

This harmless superstition, however, seems to have ended with the classic ages; but the custom of saluting those who sneeze still survives in many parts of continental Europe. In the beginning of the last century, M. Morin tells us that the Anabaptists in England had made themselves remarkable, among other things, by the 'whimsical zeal' with which they combated this custom; and in the preceding century, the essayist Montaigne said, 'Let us give an honest welcome to this sort of wind, for it comes from the head, and is blameless.' Snuffing, we fear, has had a hand in the decay of this remnant of ancient politeness; for we find the first-mentioned author lamenting that 'there is a great reason to fear that we shall soon see this respectable custom die out; for sneezings have become so frequent, and so much in vogue, that it is rare now-a-days to see produced naturally those salutary functions which the human race has so justly deemed worthy of its respect. They are forced from nature whether she will or no, and it is no longer the same thing.\* There can be no doubt that superstition, from whatever cause arising, mainly engendered this respect for the function of sneezing; and accordingly, by the learned even of ancient times, it was frequently disregarded as a vulgar prejudice. But Clement of Alexandria, in his little treatise of politeness, goes further than this, and regards sneezing as a mark of intemperance and effeminacy: he says that it should be suppressed as much as possible, and is most unmeasured in his reprobation of those who seek to procure it by extraneous means. Though very many now-a-days set at defiance this anathema of the Greek Chesterfield, yet the usages of modern society coincide in the main with his suggestions; and when in company with those we respect, if sneeze we must, we at least endeavour to conceal it from observation.

Aristotle of old declared sneezing to be a favourable symptom of health; and the rather humorous light in which we generally regard it seems to confirm his decision. It is a gentle stimulus to a languid system—it is a refreshing evacuation of the head, which at once pleases and relieves us; such, say many, are the benefits of a hearty sneeze. But not so think many erudite disciples of Æsculapius. 'Hearty sneeze!' say Olympiodorus and his followers; 'why, sir, you're jesting with an earthquake, sir—an alarming physical convulsion! Does it not disfigure the prettiest face with epileptic tremors? It is a syncope, sir; nay, sir, it is a short epilepsy!' (*brevis epilepsia*). Verily this is a grave charge against sneezing. It is but lately that it first met our startled ears; but since then, we have ever looked upon a snuffer as a sort of swindler of the sexton—one who should long ago have been a source of revenue to some deserving cemetery company. Either the classic doctors are superannuated, or snuffers are infatuated sensualists, who, for the sake of a gentle titillation, and a still gentler nasal intoxication, peril in a single day more lives than a cat's. Their existence is a constant libel on the fair fame of Olympiodorus. Which, then, is right—the Greek or the disciple of Raleigh? The question, doubtless, seems *prima facie* a very interesting one, affecting alike the queen on the throne and the child in the nursery; but on so grave a subject,

'Who shall decide, when doctors disagree?'

Perhaps much, as Sir Roger de Coverley remarks, may be said on both sides. For ourselves, we are content to believe that, like the patriarch, we enjoy a reprieve from the perils of sternutation. Moreover, we don't give a snuff for a sneeze—no, nor take one either; but should any of our readers think fit to investigate the subject, perhaps the society *De Lunatico Inquirendo* may present him with a cap and bells for his pains.

\* Mémoires tirés des Registres de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. Vol. v. p. 445. Paris, 1724.

## SONNET.

BY CALDER CAMPBELL.

Ye who the lack of gold would plead as lack  
Of power to help another, think not so;  
But where the stumbling steps of sickness go,  
Follow with friendly foot; and in the track  
Of life, when ye encounter, 'mid the snow,  
Bewildered wanderers, turn not proudly back,  
But lead them gently from their walks of woe  
By such kind words as cast a brighter glow  
Than gold around them. Oh be sure of this—  
The alms most precious man can give to man  
Are kind and truthful words; nor come amis  
Warm sympathising tears to eye; that scan  
The world aright! The only error is,  
Neglect to do the little good we can!

## SONNET TO THE BUTTERCUP.

Will no one sing of thee, thou pleasing flower,  
With livelier tint than daisy e'er put on?  
Who, when warm Phœbus gives to May her dower,  
Smiling are seen the grass-green meads among;  
What time the cuckoo tunes his mellow flute,  
And on the sward the grasshopper we hear,  
'Tis then all gaily in thy yellow suit  
A smiling floral star thou dost appear.  
Memory wipes off the dust of time, and brings  
Sweet recollections of those joyous hours,  
When wandering gladly near Dove's pleasant springs,  
I called a copious harvest of thy flowers;  
With pinure filled out—a venturesome boy,  
I tumbled in the grass, and shouted wild for joy.

