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THE GARTNAVEL GAZETTE

The Journal of the Glasgow Royal Asylum



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Niobe, the Snow Queen.

AN OLD FAIRY TALE RETOLD FOR CHRISTMAS.

OF all the beautiful fairy tales for which the world has to thank the fertile fancy of ancient Greece, none is more strikingly admirable, none at once more touching and severely tragic than the myth of Niobe. Indeed she may be justly termed the Mater Dolorosa of Paganism.

The story traditionally told is so well known that a brief outline will suffice to recall its pathetic history. Niobe was the daughter of that old Lydian King, Tantalus, who was

punished (according to one popular account), for revealing the secrets of heaven to which his divine descent from Zeus had given him access; (according to another), for his unnatural cruelty in murdering his own son, Pelops, and serving his flesh at a repast to the gods, and was condemned to a terrible and unending doom of torture in Tartarus, where he had to stand up to his chin in water under a heavily laden fruit tree, the fruit and water, however, retreating whenever he sought to satisfy his cruel hunger or allay his awful thirst. Hence we have the word *tantalize*, which means properly, to mock and tease with the pretended offer of gifts that are only shown to be withdrawn.

Niobe became the consort of the Boeotian King, Amphion, and the proud mother of a numerous progeny. Alas! Poor Niobe! her pride was her undoing. By boasting over Leto, the mother only of Apollo and Artemis, she provoked the deadly resentment of these deities, who determined to avenge the insult to their mother, and punished her by shooting her children before her eyes.

And so Niobe saw all her children, all but one—her little daughter Chloris—fall around her under the deadly and unseen arrows of the Powers of Light.

In pity Zeus changed her into stone, and a weeping rock near Smyrna is still pointed out as the metamorphosed Niobe. The fate of the poor mother and her children gave the famous sculptor, Scopas, the subject of one of his masterpieces—The Niobe Group—the original of which is lost, but a good Roman copy of which was discovered at Rome in 1583, and is now in the famous Uffizi collection at Florence. Pictures of this well-known group show Niobe horror-stricken, amid her children, who are one by one being struck down dead by the unseen shafts of Apollo and Artemis. With upraised arm and outspread mantle she seeks to shield her darling Chloris, who kneels in terror at her feet. All the other children, youths and maidens, are either dead, dying, or vainly seeking to escape the fatal shafts. Such is the world-renowned group of Niobe and her Children.

And how did this story begin? we ask, and philologists tell us in reply that it is a fairy tale of the snow. The name "Niobe" means *snow* and is derived from the parent source of Greek and Latin, in which languages the names for snow, while differing from each other, reveal their common kinship just as the English *snow* and the German *schnee* are obviously dialectal varieties derived from the old original language of our common Teutonic forefathers.

In the same way the "stems" of the Greek and Latin words for snow can be shown to be branches of a tree that grew out of one common "root." So much for the name. Let us now see how the narrative grew out of the snow-name Niobe. The numerous children of Niobe are the myriad snowflakes which fall and cover the landscape only to fade and die in the darting rays of the sun, causing their mother to melt away in tearful sorrow at their mysterious disappearance. But as they die, one child of the snow survives—Niobe's youngest daughter,

the timid little Chloris, who nestles at her mother's feet—that pale white blossom which we call the *snowdrop*. This little flower with its drooping head loves the snow, and is the only snowflake that survives the untimely fate of all her sisters. But while she grows, the opposing powers of frost and fire together turn the soft white of the snow to stony ice, and thus in the gleaming, dripping icicles of earliest spring we have the suggestive origin of the fairy tale, which explains, as if for little children, how the snow is changed to ice when the snowflakes disappear, and why the slender snowdrop is the first and only herald of the Life that will not die. Such then is the story of Niobe, the woful mother and her winsome little one that was not killed when all the other snowflakes withered and wasted away beneath the arrows of the Sun and Moon. This was how the old Greek imagination drew comfort from the dead of winter, and pictured the gracious birth of New Life amid the cheerless desolation of the cold, dark days. May we not find here a dawning anticipation of that Divine Legend which tells of the winter advent of Him who is the Life of men, and whose coming is commemorated every Christmas-tide, and symbolized by another fair, white flower, "The Star of Bethlehem."

P. H. A.

Coming Lantern Lectures.

MR. JOHNSON (our Secretary) comes on January 21st, accompanied by Mr. J. Arthur Brown, to give us a lecture with lantern views on "Northumberland: a tour on the Scottish and English Border." We have also to announce that the famous naturalist, Mr. Richd. Kearton, F.Z.S., will probably be with us in January; and that Miss Gertrude Bacon, daughter of the well known aviator, will lecture on "A Girl's Adventures in Cloudland," on 23rd December.

The Forthcoming Scottish Musical Play.

IN the October issue of the GAZETTE there appeared a letter to the Editor from "an old member" of the "Gartnavel Comic Opera Company" enquiring as to the possibility of resuming this form of entertainment which somehow had fallen through last winter. We have therefore much pleasure in saying that for some weeks back there has been in active preparation an "Original Scottish Musical Play," in three acts, which, it is hoped, will be sufficiently advanced for production on Christmas Eve. Of the nature of this rather ambitious production we cannot, of course, at present, offer any remarks further than that, to quote a familiar phrase, it is "executed on our own premises" in the fact that the libretto is original. In the musical part, in addition to patients and staff, there are some fifteen children, boys and girls, and a pleasant evening's entertainment should, omitting unforeseen circumstances, be the result.

J. C.

The Staff Dance.

THE first Staff Dance of the season was held on Tuesday, the 1st of November. These functions are always very enjoyable, and this one proved to be no exception.

The Asylum Medical Staff were present in full force, and as guests of the evening we had with us Dr. Adamson, and Messrs. Howell and Kelly, our late clinicians.

Dancing commenced at eight o'clock, and was kept up merrily till after twelve—all too short the hours seemed.

