

RETROSPECT OF A YEAR.

Time by moments steals away, First the hour, and then the day; Sun! the daily loss appears, Yet it soon amounts to years; Thus another year is flown, And is now no more our own, (Though it brought a promised good) Than the years before the flood.

But each year—let none forget— Finds and leaves us deep in debt, Favours from the Lord received, Sins that have the Spirit grieved, Marked by God's unerring hand, In His book recorded stand; Who can tell the vast amount Placed to every soul's account?

We have nothing, Lord to pray, Take, O! take our sins away; Self-condemned, on Thee we call, Freely, Lord, forgive us all, If we see another year, May we spend it in Thy fear: All its days devote to Thee Living for Eternity.

THE COUNTRY COUSIN.

AN AMERICAN TALE.

'How provoking!' cried the gay and beautiful Emily Howard, as she threw aside a letter she had been reading; 'only think, to be bored for a whole fortnight by a vulgar country cousin, and that, too, during the gay season. Oh, dear! oh, dear! what will the Wiltons say? But there it is; I must write her to come for father has given her a pressing invitation, of course never once thinking she would accept.'

And she seized her pen and wrote a pretty note, and, hastening to the bearer, who was awaiting an answer in an adjoining room, with a face wreathed in smiles, presented it.—'But, alas! not one syllable of her vehement soliloquy had escaped the gentleman, and he being a friend of the family by whom he had been commissioned to deliver the message, on return related the whole affair to Louisa Dalton—the country cousin.

On being left alone, the astonished girl burst into tears—tears of disappointment, indignation and mortified pride. But she soon recovered herself, and, wiping her eyes, seemed lost in thought, when suddenly a merry laugh burst forth, and she roughly said—'Ay, that will be fine at all events; I'll make the most of my visit, and foolish Emily Howard shall find that her cousin, in point of vulgarity, is quite up to her imagination. I am sure it is but fair she should be punished, and as to her own opinion or that of her associates, it matters but little to me. True, it will be a difficult part to play, but I trust much to my powers of imitation in carrying out my plan, which, fortunately, according to the science of phrenology, are uncommonly developed.'

Could Emily Howard at this time have looked in upon her expected guest, she would have dismissed all fears of being disgraced by her, as even she—the admired city belle, in point of beauty and accomplishments, could not rival her. She was gracefully reclining on a luxurious lounge, in a rich and tasteful apartment. The light of the departing sun, was streaming through the window, and the diamond curtains reflected a deeper hue to the rose tint on her cheek. Though the traces of tears were still visible, a sunny smile played round the lips of Madama beauty, and every feature seemed radiant with the light of warm affection and home. Oh! joyous happy season when life with its varied charms opens upon the young maiden, with only rainbow hues; when on the sunny landscape she sees no dark spot, no eclipse.

The father of Louisa having acquired a competency, and being lord of rural life, while she was still a mere child, had chosen a lovely sequestered retreat. Here, amid Nature's sweet adornments of flowers and shady groves, with a fond mother, she had passed her happy childhood, and here she had numbered her eighteenth year. She was possessed of fine natural talents, and, under the guidance of her accomplished mother, had made great proficiency in both solid and ornamental branches. Although she had travelled much with her parents, and for one of her years had seen much of the gay world—though admiring eyes had gazed on her, and flattery's voice had breathed in her ear—she still retained the sweet simplicity and love of nature which ever springs from a pure heart.

