## ÆNIGMATA.

I wanted the sweep of the wild wet weather,
The wind's long lash and the rain's free tail,
The roar of the trees as they swayed together,
The measureless gray that was over them all;
Whose roar speaks more than a language spoken;
Wordless and wonderful, cry on cry—
The sob of an earth that is vexed and broken,
The answering sob of a broken sky.

What could they tell us? We see them ever—
The trees and the sky and the stretch of the land;
But they give us a word of their secret never;
They tell no story we understand.
Yet haply the ghostlike birch out yonder
Knows much in a placid and silent way;
The rain might tell what the gray clouds ponder,
The winds repeat what the violets say.

Why weeps the rain? Do you know its sorrow?
Do you know why the wind is so sad—so sad?
Have you stood in the rift 'twixt a day and a morrow,
Seen their hands meet and their eyes grow glad?
Is the tree's pride stung at its top's abasement?
Is the white rose more of a saint than the red?
What thinks the star as it sees through the casement
A young girl lying, beautiful, dead?

—Harry Pain in Speaker.

## SUGGESTION.

"What do you think of it, doctor?" asked the prisoner's counsel.

The physician, a celebrated specialist and authority on mental diseases, shook his head gravely in a noncommittal sort of way.

"You followed up the clew I gave you?" persisted the lawyer.

"Yes."

"And you think"—

"I shall examine him again today," replied the doctor. "I have seen several experts in the new science, and they all agree that poor Julian is an impressionable subject, a ready made victim to any one who might have wished this deed done by proxy; but the motive? Probably some lover's quarrel, some revenge; they say the girl was pretty and coquettish. There is something baffling about the affair," added the doctor with a slight relaxation of his professional caution. "While I have never had too much confidence in this idea of 'suggestion,' I am not prepared to say there is nothing in it."

"Let me go with you today, doctor. I will slip in without speaking, listen to the story he relates, and one of us may chance on some word or idea to give us the indication we seek."

So it was agreed.

"How do you feel today?" asked the doctor kindly, as they entered the prisoner's cell.

The man was lying on his hard bed, staring in front of him, with hollow, vacant eyes.

"My thoughts," he replied, "flutter about aimlessly; sad, oh, sad, as long snow covered plains under the light of the moon. I have worn myself out with walking to and fro. My limbs ache as if I had been beaten. I feel very cold, but the palms of my hands are burning with fever, and I have a dull pain at the base of my brain."

The physician nodded gravely and said a few soothing words, then requested the patient to relate all he could remember about the crime.

"But, doctor," objected Julian, "I have already told you twenty times or more. It will be monotonous to go over all that again, though, to be sure, there is nothing better to do here. Well then, place yourself there, opposite to me, so that you will hide that white wall; it looks to me like a canvas on which is painted that unfading image; the coffer with the head upon it! When you go away my terror will return. If they would only soil that wall a little; it seems to me the slightest stain would obviate this fancy. I tried to soil it, and the jailer scolded me as if I had been a schoolboy."

"Go on with your story," said the doctor quietly.

"I was walking along aimlessly, when from a long, dark, narrow street I emerged on the thoroughfare. Lights were shining here and there under the trees like great flowers of flame. The yelling of showmen, the music and bells of the merry-go-rounds, the trumpets and drums, hurdy-gurdys and squeaking playthings of the children made a most horrible din, for the annual festival was in full tide.

"Cornered by a group of curious people, I was crowded and crushed, raised off my feet and carried along before a booth. Above the door I read the word, 'Metempsychosis.'

"A fat man was selling tickets; he was pitted by smallpox and had one eye smaller than the other.

"Inside it was very, almost quite, dark.

"Before us a square of light opened in the canvas which was stretched at the farther end of the booth. Within this frame appeared a table with a gauze screen separating it from the spectators.

