FAITH LEFFINGWELL'S ORACLE.

Not far from the steep precipice over which the turbulent Yantic plunges, near the old settlement of Norwich town, is the site of the birthplace of one whose name can never be forgotten in this land. Nearly a century and a half have passed since this man was born, and the progress of improvement has almost wholly obliterated all trace of his early home. Some time ago there was discovered a relic upon this place, concerning which there prevailed a curious and suggestive tradition in the early days of the century. This relic was an old well, which some laborers found beneath many years' accumulation of sod and vegetation. The ancient walls had crumbled and fallen in; the bottom was dry, and there was picked up something of such singular shape that it was cast aside for further examination. The rust and decay of a hundred years had disfigured this strange thing, but there remained such regularity of outline and such evidence of purpose in its formation that it seemed to be plainly some man's handiwork that had been cast into the well. The workmen, after a brief scraping of it with their jackknives, threw it away as worthless, but a gentleman having the tastes of the antiquary obtained possession of it, and with patience restored to it something of its original likeness, enough at least to satisfy him that it was a bust of George III., King of England, and had been carved with no small cunning from a block of oak. Such symbols of the royalty that governed them were in the colonial days occasionally set up over the tavern porches and at the entrances of buildings where justice was meted out in the name of the King.

To the antiquary this relic seemed of great value, for he believed it to be nothing less than the soothsayer of the old well, in whose existence many of the colonists firmly believed, and whose silent oracles were interpreted by one who was regarded with awe, because possessed of the marvellous power of such interpretation. It was doubtless this wooden suggestion of royalty that was associated with a strange tradition, as told in after years. Faith Leffingwell's oracle. This is that tradition.

There came down the post road that led from Chelsea landing, at the head of the Thames, to the important villages to the north, a fine, active young man, one morning in the early fall of 1772. Though not of great stature, he was of commanding figure. There were agility, energy, and abounding health betokened by his gait. His step was quick and vigorous, though his legs were encased in heavy riding boots, with brightly polished spurs at the heels. He seemed to have recently dismounted, and to have left his horse behind. His greatcoat was somewhat tarnished by dust, as though he had ridden some distance.

He stopped in the highway, and looked with interest at a plain, substantial gambrel roof house that was set back some distance from the road, in the middle of a level field that was bounded a thousand yards or so in the rear by a thickly wooded bluff. As the young man looked about, a half smile came over his stern, hard features, and he permitted himself to utter aloud his thoughts.

"I did well to quit this spot, though it is my birthplace, and is good farm land. I did well to abjure farming. Bah! There's no energy in that, and there's stuff in me for better things, better even than mixing pills in the drug shop I have set up in New Haven. But my opportunity is to come. Am I not already commander of the Governor's Guards? and before long there'll be better business for me than playing soldier too."

He stood there scanning the home of his boyhood, and his lips curled, though the quiet place awakened none but contemptuous thoughts. Then he smiled again, this time with some measure of merriment.

"There's the old well under the apple tree, and the sweep is broken. Ha, ha! I frightened them well. I wonder if old Leffingwell's image of King George is at the bottom where I threw it in revenge for his trouncing of me."

Here the young man made his way to the well, and bending over the decaying curb looked intently down. The water was clear, though deep, and there at the bottom he saw faintly outlined the human figure, whose face the rippling water contorted into strange grimaces.

"It is there, and they say it tells fortunes. Well, what fools these pious people are."

The young man was about to turn away when a curiously garbed figure stopped him.

"Let me read your fortune, Mr. Benedict," said the person. "You know me. I am old Nancy. I know you, though you've been away so long."

"You alive yet, Nance? Egad, I should have thought you would have been gathered with your familiars ere this. Go on. What is my fortune?"

The old creature peered over the well, and then, turning upon him with a look that was meant to be awful, but which discomposed him not the least, she said:

"You will be great, but you will be cursed."

"Does it say that? Give it my best compliments, and say that it tells no strange thing. I shall be great, and cursed I have been by every person hereabouts who knew me when a lad. Peddle your mysterious wares upon the silly maids hereabouts, Nance."

"It is true, Mr. Benedict. Better for you to drown yourself to-day in the well."

"Begone," said he.

Then he hastened away, undisturbed by this nonsense, for he knew no fear. He had business to do in the peaceful old town, and wished to be about it, that he might set out again that evening for New Haven.