The music was bright and tuneful, the floor well polished, and last but by no means least, a host of pretty partners, so that it is no wonder that the gentlemen, though rather in the minority, did their duty manfully and found their heavy task a congenial one.

A very pleasing feature of the evening was the presentation of a beautiful bouquet to Mrs. Gourlay, who graciously handed over to the successful nurses and attendants their badges and diplomas.

Our genial chief, Dr. Oswald, in a neat speech moved a vote of thanks to Mrs. Gourlay for her kindness, and Mr. Gourlay very wittily replied.

Dancing was then resumed till the enticing tables of the supper room demanded attention. After an interval of well-earned rest and refreshment, the ball was again set a-moving, and dancing continued vigorously till a completed programme with extras brought the evening's proceedings to a close.

It was with great reluctance that we joined hands for the singing of "Auld Lang Syne," and then departed, taking with us as a solace very happy memories of a most enjoyable evening.

Airlie Concert.

A LARGE and appreciative audience assembled for the first of this season's concerts, when a good programme, though rather lacking in variety, was submitted in an able manner as evidenced by the numerous encores.

Some disappointment was occasioned by the unavoidable absence of the "comic singer," though a capable substitute was found in one of the artistes, who raised shrieks of laughter with a broadly humorous song of music-hall fame.

Several dances in the course of the evening enlivened the proceedings greatly.

The lengthy programme being completed, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr. Airlie, on behalf of the Abstainers' Union, and the artistes, for the enjoyable evening which they had provided.

Judging by this one, the remaining concerts of the season are sure to be appreciated.

Madame Bertha Moore's Recital.

AS LAST year's recital had been so thoroughly appreciated by all present, this year's was keenly looked forward to.

Madame Moore took for her subject "Modern Composers and their Works," and very instructive and interesting it proved to be.

A concise and racy sketch of their lives embellished with many anecdotes was given, with a short criticism and description of their work.

Her singing of the typical songs of each composer left nothing to be desired, and in the Fan Song she shewed in addition her great dramatic power.

Chursday Dances.

THESE dances have been entered into with great zest, so that the available dancing space has been as a rule well occupied.

This result is in a large measure due to the good music provided, indeed, at the skirt of the pipes those unable to get up to the Schottische must feel keen regret at their disability. The recitations and songs, both from soloists and the quartet party, have all been very good, and have largely contributed to the pleasure of these evenings.

Our Abode.

(INCIDENTAL NOTES BY DESIRE)

OUTDOOR recreation is rightly encouraged and indulged within the precincts of Gartnavel. Bowls, cricket, croquet, football, golf, tennis, etc., are all played in season. Each game has its special votaries, amongst whom are some skilled and inspiring exponents. Friendly encounters are of frequent occurrence, and create general interest and pleasure. An unusually lengthened programme or card of cricket fixtures heralded the past year, which fairly

good weather, not so continuously bright and beautiful, however, as characterised the memorable Exhibition year (1901), kept unlagging. No less than twenty-six matches were arranged, involving much correspondence on the part of the courteous Secretary, Dr. T. Goldie Scot. Out of this number two were abandoned—Titwood Eleven of Clydesdale and Kelvinside Academy—the first named alone through climatic or elemental interference. Five were drawn, viz.:—Medical Practitioners, Victoria, Ravenna, Bothwell and Johnstone; nine lost:—North-Western, Lennox Castle, University, Anniesland, Dennistoun, Mr. R. J. Hotchkis' Eleven, Kenmuir, Gartloch, and Meadow Bank; and ten won:—Richmond, Barlinnie, Anderson's College (Medical School), Unitas, Hamilton Crescent Eleven of West, Gartloch, Barthead, Neilson, Golfhill, and Clarendon, or, altogether, making the total 26. If the wins but exceed the losses by only one, yet the result is sufficient for victory. Better fielding, and at times more nerve or determination would have rendered the result more distinct and pleasurable; but in all fairness be it remarked, that faults, ever easily at hand, like fortune, are seldom one-sided. The grand total of runs, including wickets, byes, etc., scored by Gartnavel during the entire season amounts to 1791, and this for the loss of 242 wickets, or an average of 7.4 runs per wicket, while that of their opponents numbers 1656 runs for 228 wickets, or 7.26 runs per wicket. Detailed averages may be dispensed with; but in batting be it noted that Dr. R. D. Hotchkis, Mr. Waddell, Mr. Kelly, and the young attendant cricketer, H. Cockeroff, who hails from Yorkshire, are the leading quartette. In bowling also is Attendant Cockeroff notably conspicuous, by taking no less than 103 wickets for only 430 runs, or an average of 4.17 runs per wicket, no ordinary achievement. Throughout he was fairly well

supported by Attendant M'Fadzean; and on one occasion, against Golfhill, our Clinical, Mr. Percy Kelly (lately left; good health and success go with him) made a welcome and splendid record, when, doubtless aided by the radiance of a setting sun, he was instrumental in lowering seven wickets for two runs! The matches against Gartloch were evidently anticipated with greatest interest, and most keenly fought. Might we suggest, additionally, an alternative arrangement with another kindred institution, such as Edinburgh, Ayr, Perth, Dumfries or Larbert, and whose teams are of good repute. We hope that next season will witness the return to the tented field of an esteemed Ex-Captain whose achievements with bat and ball are frequently the theme of conversation. In this and other associations he is truly regarded by his old friends as a valiant and doughty Scot lang missed. Will a new pavilion grace the ground next season? The scoring box which presently serves could advantageously be (h) arbour'd elsewhere. If divided boundaries on the south are deemed necessary, they might be nicely and effectively banneretted.

During the summer several ladies' matches were played on the western field, and afforded healthful exercise and enjoyment to all who joined. Afternoon tea, and sometimes delicious fruit, persuasively tendered, was fit accompaniment to those hearty and merry meetings. Prithee, fair reader, consider not these closing sentences remissful, nor yet lacking in gallantry, rather associate them with the thought conveyed in the homely and qualifying phrase—though last, not least in our regard.

