

A WOMAN'S QUESTION.
By Adelaide Anne Procter.

Before I trust my fate to thee,
Or place my hand in thine,
To follow thee, I would be sure
To know thy nature, color,
Color and form to mine,
Before I permit thee to go,
I would know thy heart for me,
Question thy soul to assist for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
A shadow of regret;
In thee one link with the past
That hinders thy spirit's free
Or is it thy faith and free
As that which I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmed dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
Untroubled by the pain of care,
If, so, at my pain or cost,
Thy life be before all is lost?

I ask deeper still: if thou canst feel,
With thy thy innocent soul,
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole,
Let me not be thy partner,
But in true mercy, tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fill?
Speak that to any other day
Could better we or still?
I should not, lest of some far day
My whole life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid
The demon-spirit, change,
Seducing a passing glory and
On all things thy strange?
It may not be thy fault alone,
But shield my heart against thine own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy claim one day
And answer to my hand,
That fate, and that to-day's mistake,—
Not thou,—had been to blame?
Some notice thou couldst give,
With surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer not,—I dare not hear,
The words would come too late,
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
So comfort thou my soul,
Whatever on my heart may fall,
Remember, I would risk it all!

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE
England—Approaching the great city of Manchester—Smoky Fun—How the English have Fun—Belle Vue—All for a Shilling.

By K. T. STABBECK.

I have heard of Manchester and heard it was smoky. I am very fond of smoke. I approached Manchester through several tunnels, some of which were several miles long. We stopped at one of them to permit a train to pass us, and here I enjoyed a rare opportunity to look at Manchester. It was, most strictly speaking, a bird's-eye view. I don't think there is a bird's-eye view that can look through the second chimney in the city. From the car window where the horizon might reasonably be expected to exist, the air was filled with murky grayness. Through it here and there a lamp-post and chimney, some of them appearing to wink at my appetite for more, and to leave a fertile imagination busily constructing hundreds of them and filling the entire plain with brick walls, clanging machinery, and heavy rolling drays—none of which were seen. The probability of Manchester was oppressive. As for the smoke it hung as limp as a dish-cloth over every thing. There was no less smoke than I expected to see. I had heard that the contents of the ponderous chimneys fell where they pleased, and that every crevice, clutched upon every smooth and bright thing with its smutty fingers. I have wondered how people could live in such a furnace with the faintest degree of comfort and if I were surprised that those whose labor called them there should endure the oppressive atmosphere, I was in an agony of perplexity to account for the presence, of which I had heard of merchants, hotel-keepers, the profession, etc., to say nothing of the numerous strangers constantly coming, chocking and sneezing, and coughing, and sneezing, and the church and theatre seats were upholstered to guard against the taint from the soot-be-grimed audience. I tried to imagine a wedding with its white veils and kids, and almost laughed out aloud at the fantastic absurdity of the thing. Then I tried to imagine a snow-storm wrestling with the city, but backed away from the task with some trepidation, and I sternly asked myself "can this be a white man's government?"

Attempting to do as I best could to adopt the English name of station, I was surprised to find I could breathe without any difficulty and that my eyes were not inflamed. Where was the smoke that encompassed the city like a morose giant ten minutes ago? It was where you saw it when you were first informed of its existence, and I was surprised to find it was clear. Just beyond was the veil of smoke. It never changed position wherever I went. It was always ahead; down the busy streets; in the neighborhoods where the clerical portions of the residence quarter; it was forever visible. After tea I went to the theatre; it was the Princess—a perfect gem of a theatre; blue, satin, gold, and red velvet; and singularly, too, the play "All that glitters is not gold" was a mill girl naturally at home, and she sacrificed herself for the wife of one of her employers may be saved and eventually marries another employer and is happy. Whatever the emotions of the many other mill girls who sat in the auditorium and watched this episode in the romantic life of a factory girl and business, you can tell as well as I.

After theatre, I wandered about the streets to see if Manchester street life at night differed from that of the metropolis, and found that it did in that it was darker, and the shops were closed, and the street lamps, supplied with illuminated oil and public-house. Being a manufacturing people, I imagine they go to bed early. In fact I am willing to swear to it. For two hours the next morning, I walked through the maze of warehouses, on Market street. It was an altogether different section from what I had seen elsewhere in England. They were tall buildings, severely plain in design, and with upper windows that never knew the profane touch of soap and water.

From early morning, heavy drays drawn by the colossal horses of Normandy, with clink whiskers on their heads, and freighted with cotton and cotton goods have been taken through the streets, and are still at it. There is stored in the manufacturing art, and from here it is shipped all over the world, to gladden the heart and lighten the purse of the multitude.