As he passed along the highway, looking neither to the right nor left, he approached a low red farm house, whose foundations were set flush with the narrow path beside the highway, and built with its side parallel to the road instead of the front. A great stone chimney was built on the outside like a buttress, and projected on the path a considerable space, so that one walking the path was hidden from any on the other side. The young man came abreast the chimney and then suddenly stopped and stepped back a bit. He had seen something at the window of the apartment beyond the chimney at the rear, for which he longed for another undisturbed survey. A low rythmical whirr that escaped from the partly opened window was notification that the spinning wheel within was busily employed. Removing his hat for greater convenience, the young man cautiously peered around the corner of the chimney, and thus for a moment or two feasted his eyes on what he saw. It was indeed a fair vision. Bending gracefully over the wheel, from whose distaff her fingers were busily engaged in drawing the flaxen tow, and in this operation revealing a white and rounded arm and dimpled elbow, was a young girl. Her face was fair, and the profile of it as chaste and delicate as though cut from marble. Her head was exquisitely poised, and her neck, arching with consummate grace as she bended over her work, was half entwined by a long braid of dark brown hair that she had tossed one side, so that it depended below her shoulder. Quaintly framed, too, was this living picture. The dark red of the woodwork around the window was brought into contrast with the mingled coloring of a creeping vine that had clambered up on one side and festooned the sills all about with leaves, some still deep green, some tipped with scarlet by the early hints of fall, and some brightened with a darker color.

"A handsome maid, egad," said the young man. "Who is she? This was Squire Leffingwell's house. Can it be that that stern old Puritan has suffered such a flower as this to grow here? I will find out. The maid pleases me."

So saying, he stepped out in full view of the girl, and with great grace and consideration saluted her.

The girl turned, a little startled at the presence of this fine man, thus unexpectedly appearing. She colored slightly, but she courteously returned his salutation, and placed her hand upon the wheel gently to check its revolutions.

"I ask your pardon, mistress, so rudely to have disturbed you, but you were intent with your spinning, and saw me not till I spoke."

"The chimney conceals all who approach from that way, and few take the path on this side," she said.

As she spoke she looked furtively, but modestly, upon this stranger, as though wondering who this courteous-mannered man could be. He, too, fixed his piercing dark eyes searchingly upon her for a moment, and then, with a smile and a manner so well bred that she was not disturbed, he approached nearer and held out his hand. She did not take it, but looked wonderingly upon him.

"So my memory is better than yours," he said, his hand still extended and resting upon the window sill. "To me you are now known, and I will make you remember me. Years ago a little girl went out into the field yonder, down by the brook, dressed in a bright red garment, and a maddened and infuriated animal almost caught her on his horns, when a young fellow seized her and carried her safely away over the stone wall. You were the little girl—"

Her face brightened, and she looked upon him with cordiality. "And you were the great boy that saved me. It is you, indeed, Mr. Benedict, though you are greatly unlike the picture my memory carried of the boy who rescued me, and whose mischief, my father said, had maddened the animal."

"Yes," said he, laughing. "I remember that I did torment the brute. Mischief was my pastime then, I fear. But I atoned for it. I saved you, and may I tell you, Mistress Faith, that never did I a better thing, and that I am well repaid by the vision I have had of you as you sat there unconscious that you were beheld."

She looked quickly at him, not with displeasure, exactly, because of the compliment, but because she was not used to such sudden and frank expressions of favor.

"You will take my hand now, Mistress Faith," said he.

"Yes, but not there over the window sill. Come in, and welcome back, Mr. Benedict."

She arose and went away, and an instant later he heard the great latch in the broad-ribbed door rattling in its socket, and there she stood revealed upon the threshold with her hand extended for him to take.

"It amazes me," said he when they were within, "that this should be my little playmate Faith, who did once pull my hair when I ventured to tease her."

"Surely, Mr. Benedict, your disposition always was to tease as I remember it."

"And as you have heard people say," he added quickly. "I know I was not held in great esteem when I went away from here, especially with your father. But he, I trust, has forgotten my mischievousness, and you, you, I know, have not regarded me unkindly."

"Not unless you think it is unkind to have regarded you not at all," said she, with so much of mischief in her tone that her words were plainly playful.

"T'would be unkind if it was so, but 'tis not. Come, mistress, you now and then recalled the mischievous Benedict."

"Well, sometimes, when you were suggested," she answered, demurely.

"Suggested! by what, or whom?"

"Of course, if ever I saw a maddened, roaring, tearing bull, then I surely could not forget my deliverer."

"And saw you many such?"

"One."

"Then you have thought of me but once."

"Once more, perhaps."

"When?"

"When, by chance, I passed by the old well in your father's orchard."

"The old well," said he, thoughtfully. "What was there in that that suggested me?"

"Surely, once as you led me to it, you whispered solemnly to me, and, with terror on your face, said, as you pointed down into it, 'Silence, Faith, or the servant of the Evil One will rise and take you,' and then you made me peep over, and really I saw the horrible suggestion of a human or a fiendish form, and I ran, screaming, away, you laughing at my terror."

"I laughed, but because of the foolishness of it. I have no reason to fear the mysterious occupant. Do you go there now?"

"Never since then."

"You should. The old fellow's there yet. He came up at my bidding this morning, and he told old Nance Riggs terrible things about me. I'll warrant if you go there he will tell your destiny for you. I know the ghostly servant of Satan well."

She looked queerly at him, for this flippancy seemed to her to justify the repute he had left behind him when he departed from that town to take up his residence elsewhere. She wondered that one, even so virile a man, could speak with trifling upon such dreadful subjects. "He is a strange man as he was boy," she thought. "He fears nothing seen or unseen now, and did not then."

