

Christian Family.

From My Arm Chair.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

To the children of Cambridge, who presented to me, on my seventy-second birthday, February 27, 1879, this chair made from the wood of the village blacksmith's chestnut tree:

Am I a king, that I should call my own
This splendid ebony throne?
Or by what reason, or by what right di-
vine,
Can I proclaim it mine?
Only, perhaps, by right divine of song
It may to me belong;
Only because the spreading chestnut tree
Of old was sung by me.
Well I remember it in all its prime,
When in the summer time
The affluent foliage of its branches made
A cavern of cool shade.
There by the blacksmith's forge, beside
The street,
Its blossoms white and sweet
Enticed the bees, until it seemed alive,
And murmured like a hive.
And when the winds of autumn, with a
shout,
Tossed its great arms about,
The shining chestnuts, bursting from the
sheath,
Dropped to the ground beneath.
And now some fragments of its branches
bare,
Shaped as a stately chair,
Have by my hearthstone found a home at
last,
And whisper of the past.
The Danish king could not in all his
pride
Repel the ocean-tide,
But seated in this chair I can in rhyme
Roll back the tide of Time.
I see the smithy with his fires a low,
I hear the bellows blow,
And the shrill hammers on the anvil beat
The iron white with heat!
And thus, dear children, have ye made me
This day a jubilee,
And to my more than threescore years
and ten
Brought back my youth again.
The heart hath its own memory, like the
mind,
And in it are enshrined
The precious keepsakes, into which is
wrought
The givers' loving thought.
Only your love and your remembrance
could
Give life to this dead wood,
And make these branches, leafless now so
long,
Blossom again in song.

Alone with Conscience.

I sat alone with my conscience,
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In a land where years increased.
And I felt I should have to answer
The question it put to me,
And to face the answer and question
Throughout eternity.
The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And things that I thought were dead
things
Were alive with a terrible might,
And the vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face—
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that solemnly silent place.
And I thought of a far-away warning,
Of a sorrow that was to be mine,
In a land that then was the future,
But now is the present time,
And I thought of my former thinking
Of the judgment-day to be,
But sitting alone with my conscience
Seemed judgment enough for me,
And I wondered if there was a future
To this land beyond the grave;
But no one gave me an answer,
And no one came to save.
Then I felt that the future was present,
And the present would never go by,
For it was but the thought of my past
life
Grown into eternity.
Then I woke from my timely dreaming,
And the vision passed away,
And I knew the far-off warning
Was a warning of yesterday—
And I pray that I may not forget it
In this land before the grave,
That I may not cry in the future,
And no one come to save.
And so I have learnt a lesson
Which I ought to have known before;
And which, though I learnt it dreaming,
I hope to forget no more.
So I sit alone with my conscience
In the place where the years increase,
And I try to remember the future
In the land where time will cease.
And I know of the future judgment,
How dreadful so'er it be,
That to sit alone with my conscience
Will be judgment enough for me.
—Spectator.

Dr. Holmes says science is a good piece of furniture for a man to have in an upper chamber, provided he has common sense on the floor.

A sort of floating college—a boatful of scholars and scientists—has been organized to circumnavigate the world. Dr. Clark, of Amherst, is president, and Dr. Deems, of New York, is chaplain.

A new planet of the twelfth magnitude has been discovered by Coggia at Marseilles. New planets are brought into public notice every day.

The Tired Stone at Cuzco.

Every boy and girl knows something about Peru, but few people know what a famous country it was hundreds of years ago, under the reigns of the Incas. Indeed, the civilization there was better than that of the Spaniards, who conquered it, so far as regards the government and well-being of the people.

It was so well governed that there were no beggars; the land was equally divided, and the army was under the strictest discipline, and wonderfully well-trained.

There were fine roads and storehouses scattered through the kingdom, so that the soldiers could get fresh supplies of food and clothing while on the march, while the men who stayed at home, and the women, made the clothes and armor, and worked on the land, and took care of the sick and the children.

There was only one religion. Everybody worshipped the sun. Grand temples were built for this purpose, and houses built for the priests. The kings were called Incas,—the children of the sun,—and were worshipped with great reverence.

When the Spaniards conquered Peru, they found fabulous quantities of gold, and silver, and precious stones. The Peruvians did not have any money, for when they wished to buy anything from their neighbors they exchanged something else for it, so all their treasure was used for ornamenting the temples of the sun and the kings' palaces. The walls were covered with gold and emeralds and pearls and turquoises.

But when the Spaniards saw the gold, they were only too ready to carry it away to Spain, and they destroyed most of the sacred buildings, and made sad havoc when they found that the Peruvians had buried and hidden much of their wealth when they found it was likely to be taken from them.

