## durrent Literature.

THE OLD PIANO.

BY LILLIE E. BARR.

How still and dusky is the long closed room What lingering shadows and what faint per-

fume Of Eastern treasures!—sandal wood and scent With nard and cassia and with roses blent. Let in the sunshine.

Quaint cabinets are here, boxes and fans, And hoarded letters full of hopes and plans; I pass them by. I came once more to see The old piano, dear to memory, In past days mine.

Of all sad voices from forgotten years, Its is the saddest; see what tender tears Drop on the yellow keys as soft and slow, I play some melody of long ago. How strange it seems! The thin, weak notes that once were rich a

Give only now the shadow of a song-The dying echo of the faller strain
I shall never, never hear again,

What hands have touched it! Fingers small

rest,
Folded serenely on a quiet breast,
Only to think.
O white, sad notes, of all the pleasant days,
The happy songs, the hymns of holy praise,
The dreams of love and youth, that round you cling!
Do they not make each sighing, trembling

A mighty link?

All its musicians gone beyond recall.

The beautiful, the loved, where are they all?

Each told its secrets, touched its keys and

To thoughts of many colors and desires, With whispering fingers. All are silent now, the arewell said. The last song sung, the last tear sadly shed; Yet love has given it many dreams to keep In this lone room where only shadows creep And silence lingers.

The old piano answers to my call. And from my fingers lets the lost notes fall.
O soul that I have loved, with heavenly birth
Wilt thou not keep the memory of earth,

Its smiles and sighs?
Shall wood and metal and white ivory Answer the touch of love with melody, And thou forget? Dear one, not so. move the yet (though how I may not know Beyond the skies.

—Harper's Bazar.

### CONUNDRUMS.

Does a bicycler ride For the sake of the ride, Or ride for the sake of the show?

Does a girl give a kiss For the sake of the kiss, Or kiss for the bliss she bestows?

Does a man take a smile For the sake of the smile, Or smile to get rid of his woes?

#### Punctuality.

The trouble began as soon we were married-nay, even before. I had been engaged to Charley long enough to learn his weaknesses pretty well, and as our wedding day approached I began to trem-

"Charley," I said as we parted the night before, "don't be late to-morrow, whatever you do."

"Good heavens, Lelia! What do you take me for?" said Charley. "If ever a man was ready for anything-"

"Which you never were since I knew you," I said. "I believe you would manage to be late for your own funeral."

woman; I shall be in time."

I was by no means convinced of it, but I could say no more. At first I had thought of being married in the English style, but I did not fancy the idea of waiting at the chancel rails for Charley. The only safe thing seemed to be to secure him before we left the house.

Two o'clock was the hour fixed for the wedding, and as the hour approached, of 8th of December." course I was in a turmoil. I was sure that the hair dresser was late, but Aunt Fan convinced me that the appointed be gray in a year at this rate. I'm going hour had not yet arrived. He came promptly at the stroke of the clock, then all was hurry and bustle until my toilet was completed. I was ready, from the spray of an orange blossom which fastened my veil to the rosette on my slipper; but Charley had not come.

"It's too bad." I said. He promised so faithfully to be here in time. Do send somebody to look him up."

"Dear child!" cried Aunt Fan, in terror, "Whatever you do, don't cry. Blushing cheeks are all very well for a bride, but blushing eyes are a decided mistake. There is plenty of time. It is only halfpast one."

"But he might be here." I cried. "I am ready, and why not he? It's too

One great tear splashed down upon the brocaded satin of my dress. That frightened me, I resolutely repressed the rest, while Aunt Fan carefully dried the spot with her lace handkerchief. It was completely effaced, but still Charley did not come. Then I fell into stony

He won't come at all. There will be no wedding, and I shall be the laughing stock of everybody."

"My dear Lelia," said Aunt Fan, "we are not in England. You can be mar-

ried at any time, and it is not 2 yet."

out the two absurd notes. A moment afterwards the door bell rang, and Charley walked in as calm and composed as if had not been enduring agonies

"Charley! Charley! how could you?" I cried, and then stopped, and bit my lip to keep back the tears, which rushed to

my eyes.
"What is it?" said Charley, looking utterly bewildered. Instead of looking shamed, when he understood the state of affairs, he began to laugh. "My dear child." he said, "the clocks were striking wo as I came up the steps. I said I would be in time and I am."

