

THE QUEEN OF AUTUMN.

Not many years ago there was, every autumn, a famine of flowers, and scarcely a single hardy, home-grown blossom was to be had in England from the middle of October till early in January. Those who could not afford hot-house flowers had to content themselves with bright holly berries, Christmas roses, and other imperfect substitutes. To-day all that is changed, and the poorest day labourer can, if he pleases, make his house almost as gay in November as in July. The chrysanthemum has come, and it has so quickly secured a place in our favour that it now threatens to rival the rose, our national emblem, in popularity. It is the most adaptable and the most varied plant under the sun. Not only does it bloom when all other flowers are faded, but it will flourish amid the smoke and togs of central London almost, if not quite, as well as in green fields; and it can be grown either as a dwarf pot plant, a few inches high, or as a great shrub, towering many feet in the air. Its flowers are of infinitely different shapes, and plants can be had either with a single gigantic blossom, twelve to fourteen inches across, or with a myriad of tiny flowers, each less than three-quarters of an inch in diameter, produced so prodigally that they transform the plant into one mass of brilliant colour.

HER HISTORY.

It is now about two hundred years since the chrysanthemum was first introduced from China into Europe, but it was then very different from the flower of to-day. The only variety known had a small, insignificant-looking, uneven yellow blossom, and florists did not think it worth the trouble of raising. So, although importations were once or twice made, we hear hardly anything about it, and it was almost forgotten, save for a casual mention by botanists. A change took place in 1789, when a French merchant, Monsieur Blanchard of Marseilles, had three roots of the large-flowered variety sent to him from China. Only one reached its destination alive, but when this came into bloom, gardeners at once realized that here was something of very different value to the specimens they had formerly seen. Fresh importations were made, and at the same time home growers were busy, by seed raising and other means, in making fresh varieties. In 1868 Mr. Fortune, the well-known Chinese traveller, sent home for the first time specimens of the beautiful pompons, and when Japan was opened up to Europeans the same explorer obtained the first specimen of the Japanese varieties. These last-named form a distinct family in themselves, and with their arrival the real popularity of the flower began.

The improvements that have been wrought in the chrysanthemum by patient, skilled culture are almost incredible. The number of distinct varieties has been greatly increased, and, at the same time, flowers have, year by year, been made larger and larger, and have been improved in shape and colour. Every raiser strives to obtain, either through a "sport," by seed raising, or by more intricate means, new named kinds of some distinct merit; but the result is that every year there are forced on the market, along with some good new varieties, a large number of "new flowers" little different from the old stock kinds. Some of the most distinctive of the new kinds were discovered by the merest chance. For instance, a few years ago a lady in the United States received from a friend in Japan a present of a few flower roots.

HER FRUITFULNESS.

Among these was a chrysanthemum having a hairy covering over its flowers, a feature never before seen—at least to such an extent as on this specimen. A firm of florists, hearing of the plant, bought it for £300. This was a large sum to give for a single root, but the buyers well knew what they were about. Immediately they obtained it, they subdivided it as much as possible, cutting up every leaf and every joint, and planting them separately. Within a few months they had raised an immense stock, and then they put their find on the market. In a short time 35,000 plants were sold, all of which had been raised from the one root. But in this case the plant had been propagated rather too rapidly, and its constitution was so weakened that most of the roots sold the first season did not bear a single flower.

Yet in spite of the skill of the chrysanthemum growers there are two things that they cannot do. One is to raise a blue flower. Tradition says that blue chrysanthemums are raised and jealously guarded in some secluded Buddhist monasteries in Japan; but no stranger is allowed to look upon them, nor will the priests permit them to be propagated in any way, beyond what is necessary for keeping up their stock. Pictures of blue chrysanthemums are frequently seen on Japanese pottery, but whether the potters have painted from nature or from their own imaginations, no one can tell. In spite of the most diligent search no European has been able to come across the blue flower, and many of our most experienced growers openly scoff at the idea of its existing as ridiculous. The blue chrysanthemum, they declare, is as impossible as the blue rose. The other thing growers have not yet been able to do is to obtain really sweet-scented varieties. Not very long ago a French exhibitor declared that he had overcome this latter difficulty, and had on view a number of plants whose blossoms emitted a delightful odour. At first every one was delighted, but soon suspicions were aroused, and on examination it was found that the smell had been obtained by letting a few drops of scent fall on each flower!

