

# The Examiner.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND NEWS.

EDWARD WHELAN]

This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

[EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

Vol. VII.

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 1858.

No. 26.

## Literature.

### THE BIRTH OF THE YEAR.

BY F. TENNYSON.

Let us speak low, the Infant is asleep,  
The frosty hills grow sharp, the day is near,  
And Phosphor with his taper comes to peep  
Into the cradle of the new-born year;  
Hush! the Infant is asleep;  
Monarch of the Day and Night,  
Whisper, yet it is not light,  
The Infant is asleep!

Those arms shall crush great serpents ere to-morrow,  
His closed eyes shall wake to laugh and weep;  
His lips shall curl with mirth and writhe with sorrow,  
And charm up Truth and Beauty from the deep:  
Softly! softly! let us keep  
Our vigils; visions cross his rest,  
Prophetic pulses stir his breast,  
Although he be asleep.

Now Life and Death armed in his presence wait,  
Genit with lamps are standing at the door;  
Oh! he shall sing sweet songs, he shall relate  
Wonder and glory, and hopes untold before.  
Murmur memories, that may creep  
Into his ears, of old sublime;  
Let the youngest-born of Time  
Hear music in his sleep!

Quickly he shall awake, the East is bright,  
And the hot glow of the unrisen sun  
Hath kissed his brow with promise of its light,  
His cheek is red with victory to be won.  
Quickly shall our King awake,  
Strong as giants, and arise;  
Sager than the old and wise  
The Infant shall awake!

His childhood shall be froward, wild, and thwart;  
His gladness fitful, and his anger blind:  
But tender spirits shall o'ertake his heart—  
Sweet tears and golden moments, bland and kind.  
He shall give delight and take,  
Charm, enchant, dismay, and soothe;  
Raise the dead and touch with youth;  
Oh! sing, that he may wake!

Where is the sword to gird upon his thigh?  
Where is his armour, and his laurel-crown?  
For he shall be a conqueror ere he die,  
And win him kingdoms wider than his own;  
Like the earthquake he shall shake  
Cities down, and waste like fire;  
Then build them stronger, pile them higher,  
When he shall awake.

In the dark spheres of his unclosed eyes  
The sheeted lightnings lie, and clouded stars,  
That shall glance softly, as in summer skies,  
Or stream o'er thirsty deserts, winged with war:  
For, in the pauses of dread hours,  
He shall fling his armour off,  
And like a reveller sing and laugh  
And dance in ladies' bowers.

Of times in his Midsummer he shall turn  
To look on the dead blooms with weeping eyes;  
O'er ashes of frail Beauty stand and mourn,  
And kiss the bier of stricken Hope with sighs:  
Of times, like light of onward seas,  
He shall hail great days to come,  
Or hear the first dread note of doom,  
Like torrents on the breeze.

His manhood shall be blissful and sublime,  
With stormy sorrows and severest pleasures;  
And his crowned age upon the top of Time  
Shall throne him, great in glories, rich in treasures.  
The sun is up, the day is breaking,  
Sing ye sweetly, draw anear,  
Immortal be the new-born Year,  
And blessed be his waking!

### LOVE-LETTERS MADE OF FLOWERS.

BY LEIGH HUNT.

An exquisite invention this,  
Worthy of Love's most honeyed kiss,  
This art of writing *billets-doux*  
In buds and odors and bright hues!  
In saying all one feels and thinks  
In clever daffodils and pinks;  
In puns of tulips; and in phrases,  
Charming for their truth, of daisies;  
Uttering, as well as silence may,  
The sweetest words the sweetest way.  
How fit, too, for the lady's bosom!  
The place where *billets-doux* repose 'em.  
What delight, in some sweet spot  
Combining *love* with *garden* plot,  
At once to cultivate one's flowers  
And one's epistolary powers!  
Growing one's own choice words and fancies  
In orange tubs and beds of pansies;  
One's sighs and passionate declarations  
In odorous rhetoric of carnations;  
Seeing how far one's stocks will reach;  
Taking due care one's flowers of speech  
To guard from blight as well as bathos,  
And watering every day one's pathos!