The wedding journey was not a period of unalloyed bliss to me. Charley never missed a train or a boat, but he was never more than just in time, so that I was kept in constant terror. To the hours for meals he paid not the slightest attention. When I reminded him of them, he the use of being in a hotel if we cannot take our time?" As if punctuality were As if punctuality were not a virtue in itself!

It was a relief to me when we came home and settled down at last to begin and white,

Since stiff and weary with life's toil and fight;

Bince stiff and weary with life's toil and fight;

Quarrel about the furnishing of our house. I wanted a clock in every room, house. I wanted a clock in every room, to which Charley decidedly objected.

"Time was made for slaves," he said Why should I be constantly reminded of my bonds? When I am down town, I must be punctual and energetic, and a score of other things. I come home for relaxation, and I want to forget all annovances. Have a clock in the kitchen. by all means, and put one, if you please, in the servant's bedroom. For the rest, we have our watches, and what possible need have we for more?"

I yielded, but I made up my mind then which of Charley's faults, was likely to give me the most trouble.

Charley was always good-natured; will say that of him. On the whole though I am not sure that that was the most aggravating part of it. I always made it a point of being ready before time, when we were going anywhere, hoping that my silent example would its effect, but it was of no use,

"What! going already, little woman?" Charley would say. Then pulling out his watch and looking at it: "Oh, we need not start for an hour yet; plenty of time."

Then he would throw himself into a chair and rattle away about anything or nothing, while I felt myself growing more and more nervous every minute. I had made up my mind that nothing should force me to quarrel with him—quarreling is at once foolish and vulgar-and I never As the time grew on, however, I would say: "Charley, ought you not to be getting ready?"

"Oh, there's no hurry, was the invariable reply-"time enough." At last, however, he would rouse himself, look at his watch, yawn, stretch, and then rise slowly from his chair.

"That bonnet is very becoming. I supoose that is why you like to wear it so long," he said on one occasion. Then he went out of the room laughing, and I heard him moving about overhead in the deliberate way which nearly drove me

The worst of it was that he always did manage to be just in time. If I could only have convicted him of being just too late for once, I should have some thing to fall back upon in our arguments. but as it was, I had nothing to take hold

Things had gone on this way for two or three months. I did not suppose that Charley knew or, indeed, saw, how I fretted about it. I tried hard to hide my irritation, for I really loved him and did not wish to annoy, still less alienate him; That would not depend quite so much b it 1 suppose that my efforts were in npon my own volition;" said Charley, vain. We were talking about a reception laughing. "Make your mind easy, little to which we were going in the evening, and I said: "Now, Charley, dear, wont you be ready in time, just for once? You do make me waste so much time waiting

Charley laughed as usual, and was going to make one of his careless retorts but he stopped suddenly.

We have been married four months, haven't we, Lelia?" he said.

"Four months to-day," I said promptly. It was the 8th of August and this is the

"And in all that time you have not been able to cure me of that dreadful fault? Poor little girl! Your hair will

to try the effect of turning over a new leaf, and see how both like it. I did not know exactly what he meant then, but I began to understand when he went into his dressing room the moment I suggested it. He came out fully equip-

finished dressing. "No hurry, Lelia," he said looking in as he passed. "I only wanted to let you know that I am ready whenever you are. Of course I had to hurry after that, but as I always hurried anyhow, it did not make much difference. Charley said first train that came along. Being the nothing, except, "the carriage is at the next, we made sure of its being the right door," when I came down. Of course after all the fuss I had made, I could not

ing inwardly all the way. to drive round to Washington square?" I said in desperation.

knew very well that it was and was quak-

"Washington square?" exclaimed Charley. "Are you mad, Lelia! Why not family, by Philadelphia at once! Washington "We

square is miles out of our way. As if that was not just my object! could not explain myself, however, so I kept still, and we drove to our destination the last train? by the shortest route. Of course the "What! and abandon principle? Nev-couse was dark when we reached it, the costess entirely unprepared to receive us, we will inquire before we try again." by the shortest route. Of course the hostess entirely unprepared to receive us, and the waiter who let us in equally surprised and contemptuous at our untimely "But just on the stroke," I said.

Just then the cuckoo clock shouted dressing room before we dared descend. "Shall we try it?" asked

Even then we were among the earliest

"I begin to feel the reward of virtue already," sighed Charley, as we descended the stairs. "How nice it is to be early! The carriage is ordered for one, and I'll be sure to be ready."