Mr. Charles Howard, her mother's brother, resided in a distant city, but, owing to a slight misunderstanding between himself and Mr. Dalton, the families had never been on terms of intimacy; and until within a few months, had not visited, when Mr. Howard, in compliance with his sister's earnest request, had spent a few days with them at their delightful home. He was warmly welcomed by her, so that a satisfactory explanation of the misunderstanding which had

occasioned the breach was highly gratifying to both, and they only regretted that reconciliation had been so long postponed. Mr. Howard was delighted with the genius, beauty, and accomplishments of Louisa, and could not forbear contrasting the graceful modesty of her manners with the lofty bearing and haughty affectation of his own beloved child; and when he had urged the acceptance of his invitation, it had been with a hope of benefitting her not less, than with a desire for the congenial society of his interesting niece. He was aware that his daughter, having seen only rustic beauties, had imbibed a foolish but strong prejudice against those whose lot was cast without the pale of a populous city, and he forbore making any comments on their expected guest, as he wished to witness the surprise of Emily when she should discover the superiority of her country cousin. At every mention of the visit the fallen countenance of Emily portrayed to him how unwelcome it was, and he well knew she was bitterly anticipating many a humiliating mortification and trying position to which her visitor must expose her. She dared not complain to her father, for she understood his views too well to expect sympathy; and she also knew that it would require of her every possible attention towards her cousin.

The expected day at length arrived, and with a sickening heart, Emily, for the first time in her life, beheld a stage-coach stop before her father's mansion. As she had a great aversion to such vehicles, she could restrain herself no longer, and forgetting all her fears of her father's displeasure, with scornful manner and distressed tone she exclaimed—'A dusty stage-coach! Oh, papa, how could you doom me to such annoyance, for the sake of a miserable country girl? What on earth will the Wiltons say?'

The colour mounted to the temples of Mr. Howard, and Emily's cheek flushed beneath the harshest look which she had ever seen on his usually benevolent face. As she reluctantly rose to receive her guest, he coldly said—'Don't trouble yourself; I will do the civilities, as I cannot bear to see my daughter welcoming with honied words and smiles on her lip one who in her heart she despises, thus acting the double part of falsehood and hypocrisy.'

'She has not come after all,' said Mr. Howard, as the stage-door was opened; but instantly he recognized her lively features shaded by a large bonnet. As he assisted her in alighting, he could scarce repress an expression of surprise at her grotesque appearance, while she ingenuously said—'I am glad to see you, my dear uncle; but no doubt you are surprised at my travelling equipage.—Do not remove my baggage, as perhaps you will not approve of the assumed character which circumstances compel me to act, if I remain with you.'

She then explained all in regard to the letter which had been overheard by the bearer, and closed by saying, that since she had sent compliments, she had thought best to come; but if such a part as she proposed to act would be in the least unpleasant to him, she would unhesitatingly depart.

'By no means,' replied her uncle; 'your plot is excellent, and though I can scarce bear to see you do violence to your feelings, and thus veil your superior loveliness yet, I doubt not, it is one that will greatly assist in curing the serious faults of my child—faults which conceal her every virtue; and I will assist you to the utmost of my power.'

During all this time, peeping from the window above, was poor Emily, and as she witnessed the dismounting, the removal of her baggage, &c., her appearance was quite as laughable as that of her cousin's, and her remarks much more so. 'Oh, horrible!' she exclaimed, raising both her hands, and looking as if she scarce knew whether to laugh or cry, as Louisa made her appearance, 'what a large bonnet! and as to her outside dress, I believe it's her father's big farmer coat. Well, well, papa need not have feared smiling lips and honied words from me, for, hypocrite as he thinks me, I could not have asumed them, but should have laughed in spite of myself, in her face, which is as big and homely as her bonnet.'

The provoking creature! What assurance! Does she lean on his arm? And the baggage is, I am sure, precisely like that of the fat Irish woman, who always come to service in a stage-coach, with just such an old band-box tied up in a rag, only she has got a rusty umbrella. I suppose she thought maybe her cousin Emily had none, and this would be just the thing to give us both in our rainy walks.—'Tis too bad, too bad, too bad,' and tears began to flow.

At this moment Sir Edward Walton, the son of a wealthy marquis, who was visiting at Mr. Wilton's, was announced and hastily drying her tears and arranging her becoming dress with studied negligence, she proceeded to the drawing-room, where he was awaiting her. A look of undisguised admiration from him rewarded her trouble, and forgetting all her anxiety in regard to her country cousin, she was soon rapturously listening to his glowing and refined conversation.