Football, Association, lately introduced here, now engages the attention of the young men on Saturday afternoons. The season was fittingly inaugurated on October 15th with a match between representatives of the East and West houses, when, after a most

friendly, exciting and very enjoyable game, resulted evenly—a draw. On the 22nd of same month a like match terminated in victory of the East house by 2 goals to 0. Since then several spirited and good games have been played, fortune rather favouring the "wise men." There are several very capable exponents amongst the lot. A match against some outside team would prove a better exposition, strengthen its hold, and help to improvement in play. Attendant Davidson and his sturdy and energetic associates should have little difficulty in arranging.

Another introduction has been thought of for winter, a Curling Pond has been prepared at the western extremity of the policies. It has been now fully two years ready for initial service. There are expectant, longing lovers of the exhilarating and roaring game residing within the gates. Will Jack Frost reign this winter? There is hope. The quibbling adage runs thus—As the day lengthens, the ice strengthens.

Some of these games, and others, are, illustratively, painted on the walls of the large dining hall.

BILLIARDS—A new room was lately opened in the East House, with a Tournament. Twenty entered, and all were considerably handicapped. Many good games followed, some of which were fluctuating, others close and exciting. The final tussle rested between Mr. C. (scratch) and Attendant M'Fadzean (allowed ten points); and after a level and fair game the urbane and stalwart Attendant was greeted winner, for the nonce, champion. A very handsome table by the celebrated manufacturers, Messrs Burroughs & Watt, of London, is being erected in the West House, and soon will be in fine playing order. Possibly a match, East versus West, may signal the start, when good play and a keen struggle for victory may be fully expected. J.R.H.

(To be continued.)

A TRIBUTE.

Through the little garden-wicket
See how many take their way!
No one asks us for a ticket,
No one says: "It's here you pay."
Though the flowers are turning hoary
Down the path we love to go,
There to revel in the glory
Of our Autumn Flower-Show.

In our tiny Crystal Palace
Is a sight to charm the eye,
For Japan's enduring blossom
Holds the floral banner high.
Yellow, Tawny, Bronze and Purple,
Pink and Snow-white, day by day,
With a grace that well becomes them,
Prosperly march upon their way.

Oh! how many a happy moment
In that palace we have had,
Chatting with our own kind gardeners,
Or a faithful "garden-lad."
Little softnesses and trials
Faded away quite out of sight;
Cheerily we lit our bonquets,
Smile, and nod, and say: "Good night!"

Is it—but we first must mention
There are near four thousand there
That have shed their light in gallery,
Concert hall, and house of prayer!—
Is it little to have done it?
(For they soon must reach their goal!)
Little! Do not call it little
To have comforted a soul!

So we've praised them. But who raised them?
Into that if ye enquire,—
'Twas a man of mighty prowess
And enthusiasm—like his Sire,
GARTNAVEL, Oct., 1901. E. Y.

Our Cats.

We have certainly some remarkable cats in Gartnavel, "Old Grannie" being the doyenne of them all. "Grannie," a dour black and white cat, lives in the gardener's bothy along with three other cats, whose names are "Tommy," "Nero," and "Jubilee." There was another bothy cat called "Kruger," but, like his famous Transvaal namesake, he has recently passed from the stage of life. "Grannie" is the mother of many families, her numerous descendants being distributed over a wide area. As we are going to write about her children, we were under the necessity of introducing "Grannie" to

our readers. One of her kittens was given to the cart-horse stable, and was named by Andrew, "Sarah," and in due time had a family of her own (she is now a great-grandmother!). One kitten was kept and received the name of "Wee Sarah," to distinguish it from its mother. Now it so happened that poor old "Brownie," whose domain was the carriage stable, died of tuberculosis, which was brought on by being shut out in the snow and sleet one bitterly cold night. Thus the carriage stable became catless, and the mice held high carnival, and even made free with the corn chest. We were in despair, for a strange cat would not stay with us like faithful old "Brownie" (a rare cat). Just at this time "Wee Sarah" made her appearance in a very interesting condition and mewling pitifully. Of course we were only too glad to take her in, and in a few days she became the mother of five kittens, two of which we kept, the remainder being consigned to a watery grave. These two young kits were named "Abraham" and "Rachel."

But we must now return to "Old Sarah," who, by the way, has lately reared two new kittens, "Tiger" and "Blackie." We have a great number of young chickens, some 130, I believe, which have been carefully reared under the experienced hands of Mr. Tom Barr, in whose welfare she takes quite a maternal interest, entering their coops and lying beside them, being on the most friendly terms with the mother hens. If some impudent sparrow or starling makes its appearance among the chicks, "Sarah," rushes at it, either driving it away or making a meal of it. We have one young peafowl and some young guinea chicks with whom "Sarah" is also on the most kindly terms. "Wee Sarah" having established herself in the harness room of the carriage stable, devoted herself to the proper training of "Abraham" and "Rachel," and, like a good mother, brought them in

plenty of sparrows and mice. But alas! "Wee Sarah" suddenly disappeared, and then "Abraham" disappeared. What became of them we never discovered; so now we were left with only "Wee Rachel" to keep down the mice. "Major," the big staghound, promptly took the foalren little timid creature under his protection, and every evening she cuddles beside him in his straw bed in one of the empty stalls. The affection they have for each other is really wonderful. "Major" sometimes, when in a playful mood, carrying his little companion about in his mouth, which she seems to enjoy immensely. But one would require the genius of a Dr. John Brown to describe the playful antics of "Wee Rachel" and her friend "Major." The pony "Fifi" is also one of "Major's" friends, as he always accompanies her in her drives round the grounds, occasionally giving her a most affectionate kiss. But space forbids us at present saying more of "Major" and his friends. A. N. S. M.

The White Man's Burden.