"The fat man passed around a pasteboard head such as milliners use for bonnets. When it had gone from hand to hand and was acknowledged to be truly what it appeared to be, he placed it on the table and fastened the gauze screen. The light brightened; by transitions impossible to catch, without anything seeming to move, as the man announced a transformation the pasteboard head turned into a vase full of flowers, then into a cage full of birds, after that into a death's head which became the mask of celebrated statues representing successively Venus, Juno, Cleopatra, Anne of Austria, Marie Antoinette, and so on and on, until the showman said, 'Instead of pasteboard and stucco you shall now see living flesh.'

"Slowly the face dislocated, the features became hazy, confused, to form again little by little and appear distinct, animated, humanized.

"'An ingenious trick,' I thought; 'I don't even care to know if it is accomplished by the aid of mirrors.'

"The head of a young girl, sweet and fair, had formed behind the gauze. She opened her great black eyes, which, without definite expression, followed me with the strange fixity of a portrait, while across her face flitted the rather silly smile of the antique statues.

"This steady stare seemed to turn me to stone. My limbs grew rigid. I felt very strangely, though it was neither fatigue nor pain, and there was something oddly familiar about the head. Where I could have seen it before under different circumstances and in different attire I can no more remember now than I could then.

"When the crowd of spectators left I remained. The showman seemed surprised, but sold me another ticket.

"I remained through another representation. When the young girl appeared in the last act I experienced the same singular sensation of torpor, and could not move hand or foot until she vanished from the square.

"The showman walked toward the door and I followed him.

"'Why,' I asked, 'did you write metempsychosis on your sign instead of metamorphosis?'

"'Then I must have been mistaken!' he said. 'Bah! never mind, very few will know the difference.'

"Profiting by a push of the crowd I slipped behind him and hid against the canvas. He went out, saying:

"'Don't be impatient, Mille; I am going out to get something for supper.'

"I raised the canvas. On a larger coffer, covered with some Algerian stuff and ornamented with copper nails, I saw the pasteboard head. A young girl, tall and thin, dressed in a gray wrapper, was combing the long hair that fell over her face. She threw back her hair as she heard my step and recoiled so that the floor of the booth rattled. It seemed to me as if she was trying to break through the boards to escape from me. She looked pale, supernaturally pale. It might have been an effect of light, for the gas was directly above her head.

"I gazed alternately at her bloodless face and at the white face of the manikin; they seemed to grow confused in my mind.

"The girl's eyes shone, haggard and dilated like those of a somnambulist. Her pallid lips moved:

"'You have come to kill me!'

"'Kill you? Nonsense! What weapon could I use? I remember laughing as I said these words, and that is all.'

"'Collect your mind. Force your memory to obey you,' said the doctor anxiously.

"'That is all I can remember. The next thing I recall is that a man's hands closed around my throat and the man was shrieking with sorrow. His grasp must have been furious, yet I felt nothing.

"Over his shoulder I peered about to see the coffer without trying at all to free myself. The coffer was still in the corner, and the head was still on top of it. There was blood on the floor. The head looked like a pale young girl. Beside it lay a shining sword of curious shape, like an African weapon."

"'The sword was in the booth,' explained the physician; 'you took it to cut off the girl's head. Then you substituted her head for that of the manikin. All that was accomplished with a strength and rapidity only explicable by vertigo—temporary insanity—aberration, call it what you please.'

"'Decidedly, you insist upon it as firmly as the examining magistrate,' said Julian. 'Yet I can never admit myself guilty of an act I am unconscious of having done.'

"'You were out of your mind,' said the doctor. 'What happened next?'

"'I remember gendarmes with drawn swords. A walk past the booths of the showmen. And I think they booted and jeered. All the clamor mingled and confounded and became one great sound of rushing waves, then that noise resolved itself into a harmonious concert with dominating chords of deep, sweet sound. After that I found myself here, and you know the rest. You, doctor, felt my pulse, my forehead, and questioned me searchingly, but without succeeding in establishing my irresponsibility. I have never been subject to epilepsy, nor to somnambulism and my brain is not diseased. My own opinion? I have given it and been laughed at. Yet if I really did this hideous thing I am accused of, the very thought of which freezes the blood in my veins, then I have been the instrument of another's crime, a victim of suggestion. I am excessively nervous and susceptible to hypnotic influence, and have submitted to experiments until I have become a 'good subject.' I have no hope of this theory being accepted. I offer it merely as my own conviction.'