In the meantime Louisa had been busily engaged in decorating, or rather disfiguring, herself for the purpose of her plan. Her beautiful hair had been tightly drawn back from her forehead, and its luxuriant tresses confined with an immense tortoise-shell comb. Directly across her fair brow was bound a row of short, stiff, artificial curls, secured by a black fillet, which was tied back of the ear with a bright pink bow. Her dress, which in no way fitted her elegant form, was of calico, gaily striped with red and green; the waist encircled by a red sash, fastened with an old-fashioned brass belt buckle. To complete arrangements, a pair of mits encased her delicate hands, and green shoes sat loosely on her feet.

While Sir Edward and Emily were still enjoying their charming *te-te-a-tete*, the door was thrown open, and the gloomy country lassie stood courtesying before them.—Emily was so shocked, it was unable to rise, but not at all discomfited, Louisa approached, and, throwing her arms around her neck, printed a smack on her cheek which resounded through the room like the bursting of a bottle of beer, and without taking breath, she exclaimed—'I told you I'd come, dear cousin Emily, and I meant to. Ever since Uncle Charles was at our house, I've been wanting to. He told me all about you, but he never so much as told me you had a brother, advancing to Sir Edward with extended hand, saying in an undertone 'Well, so much the better.'

Poor Emily vainly assayed to speak, and Sir Edward, noticing her embarrassment, with assumed gravity, while he took the extended hand, informed her of her mistake. 'Oh, pardon me,' she replied, starting back; and then, eyeing them both in the face, she said, 'but you look as near alike as two peas, only Miss Emily is so pale; and marching across the room with the air of one perfectly at home, and fixing her eyes on a rich velvet covered easy chair, she said, 'What an elegant cheer, but I suppose you've no objections to my sitting in it, now I've got on my best gown. And so comfortable, too,' she continued, as she threw herself into it; and placing her hands on her knees, with her mouth half open, she stared about the room, and expressed her admiration of its embellished beauties, declaring it was unlike anything she had ever dreamed of. At length, as if recollecting her, she started up and said—

'But come, Emily, where is the piano your father spoke of? I'd like to see such a wonderful thing, that speaks music right out,' and, familiarly seizing her hand, she continued, 'Come, don't be so stupid; you have got to show me everything new, and that will be no small task, for everything in a new city is new to us country folks. I suppose I shall be invited to lots of frolics, candy scrapes, and quilts, and all that sort of thing, and I've brought lots of pretty clothes to wear. I know you will be quite proud of me, and as to the beaux, why, up where I live, they think I am—but there, I won't brag—you'll see what I can do.'

At this juncture, Sir Edward, whose generosity would not allow of his torturing Miss Emily, bade her good morning and withdrew, though it must be admitted he had enjoyed the simplicity of the rustic.

'What a pity,' he said to himself, as he turned away, 'that such a pretty little creature (for despite her disguise she was beautiful, with eyes soft as the dove's, and teeth of pearl) half concealed by such sweet lips, and a complexion whose purity might have excited the envy of even the beautiful Emily Howard; what a pity! she is so ignorant, and so singularly devoid of taste in her personal adornings. And her voice, despite the coarse things it uttered, its musical sweetness thrilled my heart.'

'This is only the commencement,' sighed the discomfited Emily, as she pressed her pillow after the first day of embarrassments and mortifications had passed. 'And I now not where it will end; I anticipated full enough, but her veridancy far, far exceeds it all. It will ruin me; I am sure it will, and something must be done. To-morrow I will reason with her; she is quite pretty, very pretty, and if I can only induce her to lay aside that gigantic comb, and those odious curls, and to do her hair in something of style; and then, with a little altering, one of my dresses might fit her nicely, and the mits and shoes certainly must be disposed of, and then I am sure she will appear quite like a lady—no, not a lady, but quite decent, I mean. But her foolish palaver that is worse than all; what can I do? And the poor girl, finding there was so much to be done, despairingly sobbed herself to sleep.