### DAYS.

Daughters of Time, the hypocritical Days,  
Muffled and dumb, like barefoot dervishes,  
And marching single in an endless file,  
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.  
To each they offer gifts, after his will,—  
Broad, kingdoms, stars, or sky that holds them all.  
I, in my plashed garden, watched the pomp,  
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily  
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day  
Turned and departed silent. I, too late,  
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

## The Examiner.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. I., JANUARY 4, 1858.

1857.

At the commencement of a New Year the mind is naturally led to reflect upon those events which, occupying a relatively prominent position, may be considered as characterising the year that has just terminated—events which are to afford subjects for future philosophers, and historians whose theme is "philosophy teaching by example." To each class the Year 1857 is pregnant with subjects for theories and speculation; but, not presuming to enrol ourselves in either, our readers need not fear that we shall inflict on them any quasi-authoritative exposition of the hidden sources whence some of the remarkable events of the past year had their origin, or any oracular utterances as to their political results. We but purpose to ask their attention to a cursory review of those occurrences which are of sufficient importance to assume historical dimensions. Those occurrences, principally, if not entirely, in their present state, fall within the peculiar province of the British historiographer, for, while, doubtless, their results, more or less remote, will for all time affect the world, their present is all that is vouchsafed to our eyes, and it is with that only that we purpose now to deal.

The stage on which the "bloodiest picture in the book of time" has been exhibited during the bygone year, has been erected in Asia, in that portion of God's heritage first bestowed upon man—the seat of our first parents—the clime from which the pioneers of humanity, carrying with them knowledge and civilization, colonised the earth. The close of 1856 saw Britain involved in a serious difficulty with China—that great hive of human life, which arrogates to itself an antiquity of imperial rule, dating back over two thousand years before the commencement of the Christian computation, and only 140 years after the Ark rested upon Ararat. Into the merit of such claim it is not our intention to enter; but certain it is, that, irrespectively of the particular dates we have mentioned, in the pride of ancient descent the native of China is entitled to boast that he is descended of "one of the oldest families" recorded in the genealogy of nations. This people, so suspiciously guarding their country from the access of strangers, that to all the rest of the world it was a *terra incognita*, until within the last few years when some trading stations were won from its rulers by European arms, has during the last year had its privacy somewhat rudely disturbed, and the opinion of invincible superiority—the sure offspring of long continued isolation from the ever onward current of the world's business—has been doomed to receive a shock which will probably inspire the "Celestials" with, if not a liking, at least a respectful fear of some few of the things of earth. Our readers know well the origin of the last and still continuing quarrel, the affair of the *Lorch* "Arrow," that apparently trifling difficulty which any but a Chinese official could and would have settled within a day, has led to the destruction of an immense number of vessels of the Chinese navy, the destruction of forts, and the slaughter of great numbers of the defending force. It has done more, it has—if they can be taught anything by bitter experience—taught the Chinese rulers that the mystery in which they shrouded the internal state of their empire can be preserved no longer,—they have found their heaviest armaments, placed in their strongest positions, unable to withstand a few boats' crews, led by Keppel and Elliot into the rivers and canals of the interior,—they have found mere handfuls of the "barbarians" attacking their large cities, where never was it supposed that the stranger would venture to appear. The details of those proceedings we have, as they respectively reached us, laid before our readers; and no one who has read them, as they should be read by the light of general history, can for one moment doubt that, rude as may seem to be the means employed, the civilization of the West, originally derived from the East, will be the regenerating influence on the effete institutions of the Oriental World, as the Roman daughter supplied from her own fountains the life-sustaining draught to the aged and infirm parent to whom she owed her birth, and on whose breasts she had so often hung for the sustenance of infancy.