Though she failed not to pay him that tribute of respect that daring commands, and though she saw that he had acquired some of the graces and mannerisms of fine breeding, yet she feared him, and, as he drew his seat nearer her, she withdrew, with simple cunning that amused though it annoyed him, until she had placed herself behind the protection of the great spinning wheel. She did not like his eyes, though they were bright, and with distress she saw that she was tempted to look into them, only to see that they hid all purpose and thought except condescension and the wish to be amused by her.

"Mistress Faith," said he, "I have been away ten years, and when I went you were a maid of 7 or 8. Thus have I always thought of you. So selfish and thoughtless are busy men."

"You were quite a man when you went, Mr. Benedict."

"Yes, quite and just, for I was but 21. My soldiers say that I look scarcely more than that to-day. Mistress, you should not hide your graces in this dull town. Surely none pass day by day but the farmers' lads. You should come to New Haven, where you may see much gayety and the bustle of life."

"I know none there but one."

"Have you friends there?"

"Yes, one of the scholars in the college."

"One of the pale-faced lads," said he with a smile that was almost a sneer. "Mind them not, my little playmate. Such as you are for the brave and strong, and you will find none such among the book worms."

"Nathan is both brave and strong," she said.

He smiled, and so contemptuously that she was nettled. Then he asked of the old acquaintances, and chatted of the olden time when she was his little playmate. Then her father entered, looking sternly upon this stranger until Faith told him that the young man was their old neighbor, Benedict.

"And a title for you, too, Squire," said Mr. Benedict. "But you trounced me well once."

"Aye, Benedict, you were a wilful lad, and many's the time I did predict you'd come to no good end. But you have prospered, I hear, and have become a man of authority in your community. Be just, fear God, and you will be a man of power wherever you are. Is there to be war with the King?"

"Without doubt."

"And you are eager for it?"

"You will hear from me if there be war. I have learned, Squire, that there is the stuff of a soldier in me."

"I think there is; but put on the armor of righteousness, that you may be completely equipped."

They chatted a while, the young man saying that his horse had cast a shoe, which was being reset at the landing, and that he had gone on on foot to do such business as he had.

"Then you will return this way by evening," said the Squire. "Stop and take your supper with us. I would be glad to talk more with you of the war. You learn more in your large town than we can here." Then he went away.

Later in the day the maid was busily employed with her wheel, when a horseman reined in abreast the window. He called to her in gentle tones: "Mistress Faith, Mistress Faith, may I dismount?"

When she heard that voice she looked up with joy and spoke with cordial greeting: "Why, Nathan, is it you? We should be grieved did you ride by. Stable your horse, Nathan, and then come in to see what a greeting will be yours."

The youth, a slender, lithe lad, leapt from the saddle to the ground, and then led the dusty horse somewhere away. Presently he returned, and found Faith awaiting him, standing on the great cracked millstone that served for a substantial doorstep. She extended both hands, a smile of welcome on her face that was worth many miles of riding to receive. The youth took her hands, and held them, and though he stood on the ground and she on the doorstep, so tall was he that their eyes were on a level as they gave and received reciprocal glances of pleasure. The bloom of tender youth was on the young man's cheeks, which were almost as those of the maid. His eyes were large, dark, and good to look into, for ther betokened honesty and courage. When they had exchanged the first few words of greeting she led him, her hand in his, within.

"The ride was dusty, and the day is sultry, Faith," said he, "but I minded not these discomforts."

"You must have had a peaceful mind, then."

"You know I did, for it was on my mind that before the night I should see my Faith again."

"Yes, Faith. 'Tis my last year at the college. I am now on my way there. After that year I shall be free to make good use of my learning, so that by and by when I come I may take you with me."

"You are looking far ahead, Nathan," said she, with such bewitching coyness that he was impatient for the passage of the months and years.

"I wish that the time had come. But we must be patient. God has some business of importance for me in this world. Of that I have conviction, and I must be prepared for it. Besides, I long to have so well improved such gifts as God has bestowed upon me that you may be proud of me."

He was seated by her side, his hand still holding hers, and for a time both were silent. Then he said musingly: "Stormy times are preparing for my country. I have a part therein. I thank God that he has permitted me to be born in time to act that part as He intends."

"What were you saying, Nathan? You speak so strangely, as though not to me at all, but to some one invisible to me whom your eyes are fixed upon."

"Was I so absent-minded, Faith? Mind it not. To be with you is peace for me, and my mind has been filled with troublous thoughts of late."

"What trouble, Nathan? You are always sedate, but to-day you seem almost anxious minded. I am happy to be by your side now."

"Yes, and it is peace to have you here. But I should see your parents. This evening, when the sun is set, we will sit together and watch the stars come out, as we used to do."