The following morning she was awakened to her troubles by Louisa, who, entering her room without ceremony, exclaimed, 'Heigho! asleep yet; what say you to a walk?'

Emily would have shaken her self and resumed her slumbers had not the thought that in a walk at such an hour she would get likely to encounter any of her fashionable friends, and, hastily rising, she was soon equipped.

Choosing a retired but pleasant avenue, she was carelessly proceeding along, when her attention was arrested by a gentleman whose elegant figure she could not mistake.—It was no other than Sir Edward Walton, the very one whom, above all others, she dreaded; and, drawing her veil closely over her face, she would have proceeded without noticing him, had not Louisa cried out—

'Not so fast, Emily! here is the very same young fellow who was at your house the other day; he is walking all alone, and looks wishful, as if he wanted to go with us—Here, Mr. What's-your-name, we are taking a walk too, and as you are going the same way, why not go with us?'

'With pleasure,' replied Sir Edward, biting his lip; 'I never refuse the escort of ladies.'

'Oh, very pretty,' said Louisa, and as he smilingly extended his jewelled hand, she said, 'But, not understanding the part she was playing, she was extremely modest, and her eyes fell, while a modest blush overspread her cheek, which was beautiful in the eyes of Sir Edward, although he could not explain such susceptibility from one who would hail a stranger and ask him to walk with her. At all events, thought he, such mingling of simplicity and modesty is rare, and therefore interesting, and just for novelty's sake he resolved to pursue her acquaintance, and try to draw her out.

In vain he sought to engage Miss Howard in conversation; she was so pained, and embarrassed she could reply only by monosyllables, but the light-hearted Louisa chatted on right merrily, apparently entirely unconscious of the trouble she was giving her companion. As they advanced into an open space, Sir Edward passionately called the attention of the ladies to the rising orb of day, tinged with his rich golden lines the eastern horizon. 'Tis very pretty,' faintly replied Emily, while Louisa, betrayed into forgetfulness by her passionate love of the sublime, warily reiterated—'Pretty! how tame the expression; it is sublimely beautiful.—Look again, dear Emily; what work of art can equal Nature's sweet adornings? How rich, how glorious, are the varied hues and shades.'

intellectual face beaming with the poetic enthusiasm of her feelings.—As she turned her soul-lit eye upon him, his tender gaze recalled her to her senses again, and her eyes fell and a deep blush overspread her cheeks.

Emily was not less surprised than Edward, and pleased that she had made a favourable impression on his mind (which she could not help seeing, though she believed it momentary), she half resolved to let all pride alone, love her for what she was, and independently brave public opinion. But alas! pride had gained too strong a hold on her heart; and during the reception of morning callers, she found herself as much annoyed as on the previous day.

Immediately after dinner she took the arm of Louisa, and drawing her away, said, 'Come, let us go to the dressing-room and prepare for the evening.'

'You don't mean for me to prepare,' said Louisa, eyeing herself with a look of satisfaction; 'I've got my best, and I'm sure I look pretty; and she placed herself before the mirror; 'Didn't you see that young fellow that walked with you stare at me? I know he was pleased.'

'You look well for the country, but city people dress differently, and when you are with them you should try and imitate them both in dress and manners, lest by singularity you might attract too much attention.'

'I have no sort of objection to attracting attention,' replied Louisa drily. 'Well, then, to please me will you not allow the dressing maid to fix your hair a little more like mine?'

'Just as you please; but then if it should not be becoming, it must be refitted, and all that trouble will have been for nothing.'

'Never mind the trouble, and I well know you will be satisfied.'

ings Russel, M.P., Colonel Alcock, Captain Adam Gladstone, &c.