The following amusing incident happened in one of His Majesty's Colonies some years ago, showing in a ludicrous manner the feeling of superiority which exists in the minds of some of the King's "far awa" subjects, over others who had been "imported" there as agricultural labourers.

The discussion arose between a negro of purest ray serene, and a Madras coolie—one of the lowest types India produces.

A white man—a Scotchman—found it necessary to have a drain cleaned out, which had become offensive owing to the fermentation and decomposition of molasses and other vegetable matter, which had run into, and clogged the sewer, and calling the nigga who was a porter of the establishment, said—

"Sambo, I want you to go up the yard, and clean out that drain; take two men with you, and you shall have five dollars."

Dusky Sambo (who knew the nature of the work) looked very much disgusted, and felt equally insulted, replied—
"What you take me fo', sah? You tink 'cause I a nigger dat I do work like dat? No, sah, dat work for coolie man. Plenty coolie man in the square, sah; get a coolie man."

A coolie man was found in the square on his "hunkers," waiting for work, and was summoned thus—

"Hey, papa, awa ho (come here). Me got um plenty big job, for clean um drain; me gie um (give you) pive dolla (five dollars) suppose you go clean um."

The coolie inspected the work, and seeing the negro standing by laughing, guessed that the work had been offered to, and declined by the nigger, and his feeling of superiority would not permit the chance to go past, without letting his "woolship" know just what he thought of him. Addressing the Big Buckra man, he said—

"Ah, massa, Gad sabby (God knows) dat no wuk for coolie man, dat wuk for nigga' man same like dat big nigga' man."

This made Sambo angry, and the heated altercation which ensued ended as follows, the coolie firing the last shot—

"Look here, yo' nigga' man; white man comb um hair (putting his hand to the white man's hair); coolie man comb um hair, same like Buckra (white) man; nigga' man no comb um hair, just do um so"—illustrating his words by scratching his head—"and look here, you dirty nigga' man, Gad make white man fast, den he make coolie man, and late, late Satu'day night, make um nigga' man."

His woolship retreated, as the laugh was on him, and when he had gone, the coolie said—"Massa, how much pisa (money) you gie um, massa, suppose me go clean um good?"

"Five dollars," was the reply.

"All right, massa, me go get um nudder coolie man, and do um."

W.O.

Our Supplement—The Church.

Our Supplement is about the Church, the building and dedication of which were events of the year. It contains descriptive views of the building, with the order of service, and sermon preached by the Rev. Mr. Kirkpatrick at the dedication on October 23rd.

The services on that day were suitable and impressive. The congregations were large, and included many of the Directors and friends of the Institution; and the officiating clergy-men must have been gratified by the close attention given by all those present.

Mr. Simpson, the Organist, had taken great trouble with the music, and we only wish that the standard of that day could be maintained every Sunday.

Dr. McAdam Muir preached in the evening, and it was a great pleasure to hear him. It is contemplated to have annual special services on the anniversary of the opening of the Church, and we hope then the privilege will be given of hearing other Ministers known to us only by name.

The collection at the morning service was for the fund to provide an organ and to place stained glass in some of the windows. It amounted to £15, and since then £4 10s. has been received from those unable to contribute at the time. This is but a small part of what we need; but we hope it will grow; and we will be glad to receive subscriptions from those who desire to help us to make our Church beautiful and our services complete. Mr. Aitken has recently well said in "St. Andrew" that good music has a powerful effect in calming and soothing disturbed minds, and even in alleviating physical pain.

It is proposed also to perpetuate in the Church the memory of those intimately connected with the Institution

or long in its service. There is already a proposal to place on its walls a tablet to the Glory of God, and in memory of two old and faithful servants who, after many years labour, passed to their rest. We also hope to have the Church open daily, and the provision of an organ would enable music to be played at these times of daily rest and prayer.

We are fortunate in our Chaplains, Mr. Carswell and Mr. Aitken, and in the great interest they take in the Church and congregation. The ministrations of Mr. Aitken are much liked both in the pulpit and sick ward, and we know that both are desirous of making our worship in this little Church of ours profitable to us and full of rest and gladness.

L. R. OSWALD.

What the Christmas-Tree Brought to Nora.

"Snow on snow, snow on snow," had been the order of Nature for the last forty-eight hours over the old Saxon city of Lipska. The large flakes had at last ceased falling, frost had set in, and the rays of a red, December, setting sun lit up the great snow masses of its suburbs and public gardens with a warm pinky glow. The snow wreaths on the rugged branches of the huge acacias, and the tiny white pyramids on millions of plane and poplar twigs sparkled with a diamond-like brilliance.

Three figures, evidently well prepared to resist the piercing cold, had just issued from the street door of a handsomely built dwelling house. They were, all three, somewhat burdened with baskets and parcels. After waving a farewell to a hardly discernable group of children at an upper window, they turned at once into the broad promenade-avenue which encircles the "old town;" and as they stepped along on the soft white carpet they chatted cheerily.

"If the gracious Fräulein," earnestly expostulated a hooded and cloaked serving-maid, "would only permit that I carry the apples." As she spoke she laid her free hand on the basket carried by the central figure, a young lady of slighter and stouter build than herself.

"Nein, Gretchen, thou art already burdened enough," was the reply, "and how could I go in empty-handed this night!—to Nurse above all!—Hast not forgotten the Nuremberg marzipan?"

"Nein, Gnädiges Fräulein, Master Heinrich has it in his bag."

"Or the boots? or Maxchen's little coat? or the woolly lamb, Gretchen?"

"All safe here, dear Fräulein, every one as in the lists. Did not Martha and I pack them together? We have everything with us, most assuredly. And won't Frau Becker open her eyes this time! So big a cake has never gone to Becker's; that is just my belief!"

"Ay! A fine shouting there will be up there to-morrow night!" chimed in the third of the party, a tall lad of fifteen with an academician's coloured cap on his head. He shifted his heavy bag to the other hand, then remarked carelessly: "Nora, d'ye know I saw the Herr Lieutenant Hildebrandt, to-day."