THE THEATRE.

"A SCREW LOOSE," AT THE VAUDEVILLE.

There seems to be at the moment a spasmodic rerudescence of sheer farce. After "Tom, Dick, and Harry," with its horse-play and ingenuous comicalities, comes "A Screw Loose," with its horse-play and ingenuous comicalities. The two pieces have in common the quality of arousing easy laughter. The buffoonery of both is of a straightforward, rough-and-ready kind, but in both the buffoonery succeeds in its main business, which is to make a certain number of spectators, barring or otherwise, laugh. A kind of loose, simple rustic laughter is not very difficult to arouse. It can be lightly provoked by the beetle-slide or the booby-trap or the discomfiture attending upon the deft withdrawal of a chair. The humour of our latest examples of farcical comedy are of no subtle kind. If you tickle us do we not laugh? and the artless art of these farces has much the same effect upon the mind that tickling has upon the body. The stories in this sort of piece are of little importance, and all that is necessary for the players is to spin themselves without hesitation into a tireless vivacity for clowning. Given this and a brisk succession of ludicrous incidents, and even the fable of a man who thinks that he has lost his own head and had another man's head put on its place may divert a multitude for the allotted, the inevitable hours of a stage play. "There was such laughing," in the phrase of Pandarus, "all the rest so laughed that it passed."

BOOKS RECEIVED.

ANONYMOUS. *The Confessions of a Woman*. (Griffith, Farran, and Co.) 8vo, fancy covers. Pp. 236. Price 2s.

A story in one volume. ARMSTRONG, ISABEL J. *Two Roving English Women in Greece*. (Sampson Low, Marston, and Co.) 8vo, cloth. Pp. xii., 300. Illustrations.

"Our experience [that of the author and her friend and companion, Miss Edith Payne] taught us that Greece was a charming country in which to travel, and if we did encounter danger, that was purely of our own creating."

BANCROFT, HUBERT HOWE. *Literary Industries: A Memoir*. (New York: Harper Brothers.) 8vo, cloth. Pp. xxxii., 466. Portrait.

Edited, with an introduction, by Mr. George Frederick Parsons.

BELL, HESKETH. *A Witch's Legacy*. (Sampson Low, Marston, and Co.) 8vo, cloth. Two volumes. Price 21s.

A novel.

GUTHRIE, HENRY MELVILLE, M.A. (Editor). *Selections from Early Writers Illustrative of Church History to the Time of Constantine*. (Macmillan and Co.) 8vo, cloth. Pp. x., 168. Price 4s. net.

"It is hoped that the present volume will be found within its limits a fairly representative selection of original documents for the use of students."

The author of the Latin passages cited are accompanied by a translation on the opposite page.

KAY, JOHN. *Paper: Its History*. (Smith, Kay, and Co., 42, Rathbone-place.) 8vo, cloth. Pp. 100.

KEYSER, ANTHONY. *An Adopted Wife*. (Griffith, Farran, and Co.) 8vo, fancy covers. Pp. 318. Price 2s.

A novel in one volume.

THE MAN OF THE YEAR MILLION.

A SCIENTIFIC FORECAST.

ACCOMPLISHED literature is all very well in its way, no doubt, but much more fascinating to the contemplative man are the books that have not been written. These latter are no trouble to hold; there are no pages to turn over. One can read them in bed on sleepless nights without a candle. Turning to another topic, primitive man, in the works of the descriptive anthropologist, is certainly a very entertaining and quaint person; but the man of the future, if we only had the facts, would appeal to us more strongly. Yet where are the books? As Ruskin has said somewhere, apropos of Darwin, it is not what man has been, but what he will be, that should interest us.

The contemplative man in his easy chair, pondering this saying, suddenly beholds in the fire, through the blue haze of his pipe, one of these great unwritten volumes. It is large in size, heavy in lettering, seemingly by one Professor Holzkopf, presumably Professor at Weissnichtwo. "The Necessary Characters of the Man of the Remote Future deduced from the Existing Stream of Tendency," is the title. The worthy Professor is severely scientific in his method, and deliberate and cautious in his deductions, the contemplative man discovers as he pursues his theme, and yet the conclusions are, to say the least, remarkable. We must figure the excellent Professor expanding the matter at great length, voluminously technical, but the contemplative man—since he has access to the only copy—is clearly at liberty to make such extracts and abstracts as lie closest for the unscientific reader. Here, for instance, is something of practicable utility that he considers admits of quotation.