The present state of the Chinese difficulty is, in all respects, as peculiar as is the normal state of the empire with reference to European arrangements. During the period of active operations in the Chinese waters, we were fighting, it is true, the national forces, capturing and burning the national vessels of war, but all without any formal declaration of war, or open recognition by the Emperor of the acts of his subordinate officers, who have involved his country in a contest not with an isolated Commissioner or Admiral in the service of the British Government, but with the Sovereign and people of that Empire on which the sun never sets. And after having violated their territory, by penetrating far up into the interior—having inflicted serious injury upon their material resources, and far greater on the moral influence which the compulsory isolation of the people gave their rulers—and having wonderfully intensified the force of the old reference to the doings of a Bull in a China Shop, by exhibiting the prowess of John Bull in the greatest China Shop in the world,—there is a cessation of active hostilities in consequence of the Special Commissioner, Lord Elgin, having been obliged to dispense with the troops detailed to add authority to his mission, which were required for the more pressing emergency of British India. Yet, while still the means of coercion are in abeyance, ere yet the victors return with blood-dyed sabres from India's "coral strand," no attempt at a pacific solution of the difficulty is offered by the Imperial or Provincial authorities of China—no official recognition or disallowance of the Mandarin's insolence and folly has hitherto been made, and the

Celestial Emperor, "the brother of the sun and moon," seems determined to out-stoicise the Stoics, and shew that he can be "Master of himself though China fall." The very fact that no attempt at active hostilities has been made on the part of the Chinese, during the temporary absence of the British force in India, is quite sufficient to convince the most careless observer that they are conscious of their utter inability to resist the enemy, and that their stupidity and pride prevent the admission of their inferiority.

Our next reference to the affairs of the East appears by our files to be the misunderstanding with Persia. This is remarkable principally as illustrating the wisdom and true mercy of vigorous action at the commencement of an outbreak between nations. Owing to the promptness with which the British authorities acted, and the courage and determination of those who were employed on the field, a few brilliant affairs put a speedy end to what might have ramified into a very serious complication, affecting not merely Britain and Persia, but the whole of Europe and Asia. This brief but most decisive campaign was characterized by deeds of daring worthy of the best we read of knight or paladin; and while we feel that it is invidious to select one where all is good, yet we cannot refrain from directing attention to that feat, unprecedented in the annals of modern warfare—a feat never performed by the French even when led by Murat of the snow-white plume—the breaking of a solid square of infantry by cavalry fairly leaping on and over the bayonets. Persia witnessed this marvel of daring. In reading the account of this gallant affair one recalls to mind Macaulay's ballad:—

Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,  
Charge for the golden lilies now, upon them with the lance!  
A thousand spears are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,  
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;  
And in they burst, and on they rushed, white, like a guiding star,  
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre."

Let the name of young Moore supersede "Navarre," and the quotation is perfectly applicable. Passing down the Persian Gulf, we come upon the Peninsula of Hindoostan, for centuries the theatre wherein have been exhibited the contests of the advancing European with the Asiatic power, which, though greatly superior in numbers and animated by the spirit which they feel who consider that they are fighting for their laws, customs and religion, have ever succumbed to the sterner qualities of their opponents.

During the earlier period of the mutiny of the Bengal army we gave at some length our opinions as to the probable causes of the outbreak, and from time to time we copied into our columns various details of horrible incidents which characterized the conduct of the rebel Sepoys towards the unhappy victims who fell into their power, whether by violence or fraud. We have no desire to recapitulate the ghastly catalogue, but amid the scenes of torture, murder, and outrage worse than murder, two events stand out in such bold distinctness that memory will not let them die amid the undistinguished horrors by which they were surrounded. Who unmoved can read the melancholy fate of the gallant Skene and the hapless sharer of his fate? This young European with his fair English bride, was but recently wedded, far away from merry England, amid scenes under any circumstances strange to the new comer, but what must have been the impressions made on her young mind, as day by day she received the soul-sickening accounts of the barbarities practised upon her countrywomen and their children by the fiends permitted for a while to show what human nature is capable of? Shut up with her husband in the only stronghold to which they could obtain access, she witnessed the gradual diminution of the little band which held the place against odds so fearful that no hope remained of ultimate success in repelling the foe. When, after all resistance was hopeless, when the besiegers had succeeded in effecting an entrance, then it was that poor Skene turned to her whom but a few short months before he had vowed to love and cherish until death, and nobly did he fulfil his vow. He had reserved two shots in his pistol, and now that they availed no longer for the protection of his own and that other life dearer than his own, he would expend the one in saving from pollution her who had left her happy home, and crossed the wide ocean to share his lot—the other should mingle his dust with hers. He shot her and then himself! When we read the woful tale we recalled to mind the beautiful address of the Roman father ere he sacrifices his child to save her from the licentious Decemvir:—

