

# MY POOR WIFE.

BY J. P. SMITH.

## CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

As she looked the prayer for help died on her lips, the tumult in her heart ceased, and she knew Edith's husband was at that moment as safe from molestation from her as if already ten thousand miles of water flowed between them. No impulse urged her as she had feared, to throw herself at his feet and tell him she could never leave him again, that he must give up home and children for her sake. No, she felt she could sit in his presence till morning, watch him playing with his children, chatting familiarly with his so-called wife, and never even wish to claim him as her own, because her love for him was dead. She cared no more for him for whom she had sacrificed her youth, almost her life.

She watched him passing out, followed by his family, then rose with a bewildered gesture, scarcely knowing where she was. She looked at her companion, still sleeping in her corner, from her to Mrs. Dennys, who came flouncing in for the fourth and last time, and who addressed her unceremoniously.

"Oh! Can you tell me, please, if my maid has returned? No? If she does will you tell her the box has been found, and we—" Then the maid appearing, she went on, "Oh, here you are! The box has turned up and we are ready to start at last. Are the children in the landau? I am taking Master Percy in the brougham with me. Be sure to put my dressing-case on the front seat, I think that's all. Oh, if ever I travel with such a nursery again!" she muttered, impatiently fastening on a gauze veil before the glass. "I wonder where Paul is? Does he intend driving in the brougham or landau? I haven't seen—"

"Mr. Dennys, madam, has gone on foot—he said it was such a fine night he would like the walk across the fields."

"Fine night! Why, it is raining hard and blowing almost a gale. Extraordinary idea!"

At last the station was clear of Mrs. Dennys, her nursery, maids and footmen; and Helen, unable to bear the air of the room where so many emotions had been crowded, went out to breathe in the gale.

She hurried along heedless of where she was going, her cumbersome bonnet swinging in her hand, her cloak flying out behind her like a great black wing.

Was she glad or sorry, relieved or disappointed? Had she ever loved him at all, even in those sunny days before she had heard Edith's name? If she had lived out her life in peace by his side, if he had never wanted to desert her, never cared for another, would she in time have come to feel towards him as she had felt at that moment? Would he have fallen by degrees from the pedestal on which she had placed him, or would he have always remained enthroned in her foolish infatuated eyes?

These and a hundred other questions she asked herself vainly, as she hurried through the storm; but she could find no answer, her mind was racked for the moment, the only feeling clear to her was a sense of self-pity and contempt for the years she had wasted in futile anguish.

Even now the tempter whispered, was it too late? After all she was only twenty-six—years of youth lay before her if she wished. Why not coax fire and life back to her dimmed eyes, paint her pale cheeks, let her dark hair grow, and taste pleasure after her long fast therefrom? Why not bring men to her feet, shallow faithless men, as she had done before—make other wives weep as she had wept? Surely she had endured enough already; was there sense in donning sackcloth and ashes to the end, denying herself constantly, living in the midst of misery, disease and death, when she had been no wilful sinner, but one who had been sinned against from the beginning?

Thus cynically musing, she leaned over the bridge under which she had once passed, fighting unconsciously for the life she had longed to destroy, and peered into the dark water.

"What a fool I was—that a wild mad fool," she laughed bitterly; "and my mother before me! Only there was no turning back for you, poor mother—no turning back for you!"

With a shudder she passed aimlessly on, her short hair blowing about her face, and went into the churchyard again. She paused among the heads; then, turning down the side path that led to the cross, the moon shone full for a moment upon the dreary spot, and she distinctly saw the figure of a man stretched face downwards on her grave, and that man was Edith's husband.

With a stifled scream, her hands instinctively flying to her face, she started back, and Paul, looking up, saw her. She heard his voice upraised in a loud cry—a cry that went to her heart like a knife and sent every nerve in her body quivering with a fierce pain of old, which she had believed stilled forever; one second's scared inaction and the next she was across the churchyard, flying as if for her life.