"Oh!" almost gasped his sister; then "where?"

"In Schroeder's flower shop. Think of his not being at the manor on the Eve! Isn't it strange?"

"How do you know he is not to spend Heiligen Abend at Falkenberg, Heinrich?"

"He told me."

"Then he spoke to you?"

"Of course, I told you so."

"No, you said you saw him, just."

"Well, I saw him first; then he spoke to me. He was giving an order for a bouquet."

"So?"

"A gorgeous bouquet it will be too! All roses! Price, five and twenty

marks!" The girl started, sighed deeply; then, drawing herself up to her full height, increased the pace.

"He said he would call for it himself at 6.30 to-morrow," ran on the lad, keeping up as did Gretchen, but quite unaware of the torture his words were causing. He then went off on another subject—the splendid condition the ice would be in on the morrow; but the mind of Nora did not follow his boyish eloquence, it was with that bouquet at Schroeder's, and kept turning over the probabilities of its destination. "Ah me!" she thought, "so soon to forget me—so soon," and something like a stifled sob, startled the watchful Gretchen into enquiring: "Has the Gnädiges Fräulein caught cold! But that would indeed be unfortunate, for who then would lead the Christmas Hymn to-morrow night?"

"Oh nonsense! Mädl," returned the girl, "See! there is Frau Becker's window lit up. She will be dressing the tree already, and the children sitting in the dark, no doubt."

"Then Emil the dreamer will be spinning one of his wonderful webs," said the boy, "and all the curly heads bending forward with great eyes; and Lenchen will be calling out to stop, for 'das ist zu schrecklich—viel zu schrecklich, Emil.—Here we are. Now for the Tower of Babel! Give me the basket, Nora!"

As Heinrich spoke they turned in at the great double-doored entrance that guards each "Haus" in a German city, and began the ascent of the narrow winding stone-stair. As they spiral up, take breath and climb again, we may supply a few notes of explanation.

As the reader may surmise, the course of the true love of gentle Nora Avenstein had not run smooth. Its sudden check had driven of late even the bloom from her young cheek, although in some ways it had intensified her rare beauty, and revealed the depth and strength of her loving nature.

"Could it be but one short half-year" she sometimes asked herself,—but one short half-year since she had lived that life—that quite new life, so full of aspiration, and sweet content, and hope! And now! Never before had duty seemed to this girl "stern daughter of the voice of God"; heavy had become the once glad some daily round, for the star of hope had almost set.

It had been in the month of roses, and when on a visit to an aunt in Dresden, that Nora Avenstein had discovered, in her own experience and to her great surprise, that there is a love more intense, irresistible, and for the time, absorbing, than even that of parents and of home. Bright young Lieutenant Hildebrandt too, till then heart-free, had just as suddenly met his fate, finding in the freshness and charm of this womanly girl's nature a magnet which would not let him go. For six happy weeks they had been almost daily in each other's company, meeting with ever-fresh zest, parting with ever stronger desire to meet again. Most pleasant had been those sailings up the Elbe, those wanderings through the woods to the crowning glory of the Bastei. Delightful beyond words those riding-parties over undulating velvet-warded paths 'neath miles of avenues flecked with sunshine. Numerous had been the military spectacles, the open-air concerts, the visits to the Great Gallery; and the essence of it all was not these very good things, but, to each, the presence and nearness of the other. To make use of Browning's words:

"How could it end in any other way?
You called me and I came home to your heart."

Or, as in the choice words of Stevenson: "The ideal story is that of two people who go into love step for step, with a fluttered consciousness, like a pair of children venturing together into a dark room. From the first moment when they see each other, with a pang of curiosity, through stage after stage of growing pleasure and embar-

assment, they can read the expression of their own trouble in each other's eyes. There is here no declaration properly so called; the feeling is so plainly shared, that as soon as the man knows what it is in his own heart, he is sure of what it is in the woman's."

So had it been with Nora and her lover.

The conscience of Frau von Döring, Nora's aunt, had begun to be somewhat uneasy about her responsibility in the matter. Rumours of the marked attention to her niece of a certain Herr Baron, manager of one of the first banking-firms in Lipska, had reached her soon after Nora had left school at Easter. Lieutenant Hildebrandt being Herr von Döring's nephew, and having from childhood had the run of the house and garden, could neither be ordered off nor kept long out of the way; that was plain. As a matter of fact, Frau von Döring did not *resent* him out of it; they were made for one another, it seemed to her. A letter from her brother, Dr. Avenstein, however, relieved her of all further anxiety, as it contained, besides thanks for the great kindness shown to his daughter, a request that she return home that week. The cause of this sudden recall was a formal proposal for Fräulein Avenstein's hand. The lengthened visit of Nora in the Saxon capital, and the hint of an acquaintance of the Baron's there, had induced him to take this premature step without having first secured the lady's consent.

Baron Rothfeldt had been a widower for some three years, was still young, reasonably attractive, and enormously wealthy. The wilfulness of his only child had, of late, led him seriously to consider the desirability of a second marriage; and of all the young maidens in Lipska who crossed his path, none found such favour in his eyes as the fair Nora. She was then but 18, and this visit to her aunt had been her first important outing since leaving school.

The proposal of the Baron was

received by Dr. Avenstein, the first legal pleader at the highest court in the city, with some surprise. The two men had not had much intercourse, the social position of Avenstein being somewhat higher, and his immediate circle more exclusive in the rich merchant city than that of the banker, whose title had been obtained with gold. Indeed, it was only at the great weekly winter-concerts, during the intervals of these in the foyer, that Baron Rothfeldt had had any opportunity of conversing with Nora Avenstein at all. His young daughter attended the same institution as the Avenstein girls; and, though spoiled, and often not amenable to reason, she yielded to Nora an admiration which had turned the head of a goddess. At meals she chattered incessantly about her and her young sisters, and was really the means, at first, of attracting her father's attention to Nora at the concerts. Since these had begun again in October, Baron Rothfeldt omitted none. He had received little encouragement, but his evident admiration of the advocate's daughter soon became matter of speculation in private circles. Yet there were those who fancied Fräulein Avenstein's manner was nothing more than polite; and these were right. Poor Nora! It seemed to her she now lived from day to day under a sort of disgrace, and in deepening distress.