"And then his eyes grew very dim, and his throat began to swell,  
And in a hoarse, changed voice he spake, "Farewell, sweet child! Fare-  
Oh! how I loved my darling! Though stern I sometimes be,  
To thee, that know'st, I was not so. Who could be so to thee?  
And how my darling loved me! How glad she was to hear  
My footsteps on the threshold when I came back last year!  
And how she danced with pleasure to see my civic crown,  
And took my sword, and hung it up, and brought me forth my gown!  
Now, all those things are over—yes, all thy pretty ways,  
Thy needlework, thy prattle, thy snatches of old lays;  
And none will grieve when I go forth, or smile when I return,  
Or watch beside the old man's bed, or weep upon my urn.  
The house that was the happiest within the Roman walls,  
The house that envied not the wealth of Capua's marble halls,  
Now for the brightness of thy smile, must have eternal gloom,  
And for the music of thy voice, the silence of the tomb.  
The time is come. See how he points his eager hand this way!  
See how his eyes gloat on thy grief, like a kite's upon the prey!  
With all his wit, he little deems, that, sprung, betrayed, bereft,  
Thy father bath in his despair I clutch what still can save  
He little deems that in this hand I clutch what still can save  
Thy gentle youth from taunts and blows, the portion of the slave;  
Yea, and from nameless evil, that passeth taunt and blow—  
Foul outrage which thou know'st not, which thou shalt never know.  
Then clasp me round the neck once more, and give me one more kiss;  
And now, mine own dear little girl, there is no way but this."  
With that he lifted high the steel, and smote her in the side,  
And in her blood she sank to earth, and with one sob she died."

Casualties may tell us that murder and suicide are crimes to be reprobated of man and God. We agree to the fullest extent that man should not take his own life or the life of another; but we can see in the act to which we have just alluded nothing but an exhibition of mercy and most devoted love, carried out by courage of the highest order. How deeply is it to be regretted that the bodies of those who, as they were lovely in their lives, so in their death they were not divided, could not be laid side by side beneath the marble which might record their tragic end!

Another episode in the history of this blood-baptised mutiny which arrests our thoughts is, if possible, of a darker hue than that which we have just noticed. A young English girl, beautiful, accomplished, and admired—the daughter of the late General Wheeler—so perfidiously murdered by that incarnate fiend Nana Sahib—

"Let his name stand aye accursed in the calendar"  
—having been made prisoner by the rebels, and having been subjected to the vilest treatment—having witnessed the awful atrocities of Cawnpore—having seen her father and friends basely betrayed and slaughtered—having been agonised by the hourly accumulation of the terrors which, on every side, surrounded her, until at length her feelings culminated into phrenzy at her wrongs—appears upon the scene no longer the delicate English girl, the admired of the ball-room, the charm of the social circle, "the bright particular star" around which attendant satellites revolved,—but a realization of the old Greek idea of the Furies. Those tears, which doubtless a tale of suffering or of sorrow had readily caused to flow, were now forever frozen at their source—those lips which had ever a kind word or a smile for all, were now compressed in stern determination—those eyes which once beamed with gladness or melted with pity, now burned with the glow of vengeance, as, her whole nature changed, this heroine of a fate worse than that of Judith, arose in the still hour of the night, and alone among her hellish foes, she sought the couch whereon lay her whose chattel she had become—he from whom she had incurred