"'Have you arrived at any conclusion?' asked the lawyer three days after, as he entered the doctor's office with a curious expression on his keen face, and a certain pallor and subdued excitement that at once attracted the physician's attention.

"'Why, no; I am just where I was,' replied the latter. 'I can make nothing of it. And you? You have found some solution?'

"'The solution—the motive—all,' said the prisoner's counsel, unfolding a package of manuscript. 'The girl had been insane, melancholy, suicidal mania, and all that, but had been cured, as it was supposed, and was not considered dangerous. The idea fixed, however, still enthralled her brain, and, like all demented women, the more fantastic the mise en scene of the crime the better it would please her warped imagination. She conceived the idea of employing hypnotism, attended lectures and séances, and became an expert pupil. At one of these pseudo scientific gatherings, which were frequented by some medical students of the Latin quarter, she met Julian and—incredible as it seems—hypnotized him and suggested her own murder. This MS., found a few hours ago among her effects, contains a calm statement of the facts, and completely exonerates the prisoner."—Translated for "Romance" from Le Petit Journal by Edyth Kirkwood.

### Savage Arithmetic.

Savages are not very well off for numerals, and their knowledge of arithmetic is exceedingly limited. Very few savage nations have distinctive words for any higher number than four—some do not go higher than two—all higher numbers being included in the term "many" or "innumerable." Some nations can count beyond four, but they have no word to denote "five" and therefore they use the same word for "five" as they use for "hand." For "six," then, they would say "one hand and one;" for "ten" they would say "two hands." Those who count beyond "ten" make use of the "toes," and for "eleven" say "two hands and one toe," and "twenty" should he "two hands and two feet," or "one man."—Chicago Mail.

## A MODERN PRECISIAN.

### AN AUTHOR WHOSE DELIGHT IS TO FIND DEFECTS IN NOVELS.

**A Cold Blooded Critic of Language Who Ruthlessly Destroys Poetic Expression Whenever He Discovers a Sentence Improperly Constructed.**

A chiel of the grammarian order has been taking notes of our blunders in the use of our native speech, and he has given us the result in a little volume. There is an air of anonymity about the whole performance which befits the nature of the task. The author is known but as "Anglophil," a name for which it will be in vain to search in the directory. He publishes at the Literary Revision and Translation office in the Scrawl. It is a measure of precaution. Mankind naturally pursues labors of this kind with an amount of execration which is proportioned to their benefit. To learn on irresistible evidence that we scarcely ever open our mouths without uttering an absurdity of construction is to be made wise and wretched at the same time. Reform seems hopeless, the wretchedness abides, and we look around for a victim, unconscious that perhaps Anglophil is the very person we invite to aid us in our search.

Such kill joys of social converse may be admired, but they can never be loved, and our benefactor is to be excused for every device by which he seeks to escape the odium attaching to his office. His terrible mission is to read all the literature of the day not for its beauties, but for its faults. The periodical press is not his happiest hunting ground. He bags most game in the 3-volume novel. Meetings and partings, the glory of sunrise in padding, the tender confidences of affection, the tragic tumult of the courses of true love, are, as such, nothing to him. He runs through the descriptions of them with the fierce haste of an ogre looking for something to devour, and as soon as he finds a verb out of agreement with its nominative case he makes a meal. Dread yet salutary duty! It makes men and women afraid to read a novel and still more afraid to write one, yet it should leave us with enough charity to pity the fellow creature on whom it has been laid.