Soon after the parting of the young people at Dresden, Lieut. Hildebrandt had been out for six weeks at the military manoeuvres in the field. On his return, some officious fool had taken upon himself to inform him that "that beautiful girl was going to marry Rothfeldt, the millionaire."

"Had he seen the announcement of the 'Verlobung'?"

"Well, no; but the thing was coming off, and a mighty fine thing for her, too!"

Poor Romeo, however, took the first

opportunity his military duties would permit, of going through to Lipska, nominally to hear the first performance of the new opera. On his return, but misty were his ideas of Nessler's famous work, and by his comrades he was lively rallied on his intelligent musical criticism of the opera of the year. On every side, his fears had been confirmed, save in the matter of the announcement of the 'Verlobung,' and a sudden meeting on the promenade, when neither was alone, had produced only embarrassment on both sides. In an agony of misery Hildebrandt repaired to his aunt von Döring; but what went on in regard to the matter during the next six weeks is known only to that worthy lady in Dresden (who pled mightily for her beloved boy) and her more worldly-wise, but not by any means hard-hearted brother in Lipska, who held that "such an offer might not occur again."

But far too long have we kept our young Avensteins and Gretchen toiling up the stair. Very hearty was their reception on the fifth story. After laying down the parcels and critically surveying the half-finished tree in the lamp-lit apartment, Heinrich made his way into the dark one. Here he announced himself as Knecht Ruprecht in search of bad children; then scattered handfuls of nuts on the wooden floor with most gratifying energy, noise, and abundance. The last of these being hunted out from the corners, he proceeded to relate in an awful voice of mystery, a tale more "schrecklich" than even any invention of Emily; and finished up by striking a succession of matches (oh! delightful forbidden play!), and sending round, amidst shrieks of fearful joy, "Robin alive!" from tiny hand to hand.

As for Nora, she helped for half-an-hour or so to perfect the tree, and arrange the gifts below it. A good deal of quiet conversation went on, but the visit was not a long one, time being

doubly precious at that season. When the little party, having been lighted down the stair by Frau Becker herself, were saying good-bye, Frau Becker, after sending her respects and thanks to the kind sender of most of the gifts, once more kissed and embraced her nursing, and said, "Believe me, dear child, some good thing will yet come out of thy distress. Only strive to be of a good courage that the Christmas joy of others be not marred. It is sometimes not easy to 'rejoice with those that do rejoice.'"

"I will try, dear nurse," said the girl, and meant it.

The Heiligen Abend had come at last! Seven times had called the Swiss cuckoo-clock in the Avenstein's hall. At this welcome sound a group of shining heads pressed through the nursery-door, and rapidly, but not tempestuously, made for the outer drawing-room. A smile of great expectancy was on every face; and the younger, the more serious they were.

"Where is then the Christbaum?" disappointedly inquired the three-year-old niece on entering.

"Ach! Roschen!" returned the more experienced Fritz, taking his sister's hand again, "Dost not know that first we must sing of the dear Babe in the manger! then Hans will draw the curtain, and thou wilt see what thou wilt see, Liebling!"

"Come, my Rosa," called Heinrich across the room, Nora is waiting for thy little pipe; also for thy full tenor, our Fritzechen!"

The children, six in number, then gathered round their sister at the grand piano. They formed a lovely picture as the shaded lamp-light fell upon their sweet young faces, full of health and innocence. Every word and action seemed to them to count that night for more than usual; and to be near Nora and Heinrich was of itself honour, peace, and joy. As Heinrich sought out the place in the

hymn-books for his sister and parents, Nora drew the darlings to her side. Never before had she known so sad, so perplexed a Christmas; but private griefs must have no place there, all must be bright and hopeful for the little ones.

"Perhaps I get a beautiful blue soldier, Nursey says," remarked the practical Rosa of terrestrial tastes, "a beautiful blue soldier, all silver, shiney?"

"Yes, darling, a beautiful blue soldier," returned Nora warmly, stroking the golden head; but her heart sank within her as the silver-faced splendour of the pale Saxon Blues rose before her inner eye, and the dear form of one who wore it.

Herr and Frau Adelstein, who had been making some final arrangements, now entered. At first glance Nora thought her father unusually excited, but his happy smile reassured her; while her mother's face, though pale, was beaming with motherly affection and pride. She kissed each child tenderly, and Nora saw (and silently thanked her for it) a tear run down her cheek, hastily brushed away.

"Now, my children," she said, when the servants had entered and taken their well-known places at the yearly festival, "let us sing our Christmas Hymn with very thankful hearts."

Nora then played the melody; and in her sweet, rich soprano steadily led the lay, in which all heartily joined:—

Again the Christmas festival?
Let old and young rejoice
With peaceful minds and grateful hearts,
And very cheerful voices,
Well may those hearts more warmly beat
At thought of that Great Love
That brought the Lord of Glory down
From His bright home above,
Not as a conqueror He came
(Though conquer sure He must),
But as a tender helpless Babe
To win our perfect trust.
Oh! let us then to Bethlehem,
For it is not most meet
That with the shepherds we should go
And worship at His feet.

Beside the manger, in His shrine,
Our Saviour Jesus seek;
The sent of God—the all-divine—
So lowly, kind, and meek.
Did He not come to live with men
To teach us how to live?
And come to die that He might have
Eternal life to give!

Glory unto the Trinity—
To Father, Spirit, Son!
Oh! may the Spirit dwell with us,
And Heaven's will be done.

