood a foot from the kitchen stovepipe and two feet above the stove, where there was a blazing fire all day. The kitten's ears froze, and broke off; so did the ears of a neighbor's pony. A pail of water left in the kitchen all night would freeze solid before morning. When she had been ironing the top of a pocket handkerchief the lower part would freeze on the table. The thermometer went to 58 degrees below zero. This is commented on at considerable length, and then comes this remark: "But I say deliberately that I would rather pass three winters on the prairie in Manitoba than one summer." Worse than all the freezing, the cold, the confinement, and the whole category of winter, is the mosquito, she says.—*Hartford Courant*.