"Womanly sympathy and advice is never wanted." It is a soothing reflection, and who cares to be interrupted in the enjoyment of it by the remark that the "is" should be "are?" We are not sure that modern grammarians would agree with the author, for there is precedent for the use of the singular with nouns of kindred signification. But let that pass. Then again, "Her gayety, her good humor, was [were] so infectious" leaves us in no mood to quarrel—we are too sad. The clammy touch of criticism has marred the beauty of an entire character. Similarly, "One gives up all for a woman's sake and then they torment one's life out" [she torments, etc.], seems to rob the sacrifice of all its imaginative charm. "He saw it still—the bend of her neck, the stoop of her shoulders, the flash of her eyes" [he saw them still, etc.]. Alas and alas! for a man who, in such a picture, can see but a pronoun in the wrong number.

Let us hurry through the other examples—we have no heart for comment. "Never were the weaker sex held in greater honor" [was]. "Mary had never before seen any one so handsome, well bred and well made as her new friend. She resented the latter perfection" [last]. Heroes are turned to dust and ashes in the same remorseless way. "His eyes are blue, his nose aquiline"—what can be the matter with that? Simply that plural eyes and a singular nose must not take the same verb. Put "is" after the central feature, and we may once more yield to the charm of the description if we can. "Of the two lovers, James took the highest place." The "higher"—anything for peace.

"You will feel pleasantly when she is in her coffin" [pleasant], but the effect of tragic irony has gone all to nothing while we have been getting the sentence right. The same thing may be said of an equally fine effect of scorn: "How haughtily he complained of the wine being corked" [that the wine was corked], if you please. "Mary was occupied with her work, and the painter and his model with each other" [were engrossed with each other]. And just as the author seemed settling down to business—we do not like Anglophil: "The policeman is great friends with the cook" [The policeman and the cook are great friends]. Age fares no better at his hands than youth: "I refuse even to allow his visits to the house, much less give him my daughter" [much more].

This spirit of destructive criticism invades every part of life. It is not enough to forbid us to read; we must not speak. At every turn we are tripped up in the simplest colloquialisms that have become household words. Let no man henceforth say "it don't signify," and think there is an end of the matter. It does signify very much, if you use the verb in the plural. "It does not signify," is the absolutely correct, mealy mouthed form. Who would not echo the complaint given in one of the examples, "Looking into things don't help me." It is a cry of despair, yet the author can not let it pass. "Does not help me" is the right way.

Under treatment of this sort of course every phase becomes a stumbling block. We are at a Sancho's feast of speech, and as each tempting morsel of use and wont comes before the hungry talker the physician waves it away with his wand. "Would any one in their senses have so acted?"—stop. "Would any one in his?" "with one or two exceptions"—stop again; "with one exception, or with two" ("exceptions" understood or expressed if you wish to make the phrase a little more accurately uncouth). "Put some more coals on the fire." At this point the angry householder will probably put the book there as well. But let him be calm and listen to reason.—London News.

### A New Reason.

Mr. De Club—My dear, a great German physician says women require more sleep than men.

Mrs. De C.—Does he?

Mr. De C.—Yes, my dear—um—er—you'd better not wait up for me tonight.—New York Weekly

## STORY OF GENERAL SHERMAN.

**Singular Interview at Jackson, Miss., During the War.**

"Yes, Joseph E. Johnston had crossed Pearl river on his retreat to the east, and it was known that Sherman would evacuate Jackson and pursue him as soon as possible. With great difficulty I had secured from the Federal authorities the assurance that my cotton factory would not be burned, but on the night when the evacuation was in progress I learned from reliable sources that a change had been made in the orders, and that the torch was likely to be applied to the property at any moment.

I resolved to seek an immediate interview with General Sherman himself, entertaining, however, but slender hopes, especially at such an untimely hour—for it was past midnight—of reaching the presence of the Federal chief. I had little trouble in ascertaining that his headquarters were in the —— residence in west Jackson, and before many minutes had passed I was at the front gate of the place, where, to my great surprise, I found no guards to check my progress. The house was quiet and unlighted, so far as I could discern. Somewhat puzzled, I paused for a minute or two and said to myself, "Surely this is not the headquarters of a great United States army."