"Children," said the father, as the last tones died away, "Our tree has this year been brought from our own dear home in the mountains, for it is for a special occasion. And for thee, Nora, my child," he added, evidently agitated, "we have a special gift."

"We wish to prepare thee for it, dearest daughter," added the mother, not less moved out of her usual calm, and she slipped her arm round her. A pang of almost unbearable joy darted through the girl's heart. "Hope springs immortal" there, we know. The colour fled from her cheek; she pressed her hands together to still the throbbing.

"Ready, Hans!" said the master, turning down the only lamp in the room; and the curtains began to part. Every eye was on that widening aperture, slowly revealing, in all its soft radiance and fragrance, a noble spruce bearing one hundred burning tapers. On the snowy cloth, beneath one of its sweeping branches, there lay, as by itself, a glorious bouquet of roses, which,—Nora having seen,—believed.

Oh! what—who is this? There, clad in the full accoutrement of the Royal Saxon Blues, stood a young and strikingly handsome officer.

"My Rudolph!" from the lips of the girl.

"Leonora mine!" and Nora was sobbing in the arms of her lover.

There was joy that night in the Avenstein dwelling, for to Nora as to Roschen, the dear Christmas-tree had brought "a beautiful blue soldier."

Christmas, 1904.

CRANSTON.

Rebecca was Correct.

Æ Jew once had a delusion that he could become wealthy by speculating on the Stock market, and determined to try his luck. He made a good "guess" to start with, and succeeded in making £100. Delighted, he went quickly home to tell Rebecca of his good fortune.

"Rebecca," said he, "I von a hundred pounds to-day on the Stock-Exchange, and I will make two hundred pounds to-morrow. Vait ant you vill see."

"Moses," replied Rebecca, "you take my advice and put dot monish in der pank, or you vill lose it and fail."

"No," said Moses, and he tried again and won £100 more.

"Rebecca, vot I tolt you! You see I vin £100 again."

"Vell, Moses, you put dot monish in der pank again, or you vill lose it, I tolt you."

Moses tried again the next day, and went home with his head hanging low.

"Vat's the matter mit you, Moses! Tell me kvick."

"Rebecca, I lose dot four hundred pounds and have failed in business."

"Vell, vat I tolt you, Moses! You should have take your wife's advises, and put dot monish in der pank."

Moses took to his bed sick, and became very ill, and Rebecca ran out for a doctor, going into the first house she saw with a big brass sign on the front door.

"Tector, Tector, I vant you to come and see my huspant at vonce. He vas very sick. Hurry up, Tector."

The Doctor replied, "Mydearwoman, I am not a medical doctor; I am a veterinary surgeon."

"My Rudolph!" from the lips of the girl.

"Well," the Doctor replied, "that means that I am a horse doctor!"

"Oh Tector, Tector, vasn't I a lucky woman; you are chust the man I vant; my huspant is a Jackass!"

W.O.

Very Much "Abroad."

WHERE are the Straits of Gibraltar? They divide Asia from Africa, and are spanned by the largest suspension-bridge in the world.

Describe briefly the United States?

The United States are close to the Mediterranean Ocean, and can be seen on a fine day from the top of Snowdon. They consist, principally, of California, Mexico, New York, Newfoundland, Canada, Peru, and the Ojibbeway Indians. Their chief products are cheese, American apples, cotton wool, preserved ginger, moccasins, tomatoes, and turtle-soup. They are governed by a Republic, and the President is elected every four years. The capital is alternately Ohio and I.O.U.

What is dew?

Dew is small rain which falls in the night time when we are asleep. When it can be collected in sufficient quantities in buckets, it is excellent for domestic purposes, and is then known as soft water.

What is gum?

A gelatinous substance extracted from seaweed found on the coast of Arabia and used for cooking purposes.

What is the temperature of the earth?

The heat of the earth is very oppressive, especially in summer, owing to the great quantity of coal fermenting underground.

How is coal produced?

From fossils, the bones of antediluvian animals, the *ashes* of extinct Empires, and a certain amount of friction.

Describe the action of the tides?

The tides are different in different countries, and depend upon the almanack and the weather. When it is high water at Glasgow Bridge it is low water somewhere else, and *vice versa*. Persons who bathe may always ascertain the state of the tide years beforehand, by addressing a stamped envelope to the Editor, but he will not be responsible for rejected contributions.

What causes an eclipse?

The sudden interposition of masses of dark cloud between the sun (or moon) and the earth.

What is a prawn?

A prawn is a better sort of shrimp, and the young of the lobster.

What is an eel?

An edible fresh water snake, amphibious, untameable, and very tenacious of life. It is found in all cool countries, and hibernates during the winter season. Eels have been known to attain to a great age; and their eggs, which are green speckled with yellow, are greatly prized by naturalists and collectors.

C. F. P.

Fowl Etiquette.

THERE is, apparently, a distinct code of manners in use among fowls, and it is interesting to watch how punctiliously it is observed. Fowls appear to live in family groups or limited communities, and seldom roam beyond their boundaries. Some of them are free lances and seem to be ubiquitous when crumbs are going, but, as a rule, one finds the well-marked types in their chosen places, maintaining an attitude of distinct exclusiveness. Among these exclusives, a family of Orpingtons is noticeable.

Whether it be a fowl case of the "Revolt of the Daughters" or simply a case of mother desertion, it is a fact that, after the chicks—four in number—had reached a fair growth and could "feed" for themselves, mother Orpington betook herself to the most distant point at which the poultry congregate, and there settled herself, having thrown in her lot with the most aristocratic portion in the farm-yard—four guinea fowls—whose dainty ways must make them desirable associates. Meanwhile, her own family live in distinguished seclusion at their end, which is at a considerable distance from the other fowls; their only visitor being a pretty marled grey chick that

seems to be on the most friendly and intimate terms with them, sharing their society, with all its privileges, but never aggressively and always showing a modest shyness. Though so far out of the way these Orpingtons are regular freebooters, importuning habitual passers-by with unfailing trust in their ability to distribute crumbs of bread or biscuit, and their gentle insistence is so continuous that one feels as much disappointed as they are if unable to satisfy them.

