

## LINES,

SUGGESTED BY THE PREACHING OF PREST. J. M. GRANT AND JOSEPH YOUNG AND THE HOME MISSIONARIES, AT THE CONFERENCE HELD IN CENTERVILLE ON THE 25TH, 26TH, 28TH AND 29TH OF SEPTEMBER.

Spirit of Truth! assist me now to tell  
What heart-felt joys our grateful bosoms swell—  
That Zion's watchmen, seeing danger nigh,  
To wake us up have raised their warning cry.  
We will rejoice—we knew not where we were,  
Crowded with business, pleasure, toil and care;  
Scarce above earthly things did we aspire,  
Nor did our bosoms feel the heavenly fire.

Vainly we thought we did the best we could—  
Evil was present—and we thought it was good;  
So dark we were, so blind, we could not see  
What God had formed and destined us to be:  
We had forgot how with a mighty hand  
He led us to the consecrated land—  
How kindly passing our transgression o'er  
Renewed his covenant with us once more;  
And by the ordinance he hath revealed  
On us the blessings of that covenant sealed.

Our God was gracious—with a father's eye,  
He viewed his people and he heard their cry,  
And for our sakes he made this barren soil  
With beauteous harvests to reward our toil:  
Held back the accustomed frost and hail and  
snows,

Blest us with plenty and secure repose;  
Then we neglected our covenants to keep,  
Forgot our God and careless went to sleep,  
Dreaming our glorious warfare now was o'er,  
The gospel trumpet heard on every shore—  
And Zion prospers—see her large increase  
Of wealth and numbers—see her power, and  
peace;

O'er all the world her empire shall extend,  
To her dominion there shall be no end;  
Thus dreaming, of our duties we lost sight,  
Forgot our God, nor saw the approaching night.

Darkness came o'er us, and still thicker grew  
Those clouds which hid our errors from our view;  
While Satan busy with assiduous toil  
Showed each his brother's faults both great and  
small,

Severed those ties we should most sacred hold,  
Or else we prized them less than paltry gold—  
Those holy ties of union which should bind  
The weak and erring children of mankind.

Alas! how vain in human strength to trust!  
We all are weak—the children of the dust;  
Our God-like faculties—when we are left  
Quite to ourselves, of heavenly light bereft,  
Are oft perverted to some evil end—  
To wrong a brother or deceive a friend;  
Anger, and jealousy, and envy rise,  
And each vile passion hated in the skies.

But ceaseless be our thanks to God above,  
Who rules his people with a father's love,  
Whose pitying eye beheld our dark estate  
And by his servants warned us of our fate;  
His servants who the heavenly priesthood hold,  
Nerved by his Spirit's power—by truth made  
bold,

Made manifest our follies, faults and sins—  
Each covenant broken and each light grown dim:

Showed how we grieved the Spirit of our God,  
Which now no longer could in us abide  
Till we repent and covenant anew,  
What God commands we will in all things do—  
Then to baptize us he permission gives  
And kindly all our former sins forgive,  
Sheds forth his Spirit, filling every breast  
With joy and gladness not to be expressed;  
The Holy Spirit our adoption seals  
The sons of Gods—and all his will reveals.

O let us, grateful for the power he gives,  
Walk in the light and in his covenant live.  
And strive by all the power which in us lies  
To show how much his glorious gifts we prize;  
Nor ever more in word or deed offend,  
Lest heavier judgments on our heads descend,  
And that just vengeance follow which is due  
To all who break the covenants they renew.

CENTERVILLE, Oct. 20, 1856. HARRIET.

[From Chambers' Edinburgh Journal.]

## Scrawlers.

There is a class of persons, who, owing to some deficiency in their early education, or an absorbing attention to other pursuits, have unfortunately so far neglected the valuable attainment of a plain and unmistakable handwriting, as, however great their talents or genius, to deserve the appellation of scrawlers. The mysterious hieroglyphics which they use in expressing their thoughts are a constant source of puzzling vexation: an uncertainty rests upon the minds of the most experienced decipherers of their enigmatical characters, and a probable guess is all that the uninitiated can attain to.

Various and amusing are the peculiarities of handwriting in these people. Some join one word with another along the whole breadth of the paper, so as to resemble a very uneven line. Others ingeniously, with a tortuous pen, make those parts of their letters thin which should be thick, and vice versa.

Some, of still more original genius, form their letters perpendicularly, or the reverse of the usual angle, their characters resembling music rather than writing.

Others are so impatient, that they cannot afford time to finish their words, and this adds very amusingly to the perplexity of the reader, rendering it almost necessary that the writer should append a key to his system of shorthand.