## FOREST LIFE.

A rich and racy book has just made its appearance in Scotland, full of excellent and touching pictures of deer hunting, forest-life, and all the incidents and adventures which can possibly come within the scope of such a life. It is the joint production of two brothers who have lived for many years, amid the pleasures and excitements of the chase, in the wild forest of Tarnaway, in the north of Scotland, and who are only known to their cotemporaries by the charming book which they have sent into the world.

The following picture of animated nature, selected from this work, is sketched with inimitable power and beauty:—In the bedding season the does retire into the most secret thickets, or other lonely places, to produce their young, and cover them so carefully, that they are very rarely found; we have, however, deceived their vigilance. There was a solitary doe which lived in the hollow below the Braigh-cloiche-leithe in Tarnaway. I suppose that we had killed her 'marrow,' but I was careful not to disturb her haunt, for she was very fat and round, stepped with much caution, and never went far to feed. Accordingly, when, at evening and morning, when she came out to pick the sweet herbs at the foot of the brae, or by the little green well in its face, I trode softly out of her sight, and if I passed at noon, made a circuit from the black willows, or thick junipers, where she reposed during the heat. At last, one fine sunny morning I saw her come tripping out from her bower of young birches as light as a fairy, and very gay and 'canty'—but so thin, nobody but an old acquaintance could have known her. For various mornings afterwards I saw her on the bank, but she was always restless and anxious—listening and searching the wind—trotting up and down—picking a leaf here and a leaf there, and after her short and unsettled meal, she would take a frisk-round-leap into the air—dart down into her secret bower—and appear no more until the twilight. In a few days, however, her excursions became a little more extended, generally to the terrace above the bank, but never out of sight of the thicket below. At length she ventured to a greater distance, and one day I stole down the brae among the birches. In the middle of the thicket there was a group of young trees growing out of a carpet of deep moss, which yielded like a down pillow. The prints of the doe's slender forked feet were thickly tracked about the hollow, and in the centre there was a bed of the velvet 'fog,' which seemed a little higher than the rest, but so natural, that it would not have been noticed by any unaccustomed eye. I carefully lifted the green cushion, and under its veil, rolled close together, the head of each resting on the flank of the other, nestled two beautiful little kids, their large velvet ears laid smooth on their dappled necks, their spotted sides sleek and shining as satin, and their little delicate legs as slender as hazel wands, shod with tiny glossy shoes as smooth and black as ebony, while their large dark eyes looked at me out of the corners with a full, mild, quiet gaze, which had not yet learned to fear the hand of man: still, they had a nameless doubt which followed every motion of mine—their little limbs shrank from my touch, and their velvet fur rose and fell quickly; but as I was about to replace the moss, one turned its head, lifted its sleek ears towards me, and licked my hand as I laid their soft mantle over them. I often saw them afterwards when they grew strong, and came abroad upon the brae, and frequently I called off old Dreadnought when he crossed their warm track. Upon these occasions he would stand and look at me with wonder—turn his head from side to side—snuff the ground again, to see if it were possible that he could be mistaken—and when he found that there was no disputing the scent, cock one ear at me with a keener inquiry, and seeing that I was in earnest, trot heavily onward with a sigh.

## ROCKS OF LAKE SUPERIOR.

Upon the Southern coasts of Lake Superior, about fifty miles from the falls of St. Mary, are the immense precipitous cliffs called by the voyageurs, Le Portrait and the Pictured Rocks.—This name has been given them in consequence of the different appearance which they present to the traveller as he passes their base in his canoe. It requires little aid from the imagination to discern in them the castellated tower and lofty dome, and other sublime, grotesque, or fantastic shapes which the genius of architecture invented. These cliffs are an unbroken mass of rocks, rising to an elevation of three hundred feet above the level of this lake, and stretching along the coast for fifteen miles. The voyageurs pass this coast in the most profound calms; and the Indians before they make the attempt, offer their accustomed oblation, to propitiate the favour of their Minatous. The eye instinctively searches along this rampart for a single place of security: but searches in vain. With an impassable barrier of rocks on one side, and an expanse of water on the other, a sudden storm upon the lake would assure the destruction of the passenger in his frail canoe, as if he were on the brink of the cataract of Niagara.