But seeing no one to inquire of I opened the gate, went up to the house and onto the porch. For some minutes I stood there listening. But I head no sound within, nor was there any guard to challenge my intrusion. Through a shaded transom I caught the reflection of a light. I tried the hall door, found it ajar, pushed it open and stepped inside. The place was silent—there was nothing to indicate occupancy by the military.

"I have come to the wrong house," I said. But observing that a dim light was reflected through the half open door of a room opening into the hall I advanced and entered the apartment. It had but a single occupant. He was sleeping upon a lounge, and my steps aroused him. He turned over and looked at me.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"I want to see General W. T. Sherman."

"I'm General Sherman. What do you want?"

"I explained as briefly as possible. He said shortly in substance that his orders were to spare the factory, and they would be obeyed. He said that he wanted to go to sleep. He stretched himself and shut his eyes, and I walked out and returned up town. A few hours later the factory was in ashes."

"And you say that General Sherman had no bodyguards?"

"I say that I entered his bedroom and left it without being challenged—in fact, without meeting a soul except the general himself."

This remarkable incident was told in Green's bank, and the narrator was Joshua Green, its founder and president.—Henry Clay Fairman in Sunny South.

### Whittier's Spirituality.

Spiritualism, as it is called in our day, was a subject which earnestly and steadily held Whittier's attention. There are many passages in his letters on this question which state his own mental position very clearly. "I have had as good a chance to see a ghost," he once said, "as anybody ever had, but not the slightest sign ever came to me. I do not doubt what others tell me, but I sometimes wonder over my own incapacity. I should like to see some dear ghost walk in and sit down by me when I am here alone. The doings of the old witch days have never been explained, and as we are so soon to be transferred to another state, how natural it appears that some of us should have glimpses of it here."

As the end of his life drew near, it was easy to see that the village home where his mother and sister lived and died was the place he chiefly loved, but he was more inaccessible to his friends in Amesbury, and the interruptions of a fast growing factory town were sometimes less agreeable to him than the country life at Oak Knoll. Once only he expresses this preference for the dear old village home in one of his letters: "I have been at Amesbury for a fortnight. Somehow I seem nearer to my mother and sister; the very walls of the room seem to have become sensitive to the photographs of unseen presences."—Annie Fields in Harper's.

### A Good Way to Clean Glasses.

"It's the greatest idea in the world," said William H. Pascoe as he stood at the desk in the Southern hotel yesterday rubbing his glasses with a $50 bill. "Now, I can't see 10 feet without my glasses, and glasses have a tendency to become blurred, you know. Now, I have worn spectacles constantly for over 25 years, and I have in a small way made a study of them. A linen handkerchief does not clean them well, and silk is always sure to leave a thread sticking to the frames. Paper is of no account, as it leaves specks on the glass. Cotton is sure to leave a lot of lint behind it. Chamois is too thick, and kid don't do at all. I've tried them all, and I know. The thing to use, my boy, is a bank note. It cleans the glasses beautifully and leaves nothing behind it."

"Of course it isn't necessary to use a fifty every time, but I happened to have this one loose in my pocket, and I'm expecting a friend along in a minute and I want to make an impression. Yes, they say that bills carry disease with them, but I ain't afraid much. I've never caught anything from them. You can use a one as well as a fifty, but use a fifty, if you can; there's more money in it."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

### Sweet Potato Flour.

A St. Louis woman has perfected a patent to cover the process of making "sweet potato flour." The processes are those peeling the potato and kiln drying the peel so that it will keep for any length of time as a food for live stock; of drying and grinding the potato into three distinct grades of flour, and also of slicing and drying it in the form of "Saratoga chips."—New York Telegram.

### No Reference to Allusions.

She—You are always sneering at women who talk too much. Are you hitting at me?

He—Not at all. There are lots of women besides you who talk too much.