Some, as if still more to mystify their epistles, use neither points nor attempt to form sentences, so that the ambiguities afford a pleasing exercise for the reader's patience and

ingenuity. Such is a glimpse at the vagaries of this vexatious class of persons.

Great is the trouble and annoyance, and many are the mistakes, which such people cause in social and commercial life. Many a letter is handed about at the post office, from one clerk to another, in the vain hope of puzzling out the direction, and, after the most sagacious have shrugged up their shoulders in despair, has been consigned to the moldy repositories of the 'dead letter office.'

Many a postman travels needless miles, worries the inmates of unknowing houses, and brings the servant maids down from their 'two pair,' all in vain, because the direction on his letter is written in such vague characters. Many a friendly epistle is turned over from one member of a family to another, and despairingly dismissed with a 'Well, we can guess what he means; and the pleasure of receiving a letter from such a correspondent is thus sadly lessened by the difficulty of deciphering it.

The meaning of many a business letter is provokingly mistaken, confusion created, and loss sustained, because the order or the directions for executing it were so obscurely written; and many a pleasant appointment irrevocably lost. Nay, so foolishly affected are many people in the style of their own signatures, that these are utterly illegible save by those to whom habit has rendered them familiar.

We have known instances where the personal property of travelers was lost simply because no one could be found to decipher the autograph of the owner; and we venture to assert, that for two ordinary individuals who can make out the names of the cashiers and secretaries on our Scottish bank notes, there will be found twenty to whom the curves and blotches of ink called characters will remain an inextricable mystery.

Of all scrawlers, those are the most annoying who affect bad writing as fashionable, and deem a scrawl one of the indications of a gentleman. Of all silly distinctions, none can be more childish than this, or argue less for the sense of those who affect it. To wear one's coat inside out would be a distinction certainly, but such a distinction as any one of the least sense or sanity would avoid.

Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well; and to write badly and illegibly, is surely indicative of pitiable incompetence, or blameable carelessness, or, worse than either, a despicable affectation. A labored school-boy's squareness of every letter is certainly not desirable; but writing may surely be legible without being puerile, and easy and business-like without appearing as if scrawled with a skewer.

To those who are accustomed to write for the press, a plain handwriting is of great importance, though literary men are often sadly deficient in this respect. We have known instances, indeed, of authors being utterly unable to read parts of their own manuscript, and who have been compelled to erase whole sentences, and substitute something else.

Authors whose manuscript is very bad have to pay an additional charge for the extra trouble they give to the printer, besides what they have unavoidably to pay for the many corrections which works printed from such writings almost invariably require.

The process of printing, necessarily slow, and always liable to error, is still more retarded, and the chances of error fearfully increased by an author's obscure manuscript. The compositor—the person who arranges the type—is generally too intent upon the mechanical process of picking up the letters, to bestow much pains in deciphering his vexatious 'copy; and even the sleepless vigilance of the corrector of the press, or 'reader,' as he is termed, may sometimes inadvertently pass over an error where there is so much to puzzle and perplex.

When it is remembered how many millions of letters are used in the pages of a very thin book, it is wonderful that even ordinary correctness is attained.

When it is considered, also, how important is the transposition of even a single letter, several hundreds of which are used in every page, the difficulty of final correctness, even under the most favorable circumstances, must be apparent, and certainly need not be increased. A most important and ludicrous mistake may be occasioned by the transposition or omission of a single letter. The word 'hops' for 'hopes,' 'tailors' for 'sailors,' 'voracity' for 'veracity,' 'cows' for 'vows,' 'cats' for 'oats,' 'tongs' for 'songs,' 'posts' for 'poets,' 'dairies' for 'diaries,' and a thousand others, though they might seem to an ordinary reader sufficiently stupid mistakes, yet might all be produced by the error—omission or transposition of one letter. Surely, where correctness is so desirable, and error so easy, an author cannot well be too careful in preparing his manuscript for the press.

If authors who write illegibly could see their works in an incipient state as they leave the hands of the compositor, they would tremble, and not without reason, for the final correctness of their tropes and metaphors, as they beheld their pathos whimsically transformed into bathos, and their sublimest figures into figures of fun.

When such ludicrous errors (to mention only two out of a host we could adduce as having actually happened within our own knowledge) as 'gaiters and garters' for 'gaeties and gravities,' and 'primroses and pears' for 'primores et pares,' are made, well may the author tremble for the inaccuracy of a work the manuscript of which is obscure. Fewer would be the 'errors of the press' if the manuscript of the author were as unmistakably plain as manuscript written to be printed ought to be.