'Squire Leffingwell was pleased that this young guest should be there. It had been Nathan's custom, as he passed back and forth between his home in Coventry town, twenty miles away, and the college in New Haven, to spend a night with these people. The rigorous old man was well impressed by the youth's learning, sobriety of habit, and by his manly rectitude of character. So that, being a wise father, he had with pleasure observed that an attachment had grown that promised to give his tender flower, Faith, a strong protector in good time. On this day he talked much with Nathan of the clouds that were gathering over the country; of Sam Adams and his stirring words, and of the brave deeds of their brethren of the Massachusetts colony in Boston. The old 'Squire perceived that Nathan was most seriously minded about these things, and that an ardent patriotism commanded him. But when Nathan, with unusual enthusiasm and excitement, said: "Sir, God has a special part for me to do in the days that are near," so convincing was his manner that the old man was convinced as well, and he said, "Nathan, I believe it, and you will do it well."

It happened that just before the hour for the evening meal their old neighbor, Mr. Benedict, came again.

"Nathan," said Faith, "our old neighbor and my big playfellow is here. Mr. Benedict, the friend of whom I spoke has happened in upon us," and she presented these two men by name to each other.

In after years, so long as she lived, remembered the girl this strange meeting that took place before her. The young men seemed for an instant to have seen something in each other, some hint or premonition of what afterward would happen, some revelation that intuition suggested, that caused them to be unmindful for an instant of the formalities of the occasion. The elder fixed his piercing dark eyes upon the younger student, not rudely, but yet strangely, and then, recovering himself, bowed low. The younger, as firm and manly, spite of his youth, returned the strange glance with almost strained expression of inquiry. Then he returned the salutation. Neither spoke. At the table conversation turned upon the threatened revolt of the colonies.

"It will come," said Mr. Benedict, "and what an opportunity for glory and for brave exploit will there not be for our vigorous young men. Is it not so?" he asked of Nathan.

"It will come," said Nathan, with solemnity of tone, "and what opportunity may there not be of doing service for our country."

The elder, with as much display of contempt as was possible for one to show who cultivated good manners, turned to Faith and said: "Your young friend is a dreamer."

But when they came to the parting with him, Benedict said to Nathan, "Something tells me that we may be both heard from if the war comes. That impression seized me as Mistress Faith presented me."

"It is strange that I, too, was similarly impressed," replied Nathan coldly.

In the early evening of the next day, as Faith was seated where she had sat beside him she loved on the evening before, she heard a voice calling: "Faith, child, Faith."

She knew the voice and she said: "What is it, Nancy?"

"Come walk with me."

The young girl did as she was bid, for she was in the mood to hear what this mysterious, curious creature of solemn face and shaggy eyebrows might say to her.

"Faith, Faith Leffingwell," said the old woman, "Nathan was with you yesterday."

"You know it, Nancy."

"And Mr. Benedict, too."

"You saw him."

"And did these two men meet? Did you bring them together?"

"Yes, Nancy?"

"Then Nathan is the other one. I knew I should see the other. Come with me, Faith."

The old woman led the girl to the old well. The setting sun threw an almost weird and ghostly light upon the trees and fields.

"Look there upon the water of the well, Faith," said the old woman.

"I cannot, Nancy. I was frightened once."

"But you will not be harmed. Do it."

The girl, she knew not why, timidly did as she was commanded, but she suddenly started back: "'Tis the same awful face and form, Nancy," she said. "Let us go away."

"You have seen it, then. That was what I wished. Let me look upon it now."

"The old woman bent low over the curb, and thus remained many moments. Then she arose, and turning to the young girl, said: "It has told me. I know."

"What, Nancy?"

"Many strange things. Fame and infamy were here yesterday. Both sprung in this little corner of Connecticut colony. This is what it said of you, Faith Leffingwell: 'A great but evil one shall save her; a greater and a noble one shall be her lover.' Think well of that, Faith. Therein is your destiny."

"What does it mean, Nancy?"

"You will live to learn. Tell me, did not Mr. Benedict once save your life?"

"He said, unhesitatingly.

"Then the half is already told."

For many days the young maid pondered over this mysterious oracle. She would sit dreamily, thoughtfully, at the distaff, forgetting her occupation, so that the wheel would revolve very slowly, and her hands with the yarn in them fall into her lap. Then suddenly she would awaken, and with a vigorous twist set the wheel in motion again. But though she reasoned that it was all absurd, yet the meaning of the oracle perplexed her.

Four years passed away. The war had come. The two men whom she had brought together were engaged in it. One, Mr. Benedict, had already entered upon his fame; the other, Nathan, was still an humble soldier, whose missives to her were full of courage and hope, and breathed an ardent patriotism. One day a messenger gave Faith a letter. It was from Nathan. It was tender, almost sorrowfully so, but he bade her be courageous, though he was about to enter upon a perilous mission, but one that his duty called him to accept. "This," he wrote, "is what God has set apart for me to do."

"He will do it, father," said Faith. "Nathan never fails. And the patriotic old man said:

"Nathan will do it, whatever it is."

A week later Esquire Leffingwell sought Faith. "My child," he said, "have you the courage Nathan desired you to exercise?"