Colonel Wilford, who was warmly received, introduced the subject of his lecture by a brief glance at the history and construction of firearms. Rifles were first mentioned in a target practice at Hamburgh, in 1498. They were described as muskets with a grooved inner surface; and from that day to the present rifle-matches had existed in Germany. The rifle was first employed by the Jagers, who carried them for the destruction of game that required to be shot by ball, while in England and France game-keepers had no such game to bring down. The Austrians did not at first train riflemen, for they found them ready-made to their hands among the Jagers. Frederick the Great, in order to meet the Austrian army on equal terms, was obliged to employ riflemen. They remained unknown among English troops until the necessity for them was called forth by the war of American Independence. The rifle was necessary to the existence of the backwoodsmen, and when they had the advantage of cover our troops could not stand before them. England was at first obliged to go to Hesse, to Hanover, and to Denmark for riflemen to bring against the Americans; and in 1794 the Government established the 60th battalion of Rifles, which was called the Royal American Regiment. Our first riflemen carried a mallet, with which to hammer down the ball; and the riflemen was so long in loading that it was necessary the red-coats should be near that he might take refuge behind them while he loaded. The Duke of Richmond once said that in the Peninsula our riflemen were supplied with tight-fitting bullets that would kill, and plenty of small ones that would miss, in order that they might have the pleasure of shooting off. [A laugh.] It was at length discovered that the musket supplied to the English infantry was the worst in Europe—the heaviest, the shortest, requiring the largest ball, the greatest charge of powder, having the greatest windage, the shortest range, and the least accuracy. [Laughter and applause.] It showed that the English soldier must be when he could gain such splendid victories with Brown Bess. [Applause.] The Kaffir war was irksome and inglorious, and public attention became attracted to the short-comings of our firearms. General Cathcart was sent out to the Cape with *capit blanche*, and what did he ask for? He said to the Government at home, 'Send me out 4000 Swiss.' He wanted soldiers who could hit small objects at long ranges. Brown Bess was clearly unable to bring the war to a close, for it was upon record that one morning 80,000 rounds of ball cartridge were fired, and only twenty-five Kaffirs were bagged. George IV. was very anxious that the cuirass should be adopted in the British army, and that experiments should be tried to show whether it would resist a bullet. A cuirass was accordingly fixed upon a pole, and Brown Bess was set to work at it with the advantage of a "rest."

The experiment would have been very satisfactory, only none of the balls could be persuaded to hit the cuirass. [A laugh.] At last an officer put a musket to his shoulder, and by great good luck hit the cuirass, when the ball, of course, went through it. He believed that a man might sit in a chair, at 300 yards, and let a man blaze away at him all day with Brown Bess, with one condition only, that the shooter should be bound upon his honor to aim at the mark. [A laugh.] A general officer told him that in Spain, being charged with the defence of a breastwork thrown up in a hurry, with a very few soldiers, the order was given to them to fire as rapidly as possible, not in the hope or intention of hitting anybody, but to make the enemy think they were stronger than they actually were. Firing to 'make the enemy think! Contrast this with what took place during the mutiny at Cawnpore. An officer, in command of his company, was attacked by some sowars [irregular native cavalry.] He formed his men into two lines, made both kneel, and at the word 'Fire' sixty-nine dragoons fell to the ground like a wall. [Applause.] One man alone escaped the fire, seeing which a soldier came to the front, fired, and brought the sowar from his horse at a distance of 300 yards. That was the