But the schoolmaster is abroad, education

is being settled upon a more intelligent basis, and the time, we may hope, is fast approaching when the tribe of scrawlers will be extinct, and when no one will be allowed to arrive at maturity without being taught the valuable art of making known his thoughts in characters not only to be understood, but not to be misunderstood.

Men will see the absurdity of wholly devoting their time to the attainment of Greek and Latin, while incapable of writing their own language in an understandable manner. In proportion, also, as a healthy common sense prevails, the fashionable affectation of scrawling will pass away, and will no more be esteemed a desirable distinction than an impediment in the speech which should prevent the speaker from being understood.

## More about 'Sparing the Birds.'

This is, perhaps, to some a hackneyed theme, yet its importance to the farmer and gardener demands a constant recurrence to the subject. Only yesterday we saw a gang of boys in eager pursuit of a nest of fledglings, and we could but, instinctively almost, cry out, 'boys, spare the birds.'

Boys of a larger growth, however, are more mischievous. Often in coming into the city we meet a gang of city loafers, with their dogs and guns, sallying forth to destroy the birds or frighten them from their habitations in the grove upon some quiet farm retreat. Did farmers know or appreciate the real worth to themselves of the birds thus driven away, they would expel the intruding hunters as they would so many horse thieves.

The value of birds to the farmer, the fruit grower and the gardener, is now almost universally admitted by all observing persons, for it is known that insects injurious to vegetation increase in proportion to the decrease of woodlands and the songsters inhabiting them.

Farmers are sometimes at the expense of hiring persons to search out and destroy the cut and wire worms from their corn fields, the caterpillars from the orchard, borers from their peach trees and the various bugs and insects which feed upon their vines and bushes; but a few nests of birds will do the work cheaper and more effectually.

Who has not observed the robins following the plow or hoe, and wondered at the vast number of worms and grubs which they bear to their little family in a neighboring tree. Their keen sense of hearing aids in detecting the grub gnawing at the roots of plants beneath the surface.

It is stated in Anderson's Recreations that a cautious observer having found a nest of young jays, remarked that each of these birds, while yet very young, consumed at least fifteen full-sized grubs of the anomala vitis (a chafer injurious to the vine) in one day, and of course would require many more of a smaller size. Say that on an average all consumed twenty a piece, these for the five make one hundred. Each of the parents consume, say fifty; so that the pair and family devour two hundred every day. This, in three months, amounts to twenty thousand in one season.

But as the grub continues in that state four seasons, this single pair, with their family alone, without reckoning their descendants after the first year, would destroy eight thousand grubs.

Let us suppose that the half of these insects, that is forty thousand, are females, and it is known that they usually lay about two hundred eggs each, it will appear that no less than eight millions have been destroyed or prevented from being hatched by the labors of a single family of jays.

It was a short-sighted policy which led people, in many localities, at no very distant period, to enact laws calculated to nearly exterminate certain species of birds by awarding a bounty or premium for their destruction. It is now pretty well established that some of these same birds, notwithstanding an occasionally thieving visit to the corn field or orchard, are very useful in exterminating vermin.

Vincent Rollar, speaking of the crow, says: 'It was between the plants, and as soon as it sees one that has begun to wither, it approaches it with a joyful spring, digs with its sharp bill deep into the ground near the plant, and knows so well how to seize its prey, that it draws it forth and swallows it almost in the same moment; they do the same thing in the meadows which we sometimes see almost covered with them.'

Buffon, in speaking of a certain species of grackle, similar to our crow-black bird, says: 'The Isle of Bourbon, where these birds were unknown, was overrun with locusts, which had been unfortunately introduced from Madagascar; their eggs having been imported in the soil with some plants which were brought from that island. The Governor General and the Intendant deliberated seriously on the means of extirpating these noxious insects; and for this purpose, caused several pairs of Indian grackles to be introduced in the island.'

'This plan promised to succeed; but, unfortunately, some of the colonists seeing the birds eagerly thrusting their bills into the earth of the newly sown fields, imagined that they were in quest of grain, and reported that the birds, instead of proving beneficial, would be highly detrimental to the country.'

On the part of the birds it was argued that they raked the new ploughed grounds, not for the sake of the grain, but for the insects, and were therefore beneficial. They were, however, proscribed by the council, and in the space of two hours after the sentence was passed against them, not a grackle was to be found in the island.