### Gayly Decked Immigrants.

A picturesque party of Italian immigrants landed at the barge office the other day. There were about a dozen men and six or eight women. The men wore clothing of a rough, buff colored material, with scarfs and caps of brighter hues. The women displayed a variety of gay colors—red, yellow, blue and pink predominating. Each woman was bareheaded, but each wore ribbons in her hair and a bright colored shawl or apron. The strangers attracted a great deal of attention as they straggled up Broadway from the Battery with their bundles. They evidently found as much novelty in their surroundings as the New Yorkers found in their quaint appearance. The women apparently had the keenest observation and pointed out to their more stolid male companions various objects as the party moved along.

At Rector street they saw a flower stand, and half a dozen of the women gathered about it and gave vent to voluble expressions of delight. They dragged some of the men before the stand and gesticulated violently. The men tried to pull away from them, but could not. After awhile some pieces of money came out of the men's pockets, and with much eagerness and chattering the women selected one flower apiece. The vendor took his pay out of the handful of American silver tendered him, and the party moved on, both men and women as joyous as a lot of school children.—New York Times.

### A Friend of the Farmer.

The hop growers of Otsego county have discovered what naturalists have long been trying to make farmers understand—that skunks, instead of being their enemies, as they formerly supposed are among their most useful friends. As one hop grower expressed it, "Nowadays we protect skunks as carefully as we do song birds."

Hop yards, it appears, are infested by a certain kind of grub which gnaws off the tender vines at the root, and this grub is the favorite food of the skunk.

As a general thing the skunks sally forth at nightfall, but now and then they are to be seen at work in broad daylight. The proceeding is an interesting one to watch.

The skunk begins his quest on the edge of the yard, where he cocks his head over a hill of hops and listens. If a grub is at work upon one of the four trailing vines, his quick ear is sure to hear it. At once he begins to paw up the earth, and presently he is seen to uncover the grub and swallow it with unmistakable relish.

Then he listens again, and if he hears nothing proceeds to the next hill. And so he goes on till he has had his fill.

Now that the skunks are no longer molested, they have become comparatively fearless. Sometimes, we are told, they keep up their operations even while the cultivator is driven between the rows.—Cor. New York Tribune.

### The Work of a London Writer.

"T. P." stands alone among popular journalists in that practically all his work is done for one paper, The Weekly Sun, of which he is the founder and editor. He knows as well as any one the value of his own pen, and he takes care to write the most important parts of the paper himself and to append his famous initials to all his work. A casual glance through a number of the paper will serve to show the amount and variety of his weekly labors.

First there is a review of the "book of the week," which invariably extends over five closely packed columns. This article, always conspicuously brilliant, would be a good two days' work for any writer. Then there are the editorial notes from one to two columns; an interview with some celebrity, one column; theatrical critiques, two or three columns, and lastly a few paragraphs on the correspondence page. All these are signed "T. P." Yet Mr. O'Connor contrives to keep in the forefront of the political battle and also to write an occasional book.—London Tit-Bits.

### Two Charges.

There was a suit tried in the United States circuit court at Raleigh some years ago in which a Baltimore commission house was plaintiff and General Bryan Grimes, who led the last charge at Appomattox, was defendant. Judge Bond, who presided, was strongly anti-southern during the war and a citizen of Baltimore. The late Governor Fowle, who was a very eloquent lawyer, represented General Grimes, and in his appeal to the jury laid full stress on the character and record of his client and dwelt eloquently on the "last charge at Appomattox." Coming out of the court, he said to the opposing counsel (now Judge Fuller of the United States land claims court), "Fuller, that last charge at Appomattox has got me the jury." "Yes," said Fuller very quietly; "and that last charge of Judge Bond has got me the verdict." And so it proved.—Green Bag.

### Various Sources of Silk.

Silk worms are not the sole source of the production of silk; it is also obtained from several vegetable substances, but of an inferior and less durable description. Excellent colored silk is obtained from the prepared and finer fibers of the bamboo, which is much in demand for clothing in tropical countries from its lightness and porosity. Another form of silk is obtained from the pods of the silk cotton tree, of which there are several varieties in existence, the material obtained from them being known as vegetable silk.—Brooklyn Eagle.