way to 'make an enemy think.' [Applause.] Our troops were now all armed with the Enfield rifle, which was the best rifle made which in similar numbers, had been placed in the hands of any army. By contrast and comparison with Brown Bess it was a weapon of transcendent value and superiority. Upon the beach at Hythe one day, when Sir John Burgoyne was present, a target was put up, 8 feet by 6 feet, upon which was outlined the figure of a man on horseback. A detachment of thirty-two men were formed in line at 600 yards distance, who lodged three balls in the horse and two in the man before an officer could get a glass to his eye. Sir John Burgoyne, when he saw this, exclaimed, 'No dragoon can stand before you, and no artillery can stand before you unless it is protected.' But a new gun required a new man. Men must be taught to shoot as they were trained in any other skilled calling. What was wanted was that all the men in a regiment should be taught to shoot, as all the dragoons in a regiment were taught to ride. In the Government School of Musketry shooting was taught as a drill, without ball at all. The gallant Colonel then entered into a technical description of "aiming drill" and "position drill," and strongly insisted upon the necessity of commencing rifle practice by snapping caps and firing blank cartridge. To begin with firing ball cartridge was fatal. The volunteer who did so would never become a marksman, or he would only perpetuate his errors. If there were any sportsmen who wanted to improve their shooting, let them go through a course of "position drill," then let them fire blank cartridges at swallows or other small birds, and he would promise them that when the first of September came round, they would fire half as well again. [Applause.] He had never fired a ball until he was fifty-six years of age, and for a long time he could not get into the first class. He used to miss eighteen shots out of twenty, but he persevered, and one day he got nineteen points in the first class (650 to 900 yards.) The next drill was 'aiming drill.' The eye might be strengthened by exercise, and it was desirable to shoot at smaller objects than a rifleman would ordinarily require to hit. 'Aiming drill' at 800 yards with blank cartridge was excellent training. The ball cartridge merely gave you the power to find out if you could shoot, and what progress you were making. With this exception marksmen learned nothing with ball cartridge. An important part of a rifleman's training was the ability to judge distances. It was not at first easy, but it could be learned. There were certain distances at which horses seemed to have no ears—when flesh could not be discerned, when men seemed to have no necks, when cannon wheels had no spokes, and when all horses seemed to be of one colour. Savages could judge of distances with great accuracy, and the faculty only required to be cultivated. The gallant Colonel then proceeded to explain by means of diagrams the line of sight, the line of fire, and the trajectory of the Enfield rifle. The whole difficulty in firing bullets was that they were always travelling through the air at a curve, so that at long ranges it was necessary literally to drop them on a man's head. [A laugh.] Armed with the Enfield rifle, no infantry soldier ever need form a square to resist cavalry, unless surprised. The cavalry might come down upon them, but not a man would escape the aim of their rifles. They talked of the 'common soldier,' but we did not want the 'common soldier' in these days. What was wanted was taught, educated, and trained men. [Applause.] Some persons said that a range of 400 yards was long enough for the bulk of our troops, but if one soldier had a gun that would kill at 1000 yards, the man whose rifle would only carry 400 yards would not be able to get a single shot at his enemy. The only limit to the range of a gun was the power of the human eye. You might get a longer range by increasing the charge of powder and the weight of the gun, but the rifle would be wrecked, and where the recoil was great there was an end of accurate shooting. The weight of a gun was also an important consideration, for an infantry soldier required a weapon that he could carry in a twenty-five miles' march and fight with afterwards. How, then, was a long range to be obtained? The resistance of the air to any object in motion was in proportion to the magnitude of its surface. In artillery the 68lb. ball, with a charge of 16lb. of powder, was at present the most accurate of aim, but in firearms the whole secret of extending range was narrowing the bore. The Whitworth rifle was constructed on this principle, and at 800 yards' range the bullet from this rifle was going three times as fast as the Enfield. The greater the elevation a rifle required the more skill was wanted to drop the bullet down just where it would hit.

COLONEL WILFORD ON RIFLES AND RIFLE PRACTICE.

On Friday the 18th ult., Colonel Wilford, Assistant Commandant and Chief Instructor of the Government School of Musketry at Hythe, delivered an interesting lecture in the Theatre of the United Service Institution, Whitehall Yard, London, on rifle and rifle practice. Lord Elcho, M.P., presided. The lecture was numerously attended. Among the visitors were the Earl of Lichfield, Lord West, Colonel Lefroy, Sir John Anson, Mr. Alcock, M.P., Hon. Augustus Vernon, Mr. Hast-

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