"I trust so, father; what need is there for it?"

"Faith, if Nathan were required to give up all, even his life, for his country, what then?"

"Did—he—not assume that when he became a soldier?"

"Would you have Nathan make the sacrifice?"

"Yes. No. I cannot say. I do not know."

"But if it were for his country?"

"Father, what is this news you have?"

"But this, my child. A message I have received says that Washington sent one as a spy upon Long Island on a perilous but important mission. That one was captured by the British, condemned and hanged, and when upon the gallows his dying words of sublime courage and faith were: 'I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.' Those were Nathan Hale's dying words, my child. Your Nathan, weep not for him, but be proud that such a man loved you."

"My Nathan!" she said, with one passionate cry; and then, with the chill tone of despair, she said, as she falteringly crept toward her father for support, "Nathan has done what God had in store for him. I thank God such a man loved me." Then the reaction came.

The months and years passed. Faith understood the mysterious oracle. "A greater and a noble one shall be thy lover," and she found content and joy in the consciousness not only of his greatness, but of the universal recognition of it.

But what of the other? A great and evil one! Great this one was now acknowledged—a great soldier, a daring commander. No evil one surely, she used to ponder.

One day her aged father, his face convulsed with passion, came to her.

"Faith, my child, Benedict has fulfilled the promise of his youth. He has become infamous."

"What meant you, father?"

"Hear this: The commander at West Point has been detected in an attempt to betray his country and his trust to the British."

"Who was this commander, father?"

"Benedict Arnold, our neighbor once."

"An evil one, an evil one. Surely this strange oracle was true," and she then narrated to her father the mysterious tale of the oracle. Thus, probably, was this tradition handed down.

It is left for a relic hunter, an antiquary, who has the wooden image of King George, that in his youth Benedict Arnold, for spite, obtained it surreptitiously and cast it in the well, where, in a proper light, it was seen by some superstitious-minded person. E. J. E.

A NEW POISON DISCOVERED.

The Result of a Chemical Search Caused by Cheese Poisoning in Michigan.

It is well known that cases of severe illness sometimes follow the eating of cheese. In the United States, and in some parts of Germany, such instances are of frequent occurrence. We hear of similar cases, too, in England and, though less often, in France. Among American dairymen cheese which produces such effects is known as sick cheese. Formerly this article was believed to be confined wholly to cheeses made in small quantities on farms. Some years ago, however, the reputation of a large cheese factory in Ohio was destroyed through the large number of cases of alarming illness arising from eating of its product; and more recently, cheese poisoning became so common as to excite alarm among dairymen. Finally, so many persons were poisoned last year in the State of Michigan by cheese made in one of its largest factories, and by a thoroughly experienced maker, that it was decided to enter upon a search for the mysterious substance which was causing all the trouble. This work was undertaken by Prof. V. C. Vaughan, who lately presented a report of his investigation to the Michigan State Board of Health.

The samples of cheese examined had no peculiarities of appearance, odor, or taste by which they could be distinguished from those of good cheese. Of two pieces, one poisonous and the other wholesome, a dog or cat would choose the good cheese, but the Professor thinks this is due to an acuteness of the sense of smell not possessed by man. The animals are not affected by eating the cheese. Possibly if a person tasted a cheese knowing that it was poisonous he might detect a sharpness of taste which would not ordinarily be noticed. But there is no certain means, aside from a chemical examination, by which a poisonous cheese can be distinguished from a wholesome one. The most trustworthy, ready method of examination is to press a strip of blue litmus paper against a freshly cut surface of the cheese. If the paper is reddened instantly and intensely, the cheese may be regarded with suspicion. When treated in this way any green cheese will redden the litmus paper, but ordinarily the reddening will be produced slowly and will be slight. If the piece of cheese be dry it should be rubbed up with an equal volume of water, and the paper should then be dipped in the water. Dr. Vaughn thinks that grocerymen should apply this test to every fresh cheese.

After a long and determined hunt the Professor succeeded in isolating the poison, which will now pass into chemical science under the name of tyrotoxicon. It is found to be a product of imperfect putrefaction in the cheese, and it occurs in the manufacturing vat, for the curd itself has been known to poison persons. Tyrotoxicon appears in the form of needle-shaped crystals, which are freely soluble in water. The smallest visible fragments of a crystal placed upon the tongue caused a sharp, stinging pain and in a few minutes dryness and constriction of the throat. A slightly larger amount produced vomiting, nausea, and diarrhœa. The isolated poison has a sharp, pungent odor, but in the cheese the taste and odor of the poison are both modified beyond recognition. The poison is volatile, and even poisonous cheese may be eaten after it is cooked.

The symptoms observed in cheese poisoning are similar to those caused by tyrotoxicon, with the addition of headache, double vision, and marked nervous prostration. In rare instances the sufferer dies from collapse.

POETRY OF THE PERIOD.

The Promises.

From the Sailors' Magazine.

