

W. M. THACKERAY.

That Mr. Thackeray was sometimes given to the "mellig mood" may be shown by a little incident, in the relation of which I trust I shall violate no confidence, or throw myself open to the charge of ascribing to the great author a larger share of human kindness than often falls to the lot of ordinary mortals.

One morning I was making my way to 350 Osage square, at an earlier hour than usual, when, to my great surprise, I met Mr. Thackeray pacing up and down the footway in a state of great mental uneasiness. It was so entirely contrary to his custom—at least as far as my experience told me—to leave his house at so early an hour, and I was so much concerned at seeing him in such depression, that I was naturally induced to say that I hoped nothing very serious had happened to his household. He answered: "Poor Marchetti's child is dying." Having said this tears came to his relief, and he speedily returned home. He was on terms of close friendship with the Marchetti family, (his next door neighbor), and he sympathized with that well known sculptor in the deep love he bore for his dying child. He was in a cheerless mood for the remainder of the day, and in the course of his work reverted many times to the calamity which he so much deplored.

Again, on the morning of his departure for America. He was to start by an early train, and when I arrived (for it had been previously arranged that I should see him before he left), I found him in his study, and his two daughters in the dining room—all in a very fearful condition; and I do not think I am far wrong in saying that if ever man's strength was overpowered by woman's weakness it was so upon this occasion; for Mr. Thackeray could not look at his daughters without betraying a moisture in his eyes, which in vain he strove to conceal. Nevertheless he was enabled to attend to several money transactions which it was necessary to arrange before leaving; and to give me certain instructions about the four volumes of his "Miscellaneous" then in course of publication, and which he begged me to watch in their passage through the press, with a view to a few foot-notes that might be thought desirable. Then came the hour for parting. A cab was at the door, the luggage had all been properly disposed of, and the servants stood in the hall, to notify, by their looks, how much they regretted their master's departure. "This is the moment I have dreaded!" said Thackeray, as he entered the dining-room to embrace his daughters; and when he hastily descended the steps of the door he knew they would be at the window to

"Cast one longing lingering look behind."

"Good-bye," he murmured in a suppressed voice, as I followed him to the cab; "keep close behind me, and let me try to jump in unseen."

The instant the door of the vehicle was closed behind him he threw himself back into a corner and buried his face in his hands. That was the last I saw of Mr. Thackeray before he left London on his second visit to the United States; and I think I have given sufficient proof that, great as was his power of poisoning the shafts of ridicule at the follies and vices of the day, and coldly reserved as he sometimes was in his demeanour, he was full of that gentleness of heart to which his writings constantly bear testimony; and it was his instinct to be actuated by the kindest impulses which do honor to our common nature.—Harper's Magazine for July.

## LIVING TOO FAST.

Many a godly and devout divine is a fast man. Many an editor, lawyer, merchant, or scientific man, against whom no thought of suspicion exists as to the soundness of his moral character, is fast, though not in so reprehensible a sense as the man who wastes his substance in riotous living.

Fast living, in the sense of such living as shortens life, is a much more common evil than it is generally regarded. We have seen an observer of faces and character for a long time, as we have had opportunity in cars, stage coaches, and our daily intercourse with men, and we believe that in the vast majority of cases it would be found that the rapidity of the pulse in Americans is above the normal standard. Every man's life may be measured by pulse beats. He will live, accident excepted, to make a definite number of these, and his life will be shortened in proportion to the excess of work performed by his vital organs in a given time.

Excitement, physical or mental, is the cause of the rapid rate at which most American people are living. The love for excitement is a vice as positively evil in its effects as the love for strong drink, licentiousness, or gambling. It matters not what kind of excitement; all excitement is fast living, and begets a feeling of exhaustion in intervals of indulgence, which clamors for relief from some other form of stimulant.

Thus it is that the universal demand for artificial stimulants has increased, until there is perhaps not one in a thousand who does not resort to something of this kind. Alcohol, opium, tea, or whatever else it may be, is taken to support the system, under the effect of nervous prostration, and to supply in another form the excitement which it craves.

Now all this is just the reverse of what should be the case. Instead of seeking excitement, health, and long life demand that we should subvert it. The natural, healthy condition of the mind and body is that of unexcited calmness. If excitement occurs, they should be exceptional, not the rule of life. As soon as they become a necessity there is a diseased state of mind and body, and the candle begins to burn at both ends.—Albion.

The New York Evening Post says that "not the least deplorable circumstance connected with the death of Dickens is the painfully large number of essays now preparing with the design of thrusting them upon a patient and unoffending public during the next lecture season."

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