"The theory of evolution," writes the Professor, "is now universally accepted by zoologists and botanists, and it is applied unreservedly to man. Some question, indeed, whether it fits his soul, but all agree it accounts for his body. Man, we are assured, is descended from ape-like ancestors, moulded by circumstances into men, and these apes again were derived from ancestral forms of a lower order, and so up from the primordial protoplasmic jelly. Clearly, then, man, unless the order of the universe has come to an end, will undergo further modification in the future, and at last cease to be man, giving rise to some other type of animated being. At once the fascinating question arises, What will this be? Let us consider for a little the plastic influences at work upon our species.

"Just as the bird is the creature of the wing, and is all moulded and modified to flying, and just as the fish is the creature that swims, and has

had to meet the inflexible conditions of a problem in hydrodynamics, so man is the creature of the brain; he will live by intelligence, and not by physical strength, if he live at all. So that much that is purely 'animal' about him is being, and must be, beyond all question, suppressed in his ultimate development. Evolution is no mechanical tendency making for perfection according to the ideas current in the year of grace 1892; it is simply the continual adaptation of plastic life, for good or evil, to the circumstances that surround it. . . . We notice this decay of the animal part around us now, in the loss of teeth and hair, in the dwindling of hands and feet of men, in their smaller jaws, and slighter mouths and ears. Man now does by wit and machinery and verbal agreement what he once did by bodily toil; for once he had to catch his dinner, capture his wife, run away from his enemies, and continually exercise himself, for love of himself, to perform these duties well. But now all this is changed. Cabs, trains, trams, render speed unnecessary, the pursuit of food becomes easier; his wife is no longer hunted, but rather, in view of the crowded matrimonial market, seeks him out. One needs wits now to live, and physical activity is a drug, a snare even; it seeks artificial outlets and overflows in games. Athletism takes up time and cripples a man in his competitive examinations, and in business. So is your fleshly man handicapped against his subtler brother. He is unsuccessful in life, does not marry. The better adapted survive."

The coming man, then, will clearly have a larger brain, and a slighter body than the present. But the Professor makes one exception to this. "The human hand, since it is the teacher and interpreter of the brain, will become constantly more powerful and subtle as the rest of the musculature dwindles."

Then in the physiology of these children of men, with their expanding brains, their great sensitive hands and diminishing bodies, great changes were necessarily worked. "We see now," says the Professor, "in the more intelligent sections of humanity an increasing sensitiveness to stimulants, a growing inability to grapple with such a matter as alcohol, for instance. No longer can men drink a bottle full of port; some cannot drink tea; it is too exciting for their highly-wrought nervous systems. The process will go on, and the Sir Wilfrid Lawson of some near generation may find it his duty and pleasure to make the silvery spray of his wisdom tintinnabulate against the tea-tray. These facts lead naturally to the comprehension of others. Fresh raw meat was once a dish for a king. Now refined persons scarcely touch meat unless it is cunningly disguised. Again, consider the case of turnips; the raw root is now a thing almost uneatable, but once upon a time a turnip must have been a rare and fortunate find, to be torn up with delirious eagerness and devoured in ecstasy. The time will come when the change will affect all the other fruits of the earth. Even now only the young of mankind eat apples raw—the young always preserving ancestral characteristics after their disappearance in the adult. Some day, boys even will regard apples without emotion. The boy of the future, one must believe, will gaze on an apple with the same unspeculative languor with which he now regards a flint—in the absence of a cat."

"Furthermore, fresh chemical discoveries came into action as modifying influences upon men. In the prehistoric period even, man's mouth had ceased to be an instrument for grasping food; it is still growing continually less prehensile, his front teeth are smaller, his lips thinner and less muscular; he has a new organ, a mandible not of irreparable tissue, but of bone and steel—knife and fork. There is no reason why things should stop at partial artificial division thus afforded; there is every reason, on the contrary, to believe my statement that some cunning exterior mechanism will presently masticate and digest his dinner, relieve his diminishing salivary glands and teeth, and at last altogether abolish them."