The conquerors never could be sure that there were not untold riches waiting for them, under the pavements and in the walls, so they were ready enough to pull the temples to pieces.

There are a great many stories told of the immense wealth stored away in such places. Near the great temple of the Sun at Cuzco there was a garden of gold where all the trees and plants, large and small, were made of gold, beside many animals, and birds, and butterflies, and creeping things.

At the great feasts in the temple every year, new gifts were offered by the people to the sun, and there was no article or tool there that was not made of gold and silver, even down to the spades and hoes that the priests used.

Each of the temples in the different districts was decorated with gold in proportion to the wealth of the people. These workmen are said to have been very skillful, though they had the rudest of tools.

The people had no machinery. Even the women had no scissors or needles, except long, sharp thorns, and so they did not sew much, and their needle-work was more like patching than sewing.

They had some very strange notions. The women all had mirrors, but the men never looked into them, as it was considered a most disgraceful proceeding.

When the sun set at evening, they thought it went into the sea, and made a great dive under the earth, like a swimmer, so it could arise again on the next day in the east.

The government was very strict. Almost every crime and wrong-doing was punished with death. The sentence was always carried out at once, so that the people were in great fear, and the executions were very few.

The officers punished the children even for their childish naughtiness, and the father was punished, too, for not having taught his child to behave

better.

The land was divided according to law, and the people had fine gardens and fruit, and were very comfortable.

There were canals everywhere to bring water for the crops, and in the great storehouses and granaries. Beside the army supplies, they stored up grain to be used by the people in time of famine.

All the old people, and widows, and little children were well taken care of.

The products and wealth of the country were divided into three parts, one for the priests and the worship of the sun, one for the kings or Incas, and one for the people themselves.

Every few days the armies of the kingdom marched to some foreign province, where the inhabitants were invited to surrender quietly, and to become children of the sun, to worship and serve him. After they surrendered, they were treated kindly and given the same rights as the Peruvians, for they said that their only object was to spread their civilization among those heathen nations.

But there is a dark side to this picture of such an orderly, quiet government. The people were very ignorant and were treated like children, having no right to decide things for themselves, and chance of learning and becoming more intelligent.

Even the kings themselves in Peru could neither read or write, and it seems very strange that being so wise, and so far in advance of their subjects in other matters, they should not have made some approach to a written language.

They did not even use hieroglyphics, as the Mexicans did. However, they had an ingenious way of keeping records and counting by knots, which they made in threads of different colors differently arranged. The thing to which a string referred was known by its color.

They took a census of the inhabitants of the country just as we do, and they recorded the amount of the crops and the number of men in the army, and in all these things their knots served them almost as well as our books serve us.

As for the Tired Stone, I think the story of that will teach you a good deal about Peru—of how little worth human life was reckoned by the kings and how that they had some way of doing almost impossible pieces of work which has been forgotten.

The Incas seem to have always kept their subjects busy enough, judging from the ruins one can still see, and from the accounts written by Spaniards and travelers after the conquest.

The grandest works which the Incas built to show their power and magnificence were the Temple of the Sun and the fortress at Cuzco.

We should find it hard work with all our machinery to put these great stones in their places, or to bring them from immense distances, but without iron or steel the people cut them from their quarries, and brought them over rough roads and through rivers.

These stones are so perfectly fitted together that often you cannot put the knife between them. They must have raised and lowered them many times, and the work of shaping them with pebbles, which they used for hammers, must have been very slow.

The Tired Stone was one of the largest of these great stones, but it never reached the fortress; indeed that is the way it got its name. It is twenty feet wide, and it was left on the bank of the river half a mile from the fortress wall.

The Peruvians say that owing to the hard work it had in making the journey when it reached this point it could go on further, and it was tired out and wept tears of blood, so they left it.

Most of it is under ground now, for the earth has been dug up about, be-

cause there was a story that some of the Incas' treasure was buried under or near it.

The true story is, that the stone got tired, but the poor men who dragged it up hill and down with ropes became discouraged. It is said that many hundred Indians were sent to bring it to Cuzco, and they moved it with great difficulty, as the road was rough and they crossed many hills.

Half the people hauled upon the cables in front, and the other half held it back, to keep it from slipping down hill and falling into places from which it could not be got out.

But in one place it got away and rolled down a hill killing and hurting hundreds of people. In spite of this, they dragged it on a little further to the place where it is now, and then they said it was tired, and left it to rest only too willingly.

They were fifty years in building the fortress, and some say that it was never finished, for the Spaniards came just at that time, and destroyed and plundered it with all the other forts and palaces which the Incas had built.

The people had hid all the treasure they possibly could, and it is possible that much may be still undiscovered. The Spaniards, however, pulled up the pavements, and threw down the walls, and carried away many a ship-load of treasure.

