

IMAGES IN THE FIRE.

Have you gazed into the fire,
Nor dreamed of things gone by;
Nor seen the castles forming,
And quickly flitting by?

Ab! there we view the rainbow,
In myriad hues of light,
Encircling flowing fountains
Of liquid waters bright;

There reared the high Parnassus
We hope ere long to climb,
Where hangs the laurel garland,
The noblest gift of time.

There flowers of brightest promise
Invite our ardent gaze;
As sparks of fire fly upward,
We view the ruddy blaze;

Have you seen no loved ones' faces,
In shining hues of health;
Nor wished to view them nearer,
As clothed in love's deep wealth?

As dreams meet us in slumber,
A flower fade away,
We view the glowing embers
Of the evening fire at play;

And as the embers smoulder,
While ashes hide the light,
We think of useless struggles,
Of hopes no longer bright;

ORION.

NEW PHASE OF CRIME IN ENGLAND.

A system of garroting has lately exhibited itself—especially in London—in addition to the usual amount of crime chronicled in the English journals.

"A couple of ruffians, armed with heavy bludgeons or perhaps pistols, suddenly dart from behind upon some pedestrian, seize his arms, and, if he makes any resistance, slung him with a blow, when a confederate advances to the front, and in a twinkling rifles the pockets of the victim of watch, purse or jewelry, and then the whole band instantly decamp in various directions.

About twilight, or in the evening, the streets of London and the outskirts are especially unsafe. Even brave men quail at a danger, against which it is impossible to guard, and the alarm of the people is described as being sometimes ludicrous. It is dangerous even for friends to accost each other in an unfrequented place.

These deprivations are represented as being committed by "ticket-of-leave-men," as they are called. These are convicted prisoners who were sentenced to transportation, but after serving a short time in an English prison, were liberated upon giving evidence of good conduct.

AN OLD MAID'S SOLILOQUY.

"Dear, oh! what a bore it must be to have a husband' a real genuine, bearded six-footer botheing round a body, and making a slave of one generally, under the pretence of being one's protector and provider!"

"Here's one that will never get fooled? Nary a time, gentlemen! Here's one that can read the villany of your hearts through all your studied words, bows and grimaces; could I tell what was coming when Widow Green used to come every evening, and praise my garden, my housekeeping, and my way of talking to little Cousin Sue, and making her mind? Did'nt he get his answer, though, when he ventured to pop the question? Yes, sure, he did! and the old fellow has never looked on this side of the road since.

"Then the way married women carry on is a caution, sure. Now, there's Mellissy Neel, always spitting of her spite on old maids, as though she be any better off than me, with her fine little dirty-nosed frizzle-headed young ones, and her great lubberly husband; couldn't I have booted him last Saturday evening though, when he sat down at Mellissy's feet, a d instead of rocking the cradle, or seeing after the cows, laid his great chucklehead deliberately in her lap, right before me, and there she sat, stroking his ugly red locks, and looking down at him as though he was the greatest treasure in existence.

"Then if it ain't actually disgusting to see that young Kate Gibson, cut round with her J m, a smirking, and a twirling, and talking their nonsense to one another. Lawd if I ever draw a prize in the m trimonial lottery, it shall be a rare one, now I just tell you—I shall have my eyes open when I take my chance.

"Will I ever forget the day I came back from sister Fan's? Pshaw, how mortified I was by that young couple who had the seat just ahead of me in the cars, how they whispered and tittered, with her head resting on his shoulders as though she was tired to death; my face burns yet, when I think of the look that young fellow gave one time, and then turned around to his foolish little wife, and whispered some hint, then she began to snicker too; but somehow I couldn't feel wrath at the chap for all, because he put me so much in mind of S——. Well, no matter n w—no matter," said Miss Cleverbody, her glistering needles dashing swiftly through the stitches in the mitten she was knitting, but the shaded yarn, winding through her busy fingers, was a type of the clouded thread of destiny, fate has spun for the old maid.

THE FRENCH COOK AND THE PRIZE OX—I remember an amusing anecdote of a certain nobleman who was a great farmer, and also a great epicure. He kept a famous prize ox; he kept also a famous French cook. Once on a time he invited some distinguished friends to accompany him to his country seat, and sent the cook on a few days before to prepare for the entertainment. As soon as he arrived, he was impatient to show his friends his prize ox, and carried them off to the farmyard. When he came to the stall in which the ox was kept, lo and behold the ox was gone! He called to the herdsmen, "Why, where is my prize ox?"

"P ease your lordship," said the man, "the French cook came to look at him two days ago and admired him greatly; since then the ox has disappeared."