When we passed this immense fabric of nature, the wind was still and the lake was calm. But even the slightest motion of the waves, which in the most profound calm agitates these internal seas, swept through the

deep caverns with the noise of distant thunder, and died away upon the ear as it rolled forward in the dark recesses from human observation. Resting in a frail bark canoe upon the limpid waters of the lake, we seemed almost suspended in air, so pellucid is the element upon which we floated. In gazing upon the towering battlements which impended over us, and from which fragments would have destroyed us, we felt intensely our own insignificance. Few situations can be imagined more appalling to the courage, or more humbling to the pride of men. We appeared like a speck upon the face of the creation.—Our whole party, Indians, and voyageurs, and soldiers, officers and servants, contemplated in mute astonishment the awful display of creative power, at whose base we moved; and no sound broke upon the ear to interrupt the ceaseless roaring of the waters. No splendid cathedral, no temple built with human hands, impresses the spectator with such humility, and so strong a conviction of the immense distance between him and the Almighty Architect.—*Gov. Cass.*

## THE TOP OF ÆTNA.

We arrived at the summit just as the day began to dawn. To paint the feeling at this dizzy height, requires the pen of poetry; or to describe the scene presented to mortal gaze, when thus looking down with fearful eye on the prospect beneath! The blue expanded ocean, fields, woods and rivers, mountains, and all the wonted charms of the terrestrial world, have a great effect, when viewed by the help of the nascent light, while hard by yawned that dreadful crater of centuries, revolving thick sulphurous clouds of white smoke, which falling down the mountain side in terrific grandeur, at length formed one vast colume for many miles in extent, across the sky. Anon the mountain growled awfully in its recesses, and the earth was slightly convulsed. We now attempted to descend a short distance within the crater. The noise within the gulf resembled loud and continuous thunders, and after each successive explosion, there issued columns of white and sometimes black smoke. Our senses were astounded for a while, unused to such an awful display of nature. On our exit from the crater the glorious orb of day was beginning to peep from behind the mountains of Calabria, and the wondrous vision, hitherto undefined and vague, was soon spread out distinctly to the admiring eyes. What pen could describe the glorious scene? The whole of Sicily, the coast of Italy, and the Faro of Messina, seemed gathered round the base of Ætna, while the giant shade of the mountain could be distinctly traced on the face of the Island, and over a portion of the sea. Cities and rivers in all their windings, were depicted on this mighty map of nature. To many, the most interesting part of the view is the mountain itself. The Regione Deserta of desolate region of Ætna, first attracts the eye, marked in winter by a circle of snow, but now (July) by cinders and black sand. The eye becomes satiated with its wildness, and turns with delight to the sylvan region, which with its magnificent zone of forest trees, embraces the mountain completely round. In many parts of this delightful tract are seen hills, that have been formed by eruptions of Ætna, now covered with the most luxuriant vegetation. This girdle is succeeded by another still richer, called the Regione Culta, abundant in every fruit or grain that man can desire; the small rivers Semeus and Alcantara intersect these fertile fields; beyond this the whole of Sicily, with its cities, towns, and villages, its cornfields and vineyards, in vast perspective. There was a certain degree of dread, mingled with delight, when thus elevated above the nether world. We were standing on the bank of that gulf, out of which had issued a thousand lavas, spreading desolation and death in their course, changing the face of the country, burying towns and villages beneath them.

## ELOQUENCE.

Praise for eloquence honors men of every description, from the monarch to the slave. Thus we not only see that men of the highest rank notice those who speak correctly and elegantly, of whatever profession they may be, and, on the contrary, despise those who have not this advantage; but even the lowest order of people mock and rally each other when they speak with difficulty, or when they do it in any way not perfectly pleasing to them. There is one advantage peculiar to eloquence—it can never be really despised, nor can it ever be combated but by eloquence. It was this occasioned it to be said of Plato, though he seems to condemn eloquence, that it was his greatest eulogy, as it furnished him with all those elegant words with which he fought against it. Even the most barbarous nations, who make a virtue of their insensibility to the beauties of the mind, only despise the name of eloquence. The invariably secret satisfaction which they must feel on happily expressing what they have to say, or the displeasure of feeling themselves inadequate to the task of delivering their sentiments properly, makes them esteem the art of speaking, though they despise the precepts. Let us, then, not blame those who endeavour to acquire this very necessary and elegant accomplishment.

## WOMAN—ROMANCE OF REALITY.

The devotedness of woman knows no bounds. Neither guilt nor sorrow, degradation nor misery, pain nor death, will shake her love whenever sincerely bestowed. B.