He was-and I was not. I had met an

old friend, and we were in the middle of a most interesting conversation. She was

middle of our talk, but how could I tell Charley that I was not ready when he or when we were sitting together in the stood waiting with an air of conscious evening. Charley was too busy with virtue? It was beyond my power, and absurd as it was, I had to say good bye to Anna and go.

I had not supposed at first that Char ey's reformation was permanent, but as the days went on, I was forced to confess merely inquired if I was hungry. If I that it looked very much like as if it could not say that I was, he laughed and said: "Then why hurry? What is in the evening, he entered the house; promptly as it struck nine in the morning he left it. No entreaties could detain him an instant beyond his time.

"No, Lelia, my dear," was his invariable reply, "I have already wasted too much of life by unpunctuality. You have convinced me of my error. Why

have done?" Of course such sentiments ought to have delighted my heart, and they did, in a measure. Only in a measure, how ever, I must confess, for I began to think that we should be known everywhere as "the early birds." It was never necessary to urge Charley to get ready for any thing. We were always the first in church, and we were waiting at the door of the operas and theatres long before they were open; at parties and receptions it was our invariable custom to spend from half an hour to an hour in the dressing room in order to descend with the earliest guests. And Charley was continually expatiating on the sweet reward of virtue and thanking me for teaching him the beauty of punctuality. I spent myself in vain won-derings as to how long this state of things was going to last; but of course it came to a climax finally.

My oldest and most intimate friend, Tina Verringer, was to be married and Charley and I had vowed in the most solemn manner to attend the wedding. Tina lived at Mountclair and it was there of course, that the ceremony was to take place.

"Do you think that nine o'clock will be early enough to leave here?" asked Char-

"Nine o'clock! My dear Charley, she is not to be married until one, and Mountclair is only an hour away."

"I know," said Charley, "but I was anx ious to be in time. I think that we had better start at nine to make sure."

I swallowed my astonishment as I best could, and submitted. It was not a pleasant day. If I were not afraid of exaggerating, I should say that it was a decidedly unpleasant one, being cold and gray, damp and chilly, with that chilliness that goes through your bones. Already a few stray snow flakes were fluttering down, giving promise of a storm

later in the day. The depot at Hoboken is not a specially exhilarating place to wait in; but Charley settled himself comfortably with his paper upon one of the straight up and down settees, saying, "We need not take too early a train, but it is well to be on hand; even it we do reach Mountclair too soon, we can walk about and see the place, you know."

Walk about and see the place on such a day! I said nothing, but I inwardly resolved that we should not take too early a train. At least we were warm and sheltered where we were, and who knew what we would find at the other end? While I was settling this point in my own mind, the door at the other end of the room was flung open and Charley sprang to his feet.

"Come," he said; "we might as well make sure of this train, after all;" and before I could find words in which to couch my objections without giving the lis to all the fixed principles of my life, we were in the cars.

Charley was buried in his newspaper and I was watching the fast whitening meadows, when the conductor paused before us for "Tickets." They were ready to hand, but the conductor gazed upon

them blankly.
"Whereto?" he asked, briefly.

"Mountclair," replied Charley, with qual brevity. "Wrong train. Yours left ten minutes

later from the other door. You'd better get out at Newark, and take it there. If ou miss it, there'll be another along in forty minutes."

"It is fortunate that we have plenty of time," said Charley to me, as the conducped, even to his gloves, before I had haif tor left us. "Aren't you glad that I have reformed in regard to punctuality?"

"Oh, very glad," I said, with a slight tinge of irony, and adding, inwardly, "especially if it leads you to take the wrong train rather than wait for the right one We got out at Newark and took the

Orange where we spent a quiet hour besay that it was too early to go, though I fore a Newark bound train picked us up "You see, dear," said Charley, "I go up on your principle of always being in time. Don't you think it would be pleasant If we keep on taking the first train that comes along, we shall get there sometime -if not in time for the wedding, then perhaps, in time for the funeral of all the

"We shall certainly not be in time for

We did inquire, but with the result of

"Shall we try it?" asked Charley cheer- used.-Exchange.

fully. "The wedding may be delayed, you know. The groom may be unpunc tual or something.

I fairly broke down at that "No, we will not," I said. "I don't want to go dragging in just at the tail end of the ceremony. I'm cold and tired and wretched," but I was more than that. I was thoroughly indignant, for I was sure Charley had done it all on purpose. only at New York en passant, and I Though I had a bidden consciousness should not see her again. It was very that I deserved a lesson of some kind I provoking to be obliged to break off in the thought that he had punished me too severely, so I had little to say to him then evening. Charley was too busy with pencil and paper to take any notice

though "Lelia," he said suddenly.