One of the captains had for his share the great golden image of the sun, the emblem of life and growth, which had been worshipped in the temple, and one night he lost it in gambling; and they still have a proverb in Spain,—“He would play away the sun before dawn.” The old-time wealth of the Peru of the Incas seems like a vanished dream, and almost the only monument of it that remains in literature is the simple phrase, “as rich as Peru.” SARAH O. JEWETT, in *Youth's Companion*.

Select Reading.

—The more quietly and peaceably we get on, the better for ourselves and our neighbors.

—As the shadow of the sun is largest when his beams are lowest, so we are always least when we make ourselves the greatest.—*Secker*.

—Blessed is the man who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. Know thy work and do it; and work at it like Hercules. One monster there is in the world, the idle man.—*Carlyle*.

—It is not hasty reading, but seriously meditating upon holy and heavenly truths, that makes them prove sweet and profitable to the soul. It is not he that reads most, but he that meditates most on Divine Truth, that will prove the choicest, wisest, strongest Christian.—*Bishop Hall*.

—He who promises more than he can perform, is false to himself; and he who does not perform what he has promised, is false to his friend.

“A sacred burden is this life ye bear; Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly; Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly. Fall not for sorrow, falter not for sin; But onward, upward, till the goal ye win.”

—St. Bernard puts it well when he says, “Humility is of all graces the chiefest when it doesn't know itself to be a grace at all.”

—It is wonderful what strength and boldness of purpose and energy will come from the feeling that we are in the way of duty.

—We must despise no sort of talent; they all have their separate duties and uses; all have the happiness of man for their object; they all improve, exalt, and gladden life.—*Sidney Smith*.

—Sanctified afflictions are like so many artificers working on the good man's crown, to make it more bright, and beautiful and massive.

—The table of life is abundantly supplied. If we don't eat too fast, it

will taste the better; if we don't eat too much, we shall be better nourished; if we don't snatch, there will be enough for all.

“His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles; His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate; His tears pure messengers sent from his heart; His heart as far from fraud, as heaven's from earth.”

—Self-examination, accompanied with a careful perusal of the Holy Bible, will lead us daily to a more thorough knowledge of our own character.

—Mankind are always happier for having been happy; so that if you make them happy now, you can make them happy twenty years hence by the memory of it.—*Sidney Smith*.

—Small miseries, like small debts, hit us in so many places, and meet us at so many turns and corners, that what they want in weight they make up in number, and render it less hazardous to stand the fire of one cannon ball than a volley composed of such a shower of bullets.

—Repose without stagnation is the state most favorable to happiness. “The great felicity to life,” says Seneca, “is to be without perturbations.”

—Philosophers make poor speakers. As they form, so they express their views, without heat or passion; but it is just this passion that lends interest to speech.

—There are stages in the lives of all of us when life seems hardly worth living; not periods of great calamity, but dull level bits of road along which the journey seems very weary. The sun has hidden himself behind gray clouds, cold winds are blowing up from the bitter east, the birds have left off singing, the landscape has lost its charm. We plod on drearily, and can see no pole-star in life's darkening sky.—*Miss Braddon*. It is little matter at what hour of day The righteous fall asleep. Death cannot come

To him untimely who has learned to die. The less of this brief life, the more of heaven;

The shorter time, the longer immortality.

—Dean Milman.

—The sweetest pleasures come from imparting them. A pleasant consideration this—that the things that give us the greatest pleasure are those which do us the greatest honor.

“The mossy marbles rest On the lips that I have prest In their bloom! And the names I love to hear Have been carved for many a year On the tomb!”

—The simplest pleasures are the best. And enjoyment is to be found in things familiar and at hand, rather than in things rare, costly, or remote. “The common,” says Sir Walter Scott, “is commonly the best.”

—It is only an error of judgment to make a mistake, but it argues an infirmity of character to adhere to it when discovered. Or, as the Chinese better say: “The glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time you fall.”

But, like a child in ocean's arms We strive against the stream, Each moment further from the shore Where life's young fountains gleam;— Each moment fainter wave the fields, And wider rolls the sea;

The mist grows dark—the sun goes down— Day breaks—and where are we?

—We stand too much in dread of misconception, and spend half our days in making apologies and explanations, instead of quietly taking an appeal from the hour to the year, and letting the actual in our lives contradict the seeming.

An exchange informs us that the horse-radish root will afford instantaneous relief in most obstinate cases of hoarseness. This is a simple remedy to try, and surely can do no harm. Hoarseness is a very common difficulty at this season.

—In Portugal, as well as France, complaints are made of the lack of candidates for the Roman Catholic Priesthood.