Then what is not needed disappears. What use is there for external ears, nose, and brow ridges now? The two latter once protected the eye from injury in conflict and in falls, but in these days we keep on our legs, and at peace. Directing his thoughts in this way, the reader may presently conjure up a dim, strange vision of the latter-day face: "Eyes large, lustrous, beautiful; soulful; above them, no longer separated by rugged brow ridges, is the top of the head, a glistening, hairless dome, terete and beautiful; no craggy nose rises to disturb by its unmeaning shadows the symmetry of that calm face, in vestigial ears project; the mouth is a small, perfectly round aperture, toothless and gummless, jawless, unmanly, no futile emotions disturbing its roundness as it lies, like the harvest moon or the evening star, in the wide firmament of face." Such is the face the Professor beholds in the future.

Of course parallel modifications will also affect the body and limbs.

"Every day so many hours and so much energy are required for digestion; a gross torpidity, a carnal lethargy, seizes on mortal men after dinner. This may and can be avoided. Man's knowledge of organic chemistry widens daily. Already he can supplement the gastric glands by artificial devices. Every doctor who administers physic implies that the bodily functions may be artificially superseded. We have pepsine, pancreatic, artificial gastric acid—I know not what like mixtures. Why, then, should not the stomach be ultimately superannuated altogether? A man who could not only leave his dinner to be cooked, but also leave it to be masticated and digested, would have social advantages over his food-digesting fellow. This is, let me remind you, heres, the calmest, most passionless, and scientific working out of the future forms of things from the data of the present. At this stage the following facts may perhaps stimulate your imagination. There can be no doubt that many of the arthropods, a division of animals more ancient and even now more prevalent than the vertebrates, have undergone more phylogenetic modification—"a beautiful phrase"—than even the most modified of vertebrate animals. Simple forms like the lobsters display a primitive structure parallel with that of the fishes. However, in such a form as the degraded "Chondracanthus," the structure has diverged far more widely from its original type than in man. Among some of

these most highly modified crustaceans the whole of the alimentary canal—that is, all the food-digesting and food-absorbing parts—form a useless solid cord: the animal is nourished—*is a parasite*—by absorption of the nutritive fluid in which it swims. Is there any absolute impossibility in supposing man to be destined for a similar change; to imagine him no longer dining, with unwieldy paraphernalia of servants and plates, upon food queerly dyed and distorted, but nourishing himself in elegant simplicity by immersion in a tub of nutritive fluid?

"There grows upon the impatient imagination a building, a dome of crystal, across the translucent surface of which flushes of the most glorious and pure prismatic colours pass and fade and change. In the centre of this transparent chameleon-tinted dome is a circular white marble basin filled with some clear, mobile, amber liquid, and in this plunge and float strange beings. Are they birds?

"They are the descendants of man—at dinner. Watch them as they hop on their hands—a method of progression advocated already by Björnson—about the pure white marble floor. Great hands they have, enormous brains, soft, liquid, soulful eyes. Their whole muscular system, their legs, their abdomens, are shrivelled to nothing, a dangling, degraded pendant to their minds."

The further visions of the professor are less alluring.

"The animals and plants die away before men, except such as he preserves for his food or delight, or such as maintain a precarious footing about him as commensals and parasites. These vermin and pests must succumb sooner or later to his untiring inventiveness and incessantly growing discipline. When he learns (the chemists are doubtless getting towards the secret now) to do the work of chlorophyll without the plant, then his necessity for other animals and plants upon the earth will disappear. Sooner or later, where there is no power of resistance and no necessity, there comes extinction. In the last days man will be alone on the earth, and his food will be won by the chemist from the dead rocks and the sunlight."

"And—*one may learn the full reason in that explicit and painfully right book*, the 'Data of Ethics'—the irrational fellowship of man will give place to an intellectual co-operation, and emotion fall within the scheme of reason. Undoubtedly it is a long time yet, but a long time is nothing in the face of eternity, and every man who thinks of these things must look eternity in the face."