The springtime came, and our young orchard trees
Put on white blossoms for their new spring suits;
Our pastor said, "These are God's promises—
The blossoms are God's promises of fruit!"

And this he said to cheer us in our toil,
For we were weary, both in heart and hand,
Of struggling with the hard and stubborn soil
In our new life upon the rocky land.

We waited, knowing that his words were true,
And ate the fruit with joy and gratitude;
Then learned from him another lesson, new,
That feeds our souls with sweet and heavenly food.

"God's promises are blossoms, white and pure,
'Twixt leaves of Holy Writ, with spots of red
From Christ's dear Cross; and their sweet fruit is sure
To them who trust and wait," our pastor said.

"For from the tree of Life, whose deathless root
Fails not, these blossoms springing do unfold
And bloom in beauty, and then grow to fruit
Worth more to man than all the world's rich gold.

"Yet we may freely eat from day to day,
And grow in strength and patience more and more
To do and bear through all life's weary way,
Then find laid up for us a boundless store!"

EDWARD HOPPER.

The City of the Living.

From the Boston Transcript.

In a long-vanished age, whose varied story
No record has to day,
So long ago, expired its grief and glory,
There flourished far away,

In a broad realm whose beauty passed all measure,
A city fair and wide,
Wherein the dwellers lived in peace and pleasure,
And never any died.

Disease and pain and death, those stern marauders
That mar our world's fair face,
Never encroached upon the pleasant borders
Of this bright dwelling place.

No fear of parting and no dread of dying
Could ever enter there;
No mourning for the lost, no anguished crying,
Made any face less fair.

Without the city's walls Death reigned as ever,
And graves rose side by side;
Within the people laughed at his endeavor,
And never any died.

O happiest of all earth's favored places!
Oh, bliss to dwell therein!
To live in the sweet light of loving faces
And fear no grave between!

To feel no death-damp growing cold and colder,
Stopping the life's warm truth;
To live on never lonelier nor older,
Radiant in deathless youth.

And hurrying from the world's remotest quarters
A tide of pilgrims flowed
Across broad plains and over mighty waters
To find that blest abode.

And there they lived in happiness and pleasure,
And grew in power and pride,
And did great deeds and laid up stores of treasure,
And never any died.

And many years rolled on and saw them striving
With unabated breath;
And other years still found and left them living,
And gave no hope of death.

Yet listen, hapless soul, whom angels pity,
Craving a boon like this;
Mark how the dwellers of that wondrous city
Grew weary of their bliss.

One and another who had been concealing
The pain of life's long thrall,
Forsook their pleasant places and came stealing
Outside the city's wall.

Craving with wish that brooked no more denying,
So long had it been crossed,
The blessed possibility of dying—
The treasure they had lost!

Daily the current of rest-seeking mortals
Swelled to a broader tide,
Till none were left within the city's portals,
And graves grew green outside.

Would it be worth the having or the giving,
The boon of endless breath?
Ah, for the weariness that comes of living
There is no cure but death!

Ours were, indeed, a fate deserving pity
Were that sweet rest denied;
And few, methinks, would care to find the city
Where never any died!

ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

Song of the Teakettle.

From the Travelers' Record.

Here like a brooding goose I sit,
Watched over by the algaroba,
With nest of coals instead of eggs,
A patient salamander!
In the liquid urn that bubbles near,
Well fed and with fragrant Hyson,
Is brewed the cup to granddames dear,
King George put such a price on.

Let there sing the Arab bean
That leaves the brain so murky;
I will say do for dull Hindu
Or torpid sons of Turkey;
Nectarian they may think it still,
Their taste I call in question;
I know it serves to spoil the nerves
And undermine digestion.

What woes, alas! are brought to pass
By social dissipation—
The fiery punch, the midnight lunch,
The morning agitation!
How grateful then the generous bowl
That comes with hope and healing:
That lifts to life the sinking soul
And warms with fellow feeling!

Half frozen on his icy throne—
The land of all his pleasure—
I've heard him say, twelve times a day,
He quaffs it with his ushers!
And good Queen Vic, when she's at sick,
And headaches hold her close long,
Declines her customary port,
With "Brown, a cup of Oolong!"

Thus prince and pauper well agree
To laud with equal brazes
The social drink of Confucius,
That cheers, but never crazes.
While o'er an evening fire-light glows,
The steam with music blending,
I still keep singing through my nose
My supper song unending!

H. S. CORNWELL.

Stolen Kisses.

From the White Mountain Echo.

In silence and hush of a dream,
With never a sound to be heard,
But a touch of lips in the gleam
Of the fire, and never a word.
The echo will ever repeat,
Breaking the silence and swain:
"Stolen kisses are always sweet,
And love is never in vain!"

For a kiss would a maiden wake
From the charm of a dreamful sleep,
And a touch of true love would break
The peace and hush of the deep.
For ever the echo shall greet,
Like song of a vanishing rain:
"Stolen kisses are always sweet,
And love is never in vain!"