Much astonished, my lord hastened to seek an explanation of the cook, and found him very busy in his private room near the kitchen. "What is this story about my prize ox—what have you done with my Durham ox?"

"Ab, my lord," said the cook, "I have him here, safe and sound;" and so saying, he opened a cupboard and on one of the shelves showed his lordship a small jar. Pointing to the jar, he said, with great complacency, "There! you see, my lord, he was rather too tough for a roast; but I have stewed him down into a famous sauce!"—Sir Edward B. Lyton.

—Rag in the East are now worth from five to eight cents a pound.

THE VIRTUE OF GENIUS.

Genius possesses an astonishing virtue. It lifts its hero above the common sorrows of mankind, and elevates him to a stand-point from which, like a beacon light, he diffuses around his dazzling beams of radiance, thus illuminating the fortunate age in which he flourishes, and serving, like a signal house at sea, as an object claiming the attention and respect of his fellow men. Genius shortens the path to glory and renown; and while, as every day objects of our experience, we perceive men, allotted with the ordinary share of abilities, entangling themselves in a maze of doubtful and critical circumstances, then emerging into fair prospects, and again struggling against the waves of adversity, the man of genius, without such reverses, sails into the port of Immortality with a comparatively smooth sea and favorable wind.

Genius is imperishable. It stares death in the face, and, with looks of undaunted courage and defiance, bids him perform his work of desolation. The form in which it displays its brilliancy, 'tis true, is soon laid cold and lifeless in the narrow tomb; but genius, ever alive, floats down, as it were, the ceaseless stream of Time in the bark of Immortality, through successive generations, wondered at and applauded, as it sails along. Though such men as Shakspeare, Milton, Bacon and many others have long ere this found their final resting-place, where they await, in all the fearful sublimity of death, the blast of that trumpet which shall awaken them again to existence, and announce that the great judgment day has come; yet, do they not now live among us? Yes. Their shadowy forms stand before our vision in all their greatness and majesty, and speak in loud tones of their genius.

"These shall resist the empire of decay
When Time is o'er and worlds have passed away;
Cold in the dust the perished heart may be,
But that which warmed it once can never die."

WHY SALT IS HEALTHFUL.—From time immemorial it has been known that without salt men would miserably perish; and among the horrible punishments entailing certain death, that of feeding culprits on saltless food is said to have prevailed in barbarous times. Maggo's and corruption are spoken of by some writers as the distressing symptoms which saltless food engenders; but no ancient or unchemical mode n could explain how such sufferings arose. Now we know why the animal craves salt, why it suffers discomfort, and why it ultimately falls into disease if salt is for a time withheld. Upward of half the saline matter of the blood—fifty-seven per cent—consists of common salt; and as this is partly discharged every day through the skin and kidneys, the necessity of continued supplies of it to the healthy body becomes sufficiently obvious. The bile also contains soda as a special and indispensable constituent, and so do all the cartilages of the body. Stint the supply of salt, therefore, and neither will the bile be able properly to assist the digestion, nor the cartilages to be built up again as fast as they naturally waste.—[Prof. Johnson.

CIVILITY IS A FORTUNE.—Civility is a fortune itself, for a courteous man always succeeds well in life, and that where persons of ability some times fail. The famous Duke of Marlborough is a case in point. It was said of him by one contemporary, that his agreeable manners of en converted an enemy into a friend; and by another, that it was more pleasing to be denied a favor by his grace, than to receive one from any other man. The gracious manner of Charles James Fox preserved him from dislike, even at a time when he was, politically, the most unpopular man in the kingdom. The world's history is full of such examples of success obtained by civility. The experience of every man furnishes, if we recall the past frequent instances where conciliatory manners have made the fortunes of physicians, lawyers, divines, politicians, merchants, and indeed individuals of all pursuits. To men, civility is what beauty is to woman—it is a general passport to favor—a letter of introduction, written in a language that every one understands.

HOW BEGGING CHILDREN ARE DISPOSED OF IN MUNICH.—At Munich there prevails a singular custom. Every child found begging in the streets is arrested, and carried to a charitable establishment. The moment he enters the hospital, and before he is cleaned and gets the new clothes intended for him, his portrait is painted in his ragged dress, and precisely as he was found begging. When his education is finished in the hospital this portrait is given to him, and he promises by an oath to keep it all his life, in order that he may be reminded of the abject condition from which he had been rescued, and of the obligations he owes to the institution which saved him from misery, and gave him the means by which he was enabled to avoid it in future.

AN ARMY JOKE.—An exchange has the following:
Army Chaplain—"My young colored friend, can you read?"
Contraband—"Yes, sah."
Army Chaplain—"Glad to hear it. Shall I give you a paper?"
Contraband—"Sartin, massa, if you please."
Army Chaplain—"Very good. What paper would you choose, now?"
Contraband—"Well massa, if you chews, I'll take a paper of terbacker. Yah! yah!"