Then the earth is ever radiating away heat into space, the Professor reminds us. And so at last comes a vision of earthly cherubim, hopping heads, great unemotional intelligences, and little hearts, fighting together and fiercely against the cold that grips them tighter and tighter. For the world is cooling—slowly and inevitably it grows colder as the years roll by. "We must imagine these creatures," says the Professor, "in galleries and laboratories deep down in the bowels of the earth. The whole world will be snow-covered and piled with ice; all animals, all vegetation vanished, except this last branch of the tree of life. The last men have gone even deeper, following the diminishing heat of the planet, and vast steel shafts and ventilators make way for the air they need."

Sowith a glimpse of these human tadpoles, in their deep close gallery, with their boring machinery ringing away, and artificial lights glaring and casting black shadows, the professor's horoscope concludes. Humanity in dismal retreat before the cold, changed beyond recognition. Yet the Professor is reasonable enough, his facts are current science, his methods orderly. The contemplative man shivers at the prospect, stands up to poke the fire, and the whole of this remarkable book that is not written vanishes straightway in the smoke of his pipe. This is the great advantage of this unwritten literature: there is no bother in changing the books. Our contemplative man consoles himself for the destiny of the species with the lost portion of Kubla Khan.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A DISGRACE TO CIVILIZATION.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—I am glad to see that you have taken up the question of the disgraceful condition of the London streets, more particularly in the West-end. I would respectfully ask what good have the party who advocate the ignoring by the State of the social evil in our midst ever done?

Is it not a fact that by closing and suppressing all the resorts frequented by the demi-monde they have driven them into the streets, where it is impossible, either by day or by night, to be free from their importunities? Is it not also true that the action of certain so-called vigilante societies in ejecting them from their houses in certain districts has spread them all over the metropolis in respectable localities which were previously free from them? My opinion is, of two evils choose the least, which is that the State take cognizance of the evil and legislate for its regulation, so that it be kept within bounds. The history of the world proves that public women have existed under every age and among all peoples, and that no power on earth will ever stamp them out.—Yours respectfully,

November 4.

ANTI-HUMBUG.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—I am rather astonished that the Apostle of the Doctrine of Love—I mean the Rev. H. B. Chapman—should advocate specially licensed quarters for the women who now parade our streets, that he would have us go back to the days of Cremorne Gardens and the Argyle Rooms. In forcing the evil into the open there is just a chance of suppressing it. In fact if our police were a little more vigilant, and our publicans a little more careful as to the class of people who visit their bars, the temptations to which Mr. Chapman refers would soon be minimized. And what is our Christianity coming to? Here is a minister of the Gospel advocating a system of "licensed vice," a system of huddling men and women together who have nothing in view but the giving vent to their passions. A morality which requires the chaining up of vice is hardly Christian. In this matter, I think, public opinion is at present on the right track.—I am, Sir, &c.,

November 5.

ONE WHO KNOWS.

UNARMOURED ENDS.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—Only a naval officer or a naval architect is competent to give an opinion worth having on a question of war-ship design, but on the question of complete belt or partial belt, and unarmoured ends, I would like to point out that the "cuest" nation in the world, and the one that has "beat the record" in the rapid creation of a navy, has adopted the latter principle. I refer, of course, to the United States. She has five battleships approaching completion—the Maine, Texas, and the three sisters, Indiana, Massachusetts, and Oregon. The system of unarmoured ends has been adopted in all, though I admit that the Maine was originally classed as "armoured cruiser No. 1." I had the pleasure of going over Cramp's Yard in the spring—where the Indiana and Massachusetts were built—and was told by an official of the firm that in internal design of hull they closely resembled the Victoria and Sans Pareil.—I am, Sir, &c.,

2, Harvey-terrace, Brighton, Nov. 3.

H. LAWRENCE SWINBURNE.

BRITISH BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

DEAR SIR,—I find the official address of the association was omitted from your excellent notice of the deputation to the Lord Mayor as inserted in your issue of Thursday. Will you kindly allow me to make known through your columns that all letters of inquiry may be addressed to me as below.—Yours truly,

King's Langley, Herts, Nov. 3.

JOHN HUCKLE, Secretary.

RE RATTLESNAKES.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—Having read with interest a letter in your paper signed "Arthur Stradling," I have the pleasure to inform you that I have not only encountered a rattlesnake with a thirty-jointed rattle, but have the specimen now in my possession. I may mention my rattlesnake was killed in the San Marcos Canon, in the state of Coahuila, Mexico.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

London, Nov. 2.

MONTROSE COOTE.

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