"What is it?" I asked rather sulkily. "I am thoroughly convinced now," said Charley, "that punctuality is the king of all virtues, the crowning merit of humanity; but doesn't it strike you as rather an expensive one?"

"How?" I asked, melted a little but not "Well, I won't speak of to-day, for that

was not a fair test. I know you think that I made all those blunders on purpose, but I didn't. I suppose the intoxication of such unusual virtue flew to my strive now to undo the good which you head and muddled my wits, for I certainy made uncommon hash of that affair. have been punctual. according to your ideas for a month now, and I have just been making a little computation of the result. I began to practice the virtue on the night of Mrs. Lee's reception, I believe? Very well. We each spent a solitary hour in the dressing room, which, I suppose, may fairly be considered wast-Two hours, to begin with. We went to the opera an hour too early (though our seats were engaged) on two occasions -six hours. Theater, ditto, twice-four hours. Six and four make ten, and two make twelve. Really, my dear Lelia, punctuality is a noble virtue, but do you know, it strikes me that life is too short to practice it in. It might do for Methuselah or an arch angel, but for ordinary mortals-"Don't Charley!" I cried breaking down

uddenly. "I have been a vain conceited little idiot. I was so proud of my own virtue, and it is nothing but a vice after all. I have been beginning to see it for ever so long, and I am ready to say that will never waste my time by being punctual again."

"Don't," said Charley laughing. "This month has done me no end of good, for was inclined to run things much too close. I was never exactly late, but I often made a precious tight shave of it. We'll help each other after this, won't we. little woman? You'll spur me on and I'll rim you in, and we will neither of us get out of temper with the other. Is it a bargain?"

His hand was out, and his good honest yes were shining into mine, and before I knew it my arms were around his neck and I was promising anything and every

So that was the end of our first and last quarrel that threatened to over-shadow our married life.

#### Tarring a Rat.

Rats are wonderfully clean animals. and they dislike tar, perhaps, more than anything else, for if it once gets on their neighborhood."—Arkansaw Traveler. jacket, they find it most difficult to remove it. Now, I had heard it mentioned that pouring tar down at the entrance of Roberts and Texas Siftings." Pretty their holes was a good remedy, also placing broken pieces of glass by their holes was another remedy. But these remedies were not effective. The rats may leave their old holes and make fresh ones in other parts of the house; they don't however, leave the premises for good. I thought I would try another experiment. one I had not heard of before. One evening I set a large wire cage rat trap, attaching inside a most seductive smelling piece of cheese, and next morning I very next number has won a prize," refound, to my satisfaction, that I had succeeded in trapping a very large rat, one of the largest I had ever seen, which, after I had besmeared him with tar, I turned loose into his favorite run. The next night, I tried again, and succeeded in catching another equally big fellow. and served him in the same manner. I could not follow these two tar-besmeared rats into their numerous runs to see what would happen; but it is reasonable to assume that they either summoned together all the members of their community, and by the crest fallen appearance gave their comrades silent indications of the misfortune which had so suddenly befallen them: or that they frightened their brethren away, for they one and all for-sook the place and fled. The experiment was eminently successful. From that day in 1875, till this, 1883, my house, ancient though it is, has been en-tirely free from rats, and I believe there is no remedy equal to this one, if you can catch your your rat alive. They never came back to the house again .-Chamber's Journal.

#### Broad Tires.

one, but it wasn't. That train landed us at There should be used for the preserva-These would not only run easier, but worse, and, as work is done but once or "We shall certainly not be in time for the wedding at this rate," I said, half laughing and half crying. "Suppose by good. Cities are beginning to require way of variety, we try the effect of taking wide tires. Proportioned in width to the suddenly become very devoted to the in the city. If they are good for the city they certainly are for the country. They have long been in use in England, and they would not think of using our narfinding that the next train which it would row tires. Broad tires are also best for ding, but on being called to the ceremony, privat. Of course we had the pleasure be possible for us to take would not reach use on the farm where there is much from sheer force of habit protested that of spending a solitary hour. I in the la-dies and Charley in the gentlemen's time set for the wedding. Hour after the soon come when they will be universally ed delay. And so the bride got mad and

## Humon.

Two hundred thousand people are asked to contribute a nickel apiece to build a church in Texas. It should be called the Church of St. Nickel-us, and when it is in opereration it is to be hoped the old Nick-el have less to do in Texas -Boston Cammercial Bulletin.