GIOTTO'S MODEL.

Giotto, intending to make a painting of the crucifixion, induced a poor man to be bound to a cross, under a promise of being set at liberty in an hour, and handsomely rewarded for his pains. Instead of this, as soon as Giotto had made his victim secure, he seized a dagger and stabbed him to the heart! He then sat about painting the dying agonies of the victim of his foul treachery. When he had finished his picture, he carried it to the Pope, who was so well pleased with it that he resolved to place it above the altar of his own chapel.

Giotto observed that as his holiness liked the copy so well, he might, perhaps, like to see the original.

The Pope, shocked at the impiety of the idea, uttered an exclamation of surprise. "I mean," said Giotto, "I will show you the person whom I employed as a model in this picture, but it must be on condition that your holiness will absolve me from all punishment for the use I have made of him."

The Pope promised Giotto the absolution for which he stipulated, and accompanied the artist to his studio.

On entering, Giotto drew aside a curtain which hung before the dead man, still stretched on the cross and covered with blood. The barbarous exhibition struck the pontiff with horror; he told Giotto he could never give him a solution for so cruel a deed, and that he must expect to suffer the most exemplary punishment. Giotto, with seeming resignation, said he had only one favor to ask that his holiness give him leave to finish the piece before he died. The request was too important an object to be denied; the Pope readily granted it; and in the meantime, a guard was set over Giotto to prevent his escape.

On the painting being replaced in the Artist's hands, the first thing he did was to take a brush, and dipping it into a thick varnish, he daubed the picture all over with it, and then announced that he had finished his task.

His holiness was greatly incensed at this abuse of the indulgence he had given, and threatened Giotto that he should be put to the most cruel death unless he painted another picture equal to the one he had destroyed.

"O, what avail is your threat," replied Giotto, "to a man whom you have doomed to death at any rate?"

"But," replied his holiness, "I can revoke that doom."

"Yes," continued Giotto, "but you cannot prevail on me to trust to your verbal promise a second time."

"You shall have pardon under my signet before you begin."

On that condition pardon was accordingly made out and given to Giotto, who taking a wet sponge, in a few minutes wiped off the coating with which he had daubed the picture, and instead of a copy, restored the original in all its beauty to his holiness.

LONGEVITY OF LITTLE MEN.

Your little old men abroad live, when they are to be found extant at all, to a prodigious age. They seem to be subject to the same mummifying influences as the bodies of the old monks in Sicily. They grow very yellow, very withered, their bones seem to crack as they walk, but they don't die. Take my friend, Estremadura, for instance. I have known Senor Ramon de Estremadura ever since I can remember the knowledge of anything. That Hidalgo knew my papa, and he has been dead five-and-thirty years. Estremadura was so old when I was a child that the nurses used to frighten me with him. I have met him off and on, in almost every capital in Europe. Only this summer, drinking tea with certain friends, there came a brisk though trimulous little double knock at the door. "Ecoutez," cried the lady of the house; that surely is Estremadura's knock." Estremadura! There was a cry of derisive amazement. Everybody agreed that he had been dead ten years. Somebody had seen an account of his funeral in the newspapers.

But the door opened, and Estremadura made his appearance. He was the same as ever. The same yellow face, black, bead-like eyes, innumerable wrinkles, fixed grin; the same hat, grass-green coat, white trousers, and big stick—his unvarying costume ever since I had known him. "How you do?" was my salutation to him. "Ver well since I saw you lasse." I had not seen him for fifteen years. He chatted and talked and drank tea. He was asked whence he had come? From Rome. Whither he was going? To Stockhlm. He was charming; yet we could not help feeling, all of us, as though we were sitting in the presence of a facetious phantom, of a jocular ghost. It was rather a relief when he skipped away, and was seen no more. I wonder whether he will ever turn up again. It is clear that Estremadura is ninety, if he is a day old; yet I dare say he will read the account of my death, if anybody takes the trouble to advertise that fact in the newspapers, and say, "Ahal and so he die. Ell! I knew his g'od papa ver well."

Surely we should be careful in keeping up the breed of little old men at home as well as abroad. To me they are infinitely more agreeable than big men, young or old. But they are dwindling away, they are vanishing fast. The little old ticket-porters, with their white aprons, are being superseded by burly middle-aged messengers, or else by bearded commissionaires. Artists get into the Academy before they are forty; and the little old painter who remembers Northcote, and to whom the Princess Amelia sat for her portrait, is a rara avis.—[All the Year Round.