Two Polish geese are a late addition to the farm-yard, and they move about with peculiar dignity, like alien princes in a commonwealth, showing, at all times, a princely line of conduct; never interfering with the rights of the smaller members of the community that come chucking round to get what is going, but keeping on the edge of the crowd, they allow their portion to be snapped up by the fowls. A like restraint is shown by a peahen so that it may be, to some extent, a matter of size as well as a difference in kind, and it certainly is, in both cases, a matter of politeness.

Peahens have, unfortunately, like their mates, a preference for heights, and this peahen elects, I believe, to roost on a chimney pot. This makes it easy for her to try "fresh pastures new" which she did one night; but evidently the experience proved that home was better than the outside world, for she returned next day.

Another peahen, also, took flight and never returned. A very beautiful peacock disappeared some time ago and has not been heard of.

Wallace, the collie—guardian of the farm-yard—is sad and unresponsive. No wonder. What active-minded collie of many memories, can patiently "thole" a keened existence! The only sign he gives of interest in your visit is to lark angrily if you give to the fowls before he has had his expected titbits of meat or fish. When you approach him, he stands stolidly

motionless while they are laid out and seldom touches a morsel till you walk away and then it is astonishing how rapidly they disappear. If you return to lift the paper and fling it behind the kennel, he will deliberately walk round and examine it, in case a morsel should have been overlooked.

Away, beyond the farm-yard, the graceful Stella comes, at a call, galloping across the park, for apple, radish, roll or sugar; eager to take "the goods the gods provide" and, when all is done, she would seize, if she could, the hand that held them.

R.W.

Wild-Fowl Shooting in Colonsay.

THE waters around the rocky coast of the Island of Colonsay abound with many different kinds of water-fowl. There are to be found the cider duck, the sheldrake, the scaup, the oyster-catcher, and others too numerous to mention.

The shooting of these birds affords excellent sport to the few islanders who are privileged to indulge in it, and I was lucky enough while there to have two days' shooting along the coast.

The best weather for the sport is when a strong westerly wind is blowing, as then the birds fly very close inshore, and the sportsman, perched upon an angle of rock well hid from the birds, has the best chance of going home with a good bag.

Upon such a day then, my friend and I proceeded to the shore; the sea was very rough and looked very beautiful in the dark November afternoon.

We had not long taken our positions when we descried a flock of cider duck and drake coming towards us, and a well-directed shot brought down a couple, a duck and a drake. The cider duck as many will know is of a beautiful brown colour, with those soft downy feathers on the breast with which perhaps some of the quilts in the Institution are stuffed; the drake

on the other hand is a white bird, with a green ring on the neck and brown markings on the wings.

Later on my friend brought down a beautiful sheldrake, which is a large white bird, laying its eggs in rabbit holes.

Varying sport followed, while the shades of evening came on apace, when we turned our steps homewards, and there found a substantial tea waiting for us, and soon seated round the board, we related our adventures to our friends. H. M.

TO ACHAHOISH.

Oh, Achahoish! thy hills and woods
Rise bonnie to my eyes;
Can I forget the happy days
I've spent beneath thy skies?

The red walls of thy cosy house,
The parlour where we met—
The scene my fancy oft' recalls,
And how can I forget?

The open window by the burn,
Which gently ripples by,
Where oft' we sat and watched the stars
Come peeping from the sky.

Farewell, oh, peaceful Achahoish!
With all thy wimpling rills,
Thy silent woods and friendly folk,
And bonnie heath-clad hills.

Glasgow, 20th Oct., 1904. A. N. S. M.

With Authority.

WHEN Mascagni, the composer, last visited this country he one day chanced to meet an organ grinder who was grinding out in a most mechanical manner Mascagni's masterpiece, the intermezzo from "Cavalleria Rusticana."

"Let me show you how to play that," said Mascagni to the man, and taking hold of the crank the composer finished the selection in such tempo as he thought proper.

When the composer had departed some one who knew the musician by sight said to the organ grinder:—"Do you know who that was?"

Upon confessing his ignorance as to the identity of the distinguished person who had just left the organ grinder

was informed, and he seemed greatly delighted to hear that it was Mascagni who had instructed him.

A few days later Mascagni by some chance again ran across the same organ grinder. Much to the astonishment of the former he observed a rude placard on the organ bearing these words:—"Pupil of Pietro Mascagni." N. Y.

Diary of Coming Events.

- Dec. 22—Concert and Dance.
23—Lecture by Miss Gertrude Bacon.
Christmas } Special Services, with Evening
Day. } Musical Service.
Dec. 26—Monday Fortnightly.
29—Concert and Dance.
31—Performance of "The Chief's Return," our own Company.
Jan. 1—Special New-Year Services.
5—New-Year Concert and Dance.
7—Concert—Waverley Choir.
10—Staff Dance.
21—Lecture by Mr. Johnston.
27—Lecture by Mr. R. Kearton, F.Z.S. (probably).

Varieties.

If the Doge of Venice went to a masquerade, after telling his wife he was going to spend the evening with a sick friend, what sort of a dodge would you call it? A Venetian Blind!

Why does a coat get larger when taken out of a carpet-bag? Because when taken out, you find it in-creases.

A Precarious Living.—No professional man lives so much from hand to mouth as a dentist.

The Greatest Bore in Creation.—The Mont Cenis Tunnel.

Home Rule.—Petticoat Government.

The "Irish Element."—Whiskey.

A Great "Mess."—Our Army.

Sent by the Sewing Machine.—What is Woman's true Sphere? The Hemisphere.

"The Bitter End."—The last half-inch of a Halfpenny Cigar.

"Creature Comforts."—Wives.