When hearts and lips have grown cold,
And love lives but for an hour;
When life's romance has been told,
And kisses have lost their power,
Then shall soft memory fleet,
No more a dream to enchain,
Yet stolen kisses are always sweet,
And love is never in vain.

O. C. BINGHAM.

Making Up After a Quarrel.

From the Globe-Democrat.

She stands beside the door in white disdain;
For some portentous nothing is at stake,
Nor he make right or wrong, though he were fain.
Alack! their honeymoon is on the wane;
The hearts that beat as one have learned to ache;
The stream whereon they two have come to slake
Love's thirst is parched for drought of Love's sweet rain.
They brood in sullen silence 'neath the cloud
That now first shadows this fair vellock or.
When, lo! it bursts in tears from both their eyes,
And, on each other's lips, their anger dies.
Upon his breast her golden head is bowed,
And, in his arms, he clasps his Life once more.

The Snippershan.

From Outing.

The skipper sailed or east or west
From some Seguin to far Menan,
Ere Doom's harsh voice rang in his ears
From the hoarse surf of Snippershan.

Soft plash the waves in summer noons
Along the black reefs' ragged span;
But madly hiss the breakers wild
Through winter nights on Snippershan.

Fate casts the lot for each and all;
A bubble is the life of man
As frail as those that seething burst
In the fierce waves on Snippershan.

What Troubled Him.

From the San Francisco News Letter.

Within a quiet church the sunlight stole,
Touching the pictured panes with tender care,
It entered many a darkened, sorrowing soul,
And kissed the heads of those bowed low in prayer.

But most it lingered o'er a gray-haired man,
With worn and weary face and gleaming eyes,
Like smouldering coals that the fierce breeze might fan
To leaping flames beneath the summer skies.

The solemn music pealed upon the air,
And his stern brow grew dark with secret pain,
His trembling fingers clinched as if to tear—
Or break some torturing link in Memory's chain.

He listened but he shunned the preacher's gaze,
And through the sermon restless moved about.
Clearly he'd done some crime in other days;
Perhaps he was a convict pardoned out.

Such thoughts as these filled one fair Christian soul,
And moved with pity ere he left the place,
Close to the sinner's side she trembling stole,
And lifted up a winsome, earnest face:

"Oh turn, heaven will forgive, have you not heard?
Your conscience troubles you for sin, I see."
"Conscience? Well, that's a mighty high flown word.
Now in our parts we call the thing a flea!"

Girls, as You Go Along.

From Good Housekeeping.

Come all you fair young housewives and listen unto me
(I mean those lucky ones who are from servant bondage free)
And some advice I'll give you in a simple little song,
With the simple little chorus of—girls, as you go along.

Leave everything where it should be, girls, as you go along.

You take a fancy for a cake, late in the afternoon,
And flour, butter, sugar, eggs, and milk, and bowl, and spoon,
And other necessary aids the kitchen table throng;
Don't let them stay, clear them away, girls, as you go along.

Oh! as you go along.

Put each one back in its right place, girls, as you go along.
And then you'll find how easily a great deal can be done,
Without your being tired to death, at setting of the sun.
And though, sometimes, in spite of care, things seem to turn out wrong,
'Twill always pay to smooth the way, girls, as you go along.

Oh! as you go along.

Then never leave your work behind, girls, as you go along.

MARGARET ETTINGE.

SOME NEW BOOKS.

Two Novels Worth Reading.

In *Zoroaster*, by F. MARION CRAWFORD (Macmillans), we have a somewhat noteworthy example of the anomalous species of composition which, from inability to define it more precisely, we are wont to call romance. Assuredly no one would describe this story as a historical novel, although one of the characters bears the well-known name of Darius, and although the scenes are laid in a place and epoch regarding which a good deal of fragmentary information may be gleaned from Greek historians. For the central figure, on the other hand, the author has relied wholly on his imagination, for it is a mooted question among the most competent students of the Avesta whether such a man as Zoroaster ever lived, and there is certainly much less proof of the Zend teacher's existence than of Gautama's. But there is absolutely no ground for making Zoroaster a contemporary of Darius, and Mr. Crawford's assumption that the function of the Persian prophet was to simplify and purify the Magian ceremonialism, although supported by the analogous relation of Buddha to Brahmanism, is diametrically opposed to the prevailing view of Oriental scholars, who hold that the Magian system of minute observances was gradually superposed upon the faith taught by Zoroaster, as the fabric of ecclesiasticism was built over primitive Christianity. So that, although Mr. Crawford has evidently read with much care the latest translations (all more or less tentative) of the Avesta, and has woven some extracts from the Zend Scriptures into his story, we cannot deem those readers well advised who take up this book under the impression that they have hit upon an easy process of absorbing at third hand a tincture of Oriental learning. But, considered exclusively as a work of imagination, this tale has not a little merit. There is much vigor in the figure of Darius, and the heroine, a daughter of exiled Hebrew princes—whose relation to Atossa is obviously suggested by that of Esther to Vashti in the Biblical narrative—is drawn with singular distinctness and power.