This prompt execution was followed by a speedy repentance. The locusts gained the ascendancy, and the people who only viewed

the present regretted the loss of the grackles. Shortly afterwards a few pairs were again introduced, and their preservation and breeding made a state affair; the laws held out protection to them, and the physicians, on their part, declared their flesh to be unwholesome. The grackles accordingly multiplied, and the locusts were destroyed.'

The whippoorwill and night hawk destroy vast numbers of nocturnal insects, including the codling moth, an especial enemy of the fruit grower. Both of these birds are often heard after nightfall in the vicinity of orchards, where they seize not only upon the millers and larger insects, but by means of wide mouths which they keep open when in quest of food, they collect many small insects, such as gnats, by constantly darting through swarms of them.

The night hawk often darts from a distance upon large insects, making in its swoop a noise not unlike that produced by the twang of a viol string. Nutting states that one of these birds, on dissection, was found to contain 200 insects in its crop, consisting mostly of small beetles.

We are fully persuaded that no enlightened farmer, who is convinced of even a tithe of the benefit he derives from the friendly visits of these cheerful laborers, will permit them to be destroyed on his premises; but rather invite them by means of hedges, thick shrubs and low trees, to make their habitations near him, calling him from his morning slumbers by a flood of song poured in the open casement, and ever ready with their inspiring notes to cheer him in his daily toil.—[American Agriculturist.]

[From Chambers' Edinburgh Journal.]

## Pride—Offensive and Defensive.

The French have two words to express pride, *La Fierce*, and *L'Orgueil*. A lady being asked to define the difference, replied very promptly and happily that the first was 'defensive,' and the second 'offensive.' The distinction is impossible to have too much; of thesecond, it is equally impossible to have too little.

Defensive pride is that proper self-respect which will not allow its possessor to commit an unworthy, a base, or a mean action. It is that which keeps us from making friends and companions of the vicious, the dishonest, and the disreputable. It is that which urges us to distinguish ourselves above the crowd of the idle, the ignorant, the dilatory, and the variable, by our industry, our wisdom, our perseverance, and our constancy; and which prompts us to win the applause of our fellows by our goodness, and consequent greatness.

Defensive pride is the shield with which we keep off the assaults of those who, openly or insidiously, would bring us down to a lower moral level than our judgment and our conscience inform us we ought to hold: it is the amulet with which we preserve ourselves from the machinations of evil, and the perfume by aid of which we may walk amid the haunts of vice without contamination.

Without a due proportion of pride like this, in some one of its various developments, no man yet has ever arrived at distinction, or left behind him a name which the world holds in honor. It is the nurse of emulation, and, like the antagonism of which we spoke in a previous article, becomes, when properly or opportunely excited, the spur to urge the timid or the sluggish to do the good which another has left undone; the steel upon some flinty nature, eliciting heat and light which might otherwise have remained latent for ever.

Pride of this kind sits as well upon the humblest as upon the loftiest. It is the pride of a man independent of his rank, his wealth, or his station; the pride of the gold, and not of the stamp upon it. Pride of this kind has found its most poetical, and at the same time its best and truest utterance in the song of Robert Burns, 'A man's a man for a' that.'

Every one who feels his heart glow at the sentiments expressed in that glorious lyric, feels defensive pride; and if he continues to feel it, and makes it the guide of his life, he becomes—though he toil all day, and far into the night, for hard and scanty bread; though he 'wear hoddin gray,' and dwell in a hut scarcely sheltered from the winds and rains of heaven—an ornament to his kind, and a blessing to himself.

Offensive pride, on the other hand, shows the little mind, as defensive pride exhibits the great one. It is the pride of externals, as defensive pride is that of internals; the pride of the adventitious circumstances in which a man is placed, and not of the qualities of the man himself. Offensive pride assumes various forms, and is in all of them equally a proof of ignorance, presumption, and heartlessness.

To the man of sense, it is always ridiculous; and wherever it does not excite the anger, it is sure to excite the contempt of the wellminded.—When we see a man proud of his high lineage, and expecting that we shall do homage to him for the virtues of his ancestors, although he have none of his own, we despise him all the more for the highness of his name: his pride and his lordly airs gall us, if we are of stern nature; and provoke us to laughter, if we are of the number of those who can find amusement in the contemplation of human folly. Proud men of this class have been happily compared to turnips and potatoes; all the best part of them is under ground.

Equally, if not more offensive, is the pride of wealth. This pride is the parent of every meanness. We may be quite sure, when we see a man proud of his money, that he has gained it in a dirty manner, and that he makes really, thought not perhaps visibly to all men's eyes, a dirty use of it. If he have a large house, it is not for use but for ostentation.

If he have fine carriages, valuable horses, and footmen in gay liveries, it is that he may excite