A physician falls into a fit while mak ing a round of visits, and is carried into a drug-store. "Send for Dr. X—," says somebody. "No, no, not for him," says the dying man, feebly, at the mention of his rival's name; "if he brought me around it would advertise him! I prefer to die."-Medical and Surgical Reporter.

The editor of the Pittsburg Magnet ays: "Major Reynolds presented us this week with some very large vegetable eggs. In the absence of the genuine ar-ticle they are a first-rate substit\_te. In the interests of our agricultural readers we would like to know if vegetable eggs grow on chickweed.—Texas Siftings

"You say your wife gets mad and raises row?" "I should say she did. She makes enough fuss to run a freight train forty miles an hour." "But if you knew that she was in the habit of getting mad, why did you marry her?" "Because if I had held back she would have got madder than ever."-Texas Siftings.

Kate Field says the journalist "quietly accepts oblivion." We have known him to most enthusiastically seek it when a citizen entered his sanctum with a club and announced his intention of pulverizing the entire staff. Just at the time when the journalist would accept it most gladly and quietly, oblivion is the hardest to find.—Burlington Hawke.

Sheridan, being on a Parliamentary committee, one day entered the room when all the members were seated and ready to begin business. Seeing no vacant place, he looked around the table, and said: "Will any gentleman movethat I may take the chair."-London Society.

Little Eddie T. was sick with gastric fever, peevish and fretful, but he seemed to want the idea to prevail that it wasn't much trouble to attend him. His mamma, while bathing his brow, soothingly remarked: "What is home without a mother?" The young rascal immediately snapped out: "Well, what would mother be without a home?"-Exchange.

Did it ever occur to you why old Solomon made the remark about there being nothing new under the sun? Well, the fact was that his numerous wives and wifelets kept hinting to him. about having new bonnets, and he merely murmured that there was nothing new under the sun in order that they might be made to believe that the fall styles in hats had not yet struck on.-Chicago Times.

"Gen'lemen, I don't bleve in crossin' or changin' the breed ob our hogs. De olefashioned hog is plenty good. I ows de saddest time ob my life to a fine hog. I was passin' a pen once an' seed a fine hog. Ef he hadn't been a fine hog I wouldenter paid no tention to him. Wall, I was rested on account ob dat fine hog an' sent to de penitentiary fur a year. Don't

A Hartford, Conn., paper says: "Texas is best known to the world as the home rough company, we acknowledge, but the strong arm of the law is fast causing the imported New England desperado and stage robber to disappear, and in the course of human events and a higher civilization, Governor Roberts must go; so ifter all there is reason to believe that our cloud is silver-lined.—Texas Siftings

"Nothing exasperates me so much as to hold a lottery ticket, and find that the marked Pete Freer to Harry Andrews. "I came closer than that to winning the big prize in the Louisiana Lottery."
"How was that possible?" "Well, you see, there was a raffle here in Austin for a clock, and I threw the identical same number that won the big prize in the Louisiana Lottery." "Did you win the clock?" "No; how much good luck do you suppose a man can have all at once? -Texas Siftings.

A man was carrying a coon he had caught when he met three little boys in the road. All of them said excitedly, Mister, give me that coon, give me that coon, give me that coon, mister?" "Well, boys, I'll tell you what I will do. If you will tell me what party you belong to and why, I'll give it to the boy who gives the best reason for his faith." "I'm Republican, because that party saved the Union." said one. "I'm a Greenbacker, because that party is in favor of plenty of money." When the time for the third boy came, he said: "I'm a Democrat, 'case I want the coon.—New Orleans Democrat.

S. A. N., St. Elmo, Ill.: "Would you kindly state in your next paper what could be done to a man who often comes tion of roads broad-tired wagon wheels, home in an inebriated condition, and uses very abusive language to his wife? would not cut up the road when soit, We would suggest that he could would not cut up the road when soit, ticed into an alley some night and which is a great source of injury. Nar- pounded with a club, or his head could row tires and heavy loads soon make be held under a pump, and some rold ruts, and these in turn hold water still water pumped down the back of his neck Lots of things we might suggest that you could do to him, but we would advise you to let him alone, for if you interfere with him, his much injured wife may load to be carried, for wagons to be used scoundrel, and make it very hot for you. -Texas Siftings.

> A lawyer recently lost a bride in peculiar way. He appeared at the wedshipped him.-Exchange.

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