We cannot better illustrate the difference between a romance that only plays with history and a veritable historical novel than by turning to *Serapis*, by Prof. GEORG EBERS, of which an excellent translation by CLARA BELL has been published by W. S. Gottsberger. This story is the latest, but not, we trust, the culminating number of the series by which the author has essayed to portray the transformations of Egyptian civilization from the time of Sesostris (about B. C. 1750) to the suppression of paganism in Alexandria, toward the close of the fourth century of our era. It is not surprising that we should here obtain for the first time a clear conception of the worship of Serapis, which, unheard of in classic times, played so conspicuous a part in the expiring struggles of paganism. It is not surprising, because no other writer possessed of equal literary skill has been at once a ripe Greek scholar and an Egyptologist of deserved renown, and has been thus enabled to explain the special force with which the worship of Serapis, in which Hellenic and Pharaonic elements were fused, appealed to the traditions and imagination of the composite population of Alexandria. The part which in this story the monks, who had long been the militia of the Egyptian Church, take in the destruction of the Serapeum, at that time probably the noblest building devoted to religious uses, will remind the English reader of the tragedy recounted in Charles Kingsley's "Hypatia." But one need not be himself equipped with any very profound erudition to recognize the superiority of the German book as regards the scrupulous reproduction of topography, and of the manners, customs, and ideas peculiar to the place and time. So minutely realistic are Ebers's descriptions that with this tale before us we might almost construct a map of certain quarters of Alexandria, as they would have impressed themselves upon a visitor about A. D. 375. This seems an amazing *tour de force* when we bear in mind that this narrative is no mere piece of mechanical mosaic, like "Charicles" or "Gallus," but a genuine work of art, whose characters are human beings, and whose plot is ingeniously contrived to whet curiosity and rivet attention.

The Apostle Paul's Relation to Christianity.

Several of the series of lectures delivered annually in London in accordance with the terms of the Hilbert foundation have been reprinted in this country, but none will be so welcome to well-informed and thoughtful readers as the English translation, published by the Scribners, of the discourses pronounced by Prof. OTTO PFLEIDERER of the University of Berlin on *The Influence of the Apostle Paul on Christianity*. We have here the latest and most authoritative affirmation of German scholarship on one of the most hotly and persistently debated questions raised by the history of Christianity, namely, How weighty a factor was Paul in the conversion of the belief in the Messiahship of Christ from a tribal into an ecumenical religion? It will be found that Dr. Pfleiderer occupies a middle ground between the depreciatory attitude of Renan on the one hand—who aims to minimize the real value of the Pauline element, while admitting that at certain epochs it has played a potent, not to say harmful rôle—and the view propounded by many German rationalists upon the other, for whom the personality and accomplishment of Jesus are utterly eclipsed by the Apostle to the Gentiles. Two or three extracts will demonstrate how well these lectures deserve careful examination, and will outline the distinctive position taken by the author.

Let us mark, first, how he regards the exaggerated estimate of Paul's importance to which the Tübingen followers of C. F. Baur were impelled by a rigorous application of the historical method of inquiry to theology. He points out that the extreme outcome of their tendencies has been unflinchingly proclaimed by Hartmann. "If Paul," said Hartmann, "had not invented heathen Christianity, the idea would never have occurred to later ages that Jewish Christianity was anything else than a religion of law peculiar to the Jewish nation, containing intensified Messianic expectations and with a definite reference of those expectations to the person of a prophet who was not acknowledged while he lived and met with a violent death." According to Hartmann, "neither Jesus nor the first Church advanced in religious principles beyond Judaism; the new principle of the universal religion of salvation originated with the Apostle Paul." Dr. Pfleiderer admits that there is some ground for Hartmann's assertions. "It is true that the Messianic movement would not have become the universal religion of Christianity without the work of Paul. But," he adds, "it has been forgotten that the work of Paul presupposes as its indispensable basis the personal history of Jesus, without which basis it would be as a castle in the clouds. The whole subject matter of the Epistles of Paul would be to us unintelligible, the very fact of his change from a Pharisee into an Apostle incomprehensible, and the success of his missionary labors inexplicable, were we to throw aside the one explanatory key which Paul presents to us in constantly recurring declarations," of which we have an example in "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The lecturer reiterates that "simply to ignore these personal declarations of the Apostle would be in itself an unwarrantably arbitrary proceeding, and is in the end rendered wholly impossible by the fact that it is only by means of them that the history of Paul becomes intelligible." Hartmann's conclusion, therefore, must be qualified, for the only proposition reconcilable with the facts and with sound reasoning is that, while Christian theology indubitably dates from Paul, the Christian religion dates from Jesus.

To complete the indications of the author's distinctive views, we should reproduce some of his comments on the quite opposite inclination evinced by some theologians and writers to belittle the worth of Paul's services and magnify the mischief of some outgrowths of his influence. The adverse criticisms are considered at length in the chapters which investigate the Apostle's relation to Gnosticism and to the Prot