From wandering among them, I came to the office of the American Consul, Mr. Crane, formerly compiler of the *Lancet*; and the *Charley Leonard*, on the St. Louis *Democrat*, and with this gentleman I spent a pleasant half hour.

In the afternoon, a Manchester friend drove me about the residential quarter of the city. Here smoke was still farther in the perspective, and a radical change in English thoroughfares was experienced. For three hours we drove among these streets, and if there were any doubts on my part that Manchester was more like an American city than any other English town, those doubts were now dispelled. Here were streets as straight as an arrow, with broad roadway, broad sidewalks bordered by smooth, green turf and shaded by trees, with garlands at the back of the walls, filled with beautiful flowers, and a smooth green turf. We passed through Nelson Street, and, as I saw the name, a host of tender memories flooded my soul. Heaven bless Manchester for having a Nelson Street, that oasis in the desert of life. In the evening we went to the Belle Vue. Whether it is a theatre or any other kind of an entertainment, the Englishman abandons himself to a full enjoyment of what he beholds. So he naturally runs to gardens, as better calculated to indulge this desire, and as he builds his house as plainly as possible and throws his weight in architecture on his church, so he locks not so much to a garden at home, but makes the public affair as elaborate as money and taste can do. We do not think much of Manchester, except as a manufacturing of cotton goods, and yet America has only one city as large as it, and New York, with all its wealth, taste, and reputation, has no public gardens to compare with either of the two which Manchester is provided with. The Belle Vue is the smaller, but the best known of the two gardens. There are excursions, or what we would call excursions, made to it two or

three times a week, from the adjoining towns and counties. It is better known to many English people than Manchester itself is, I am sorry to say.

Belle Vue comprises a museum of curiosities, a menagerie that would not alarm the travelling concerns by that name in America. By the way, I should like to wager that an entire American menagerie, and even scarce the ticket-rat, and then get back for an hour, and then there is a painting of the battle of Waterloo, arranged in terraces, with openings among the imitated hills and ridges for the maneuvering of troops. Opposite this is a stand for the land with flanking galleries capable of seating ten thousand people, and between these galleries and the painting is a platform where three hundred couples can dance at one time. Under the galleries are extensive tea and bar rooms; one of the tea rooms is a sixpence and the other a shilling department, and the shilling parties you go to for tea, a half a dozen slices of bread and butter which were neither cut or spread by a step-mother. The admission is a penny, and many go in for the fun of finding their way out again which in many instances proves a much more difficult job than one would believe. I saw a heavy German and his wife make the attempt. It amused both of them to see how stupid the English were in getting out. For five minutes they kept up a smiling countenance, then their features began to relax and finally they were afraid the man would swallow his own head. The woman at last burst out in tears when one of the "stupid English" took pity and piloted them out. As the sun went down and twilight—that mystic halo which crowns England from the disappearance of the rear part of the day—succeeded, the crowds increased quite visibly, and I am safe to say that ten thousand people were present. Across the glazing plaza rode men mounted in armor, making their way to the mysterious recesses of Waterloo. We went on to the galleries with thousands of others and patiently waited until 10 o'clock, when that hour arrived, the field of Waterloo renewed its carnage and terrific uproar. A balloon shedding innumerable blue lights suddenly started heavenward; rockets, Roman candles, and blue lights flashed forth. The hills and the ridges became alive with cavalry, infantry, and brigadier-generals; cannons and musketry peeled forth their thunders; battle flags waved; music sounded; and the cries of the combatants filled the air. Then a barn in the foreground took fire, and the flames rolled up through the roof, adding their crackling and hissing to the general horror. Charge after charge was made and repulsed; finally the French were driven and then the commencing musketry and musketry became fairly awful, and the scene closed.

All, all for a shilling!

Dear reader, why not come to England.

A TERRIBLE SPECTACLE.
Burning of the Goliath With 400 Boys Aboard.