—the inexplicable wrong, the unutterable shame  
That turns the coward's heart to steel, the sinner's blood to flame."  
There as he slept, his sword which had drunk so deeply of the blood of his hapless victims, by his side, offered its hilt to this avenger of blood, and grasping the gore-stained weapon from which she would, in other days, and under other circumstances have shudderingly recoiled—her phrenzy giving her the strength and nerve of manhood—the unsexed girl covered the head from the body of the sleeping wretch. Next with a pistol she shot no less than five of the retainers of the arch-monster; and then, her work of vengeance being complete, it but remained to her to join the martyred band who had preceded her through the valley of the shadow of death, having suffered similar indignities, but not, like her, having taken vengeance on the perpetrators. When life had nothing left for which to live—when all that her weak arm could do had been done—with one heart-rending cry to Heaven she bade adieu to earth, and precipitating herself into a well wherein lay the mangled bodies of her slaughtered countrywomen, her bruised spirit sought that region where "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." All true men hope that she has found it.

We have noticed those two incidents not that they are exceptional, or that it is probable that cases of equal or greater painfulness have not occurred during the mutiny, but because we have received the details of them with more particularity and minuteness than have accompanied the narratives of other cases no doubt equally shocking. If there is one characteristic which more than another distinguishes this outbreak, and illustrates the substratum of the Hindoo mind, it is the vile similarity which has throughout marked the deportment of the rebels towards women and children. Never since man first did wrong and outrage, have records of a people's hatred shown so deplorable a consistency in violence against the weak and defenceless. The aborigines of this Continent, savage and all untutored as they were, never in the times of their bloodiest history treated the wives and children of their enemies in such fashion. The scalp of the foeman was the trophy of the victor,—his wife might become his captive, but we may search in vain the records of the time,

"When wild in woods the noble savage ran,"  
for anything approximating to the unmanly outrage towards women and children which have rendered the Hindoo character infamous for all time. When reading the various details of the treatment endured by the wives and families of our brethren in the East, we have recalled to our mind the nervous lines of Byron on the battle-field of Leipzig, as descriptive of many a scene which has been witnessed during the progress of this bloody drama:—

"But the softest note that soothed his ear,  
Was the sound of a widow sighing;  
And the sweetest sight was the tear  
Which horror froze in the blue eye clear  
Of a maid by her lover lying—  
As round her fell her long fair hair,  
And she looked to Heaven with that frenzied air,  
Which seemed to ask if a God were there!  
And stretch'd by the wall of a ruined hut,  
With its hollow cheek and eyes half shut,  
A child, of famine dying;  
And the carnage begun when resistance was done,  
And the fall of the vainly flying."

A terrible retribution has, ere this, overtaken the miscreants who have "got drunk with blood to vomit crime." Delhi has fallen—the puppet King is a prisoner awaiting his trial for life, the result of which we should consider a "foregone conclusion"—his sons, who were of the rebels, received their well-merited fate at the hands of the gallant Hodgson. Lucknow has been relieved, and the "galvanized ramrod," Havelock, who seems to have chained victory to his chariot-wheels, has had the glory of setting at liberty the long-besieged yet undaunted garrison, who, under the command of a Nova-Scotian leader, Inglis, whose services will we doubt not be duly recognized by the Sovereign whom he has so faithfully served—so long and arduously defied their myriad besiegers. While the nation mourns the loss of such men as Lawrence, Barnard, Nicholson, Neill, and a host of others who have "sought the shades of night" during the pending of this struggle, it has the satisfaction of knowing that the *stuff* which, from Cressy and Poitiers to Waterloo, has added honor to its flag, still survives, and that although  
"Winds may not sweep nor wild waves roll  
Where sleep not England's dead,