The London *Daily News* of the 23rd of December gives the following account of the burning of the British training ship *Goliath*: A terrible disaster occurred on the River Thames yesterday morning, the *Goliath*, a school-ship, lying off Grays, and having 400 boys on board, being destroyed by fire. The full extent of the calamity cannot yet be measured, but many of the boys and one of the officers are missing, and are thought either to have been drowned or perished in the flames. The *Goliath* was an iron-sided vessel of battle-ship, which carried eighty guns, with engines of 400-horse power. Some years ago, after laying by in ordinary, she was sent by the Admiralty to the poor law authorities of the metropolis in order to be used for training the poor boys of London for the sea, and was placed for administrative purposes under the care of the managers of the Forest-gate School. She was a large ship of nearly 3,000 tons burden, and lying solitary in the light of the river, she was an object of interest to excursionists on the river. At a few minutes to 8 some were preparing breakfast and others cleaning the ship, while the bulk of the boys were below, many of them undressed. The group-room, in the fore-part of the vessel, was the scene of the outbreak. The lamp, to light the vessel after dark are fed with petroleum oil, and it appears to have been the rule to collect them every morning in the lamp-room for the purpose of having them cleaned and trimmed. It is said that one of the lamps was accidentally dropped by one of the boys, and the petroleum ignited and spread in liquid fire all over the deck. The alarm was instantly given, but so rapid was the spread of the fire that when Captain Bourchier, Royal Navy, the officer in command, was called from his cabin the whole deck was in flames. A terrible scene ensued. The horrified children rushed up from below through the various hatchways, which were with difficulty kept from being choked up by the crowd and struggle. One by one more were swamped, and as many of the lads clinging to the ship were compelled to drop one after another into the water there was ample occupation for the other boats which came to the rescue to pick up those who were swimming or crawling. The ship lay only about a hundred yards from shore, and a good many leaped overboard and swam to land, amongst whom were two young ladies, the daughters of Capt. Bourchier. The boats of the training ships *Arcturion* and *Chelmsford*, lying nearby, came down in a fleet to help, in command of Capt. Walters and several officers, and were instrumental in saving many lives. Capt. Bourchier was the last to leave the burning ship, and it was his belief that all the lads were saved, but there is too much reason to know that he is mistaken, for two bodies have already been washed ashore, and the schoolmaster, Mr. Wheeler, is said to have sunk. As the survivors were taken on shore the people of Grays, a small town of some three hundred inhabitants, turned out en masse to receive them. The school-rooms, places of worship, hotels and private houses were placed at their disposal, while all the coppers and kettles that could be obtained were pressed into service to get breakfast for the four hundred less than those who were missing. Kind-hearted people brought clothing for the half-naked little ones, many of whom were to be seen throughout the day clad in garments of all sizes and of both sexes. An attempt was made to make a muster of the lads in order to find out who were missing, but they were so scattered about the town that the process was unsatisfactory, besides which some were picked up by ships passing up and down the river and carried to unknown destinations, while others, it is believed, have taken advantage of their liberty to abscond, so that it may be some days before the actual results will be known.

The British Big Gun.

Experiments were made with the English big eighty-one ton gun at Woolwich, on December 10th. Six rounds were fired with charges of powder varying in weight from 220 to 240 pounds and with projectiles varying from 1,224 to 1,248 pounds. The sixth and last round was fired with 240 pounds of two-inch powder, with a 1,247 pound shot, and recorded a velocity in the instrument-room of 1,513 feet per second, and a pressure of 23 tons. The scientific manipulation was in many respects in defiance of several recognized laws of gunnery, but with a decided advantage. So far as the new gun has been tried, its success has been greater than was anticipated.

WHATSOEVER YOU DO, do well. The Arkansian man who put thirty-seven bullets into the chest of the man who killed him any more if he had tried at all.

THE STAMMERING FATHER
And the Son who is in Bellevue by Reason of the Parent's Defective Speech.

(From the N. Y. Sun.)

He had been a good-looking young fellow; but as he lay on a bed in Bellevue Hospital, he was a different man. His face was a mass of criss-crossed with adhesive plaster, a clearing had been made in the forest of hair on his head, and his legs were immovably bandaged. His features were immobile by reason of the stiffening patchwork, his mouth was open only half way, and when he talked the unvarying expression of his face was very queer. The surgeon had slightly drawn the muscles on one side of his mouth with the strips of plaster, so that viewed from one standpoint, he smiled blandly; but on the other side the visage was solemn and resentful. His name is John Garland.

"How are you feeling?" asked the house surgeon.

"Just as if my head was as big as a barrel, and almost all of the barrel was head," replied John.

The reporter was standing at John's smiling side, wondering at his good humor; but a change of attitude showed the other half of his face, which seemed much more appropriate to the occasion. He was indeed to tell about the accident which had injured him.

"My father was working up in West Fifty-second street," he said, "blasting out a road. We was to get a cellar cleaned out by spring; so there wasn't no hurry about it. My kind of work was to put in a hole, and get in a blast every two or three days, and draw out the rock and drill the rest of the time. Well, Sunday morning we thought we would go 'round and put in an hour or so, 'cause we'd lost a day for Christmas. I was out on the rock-drilling stone, and the rock was down in the hole. I hadn't no idea what he was up to. You see, he stammers so he can't say much any way, and so as a general thing we don't talk very often. Sometimes he begins to say something, but I wouldn't say anything, 'cause I don't know what he's saying, and he'd talk on till he'd got to a notion to set a blast, but I didn't dream of that. My father was working up in West Fifty-second street, and he was blasting out a road. We was to get a cellar cleaned out by spring; so there wasn't no hurry about it. 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