Soon she heard his voice, then footsteps following eagerly. Redoubling her speed she struggled on, knocking

against headstones and cypresses, stumbling over the low grassy mounds that covered the nameless dead, longing for some grave to open and engulf her, for the suffocating waters to close round her again and bear her out of reach of him, whom she, alas, still loved better than her own life or her eternal welfare, whose peace, home, happiness she was about to destroy forever.

Her breath came in panting gasps, the ground surged under her feet. Nearer and nearer came the pursuing sounds, and clearer the entreating voice. Unless the moon would slip behind that bank of heavy cloud, towards which it was traveling, oh, so slowly, and enable her to drop into the ditch that lined the churchyard in three more strides, she felt that all was lost, the purpose of her seven years' struggle in vain—in vain—oh, worse than a thousand times in vain, she knew!

It was. She never reached the sheltering ditch, his hand fell heavily upon her shoulder, and, with a moan of despair, the poor soul dropped to the ground and lay at his feet cowering and whimpering in the wet grass like a frightened child.

After a short silent struggle he lifted her up and plucked her hands from her face.

"It is you—you!" he cried. "Helen, my wife, oh heaven!"

The moon just grazing the murky mass of vapor, covered them in her own white glare. Helen, numb with horror, looked at him whom a short half hour before she had seen in the bloom of prosperous comely prime, now changed—changed into a haggard, storm-beaten aged man, with dimmed heavy eyes, worn wistful face, and hair plentifully sprinkled with grey, robbed of youth, health, hope, peace, by that moment's glance at her.

At this piteous sight love rose in arms, quickened her fainting soul, and roused her numbed limbs to resistance. She struggled and shook him off fiercely.

"Who—who are you? How dare you—you touch me? What do you mean? Are you—you mad or—tipsy, to assault a harmless stranger like that? I—I—"

"Helen, Helen," he exclaimed, in a sighing whisper—"oh Helen!"

She stammered, stopped, swayed irresolutely, then burst out violently—

"Helen! Why do you call me that? I—I am not Helen. She—she was drowned seven years ago in that water. You know it—you know it as well as I. You must be—must be mad! Oh, go back—go back, I tell you, to your wife, your children, your home—go, let me depart."

"I have no home, no children, no wife but you."

His arms were round her, pinioning her tightly to her side, his hot breath fanning her face.

"Liar!" she panted, pushing his lips from hers. "Liar! I saw you, not an hour ago, at the station with her, your children in your arms—I heard you—"

"You saw my brother, Arthur, with his children and wife, to whom he has been married for the last ten years—not me. Helen, my wife, love of my life, how could you treat me so—how?" he asked, tears choking his voice.

"Your brother, Arthur, and his wife—not you—not you!" she murmured dizzily, and closed her eyes. "I think—I think—I knew it all along. Oh, I think I knew it wasn't you!"

## CHAPTER XVIII.

He took her to a little quiet village within sound of the sea, she loved so well, and then by strict medical injunctions, kept from her all subjects likely to disturb or agitate her mind. It was no difficult task; she never once alluded to the past, or showed any anxiety to learn the history of the seven years they had spent apart—a blissful lethargy came over her, and the mere fact of living, of being together again, was sufficient for her. She wanted no explanation, no mutual confession, no explanation, no mutual confession, no cursing back into the land of trouble and sorrow she had left, he assured her, behind forever. But it was different with him. Jealousy even in the supreme moment of his happiness was already gnawing at his heart and he knew he could not live with her in peace and let those seven years sleep.

One day, about a week after their reunion, she was well enough to take a little turn on the shore; the soft salt breeze blowing in her face brought there a tinge of returning health and youth that tempted him to make an effort to recall the past. She looked at him with mournful eyes, then said with peevish petulance—

"What—can you not let me be, Paul? I am alive and happy now—why drag me back to death and torment? I want to forget it all—"

"And so do I," he answered eagerly; "but I cannot, I cannot, my wife, if you will not speak. Men are different from women, and, if I do not know how and where you spent those seven years, they will poison my peace until the day I die. Tell me now, and I will forget them, put them from me after this hour, no matter what—what you tell me."

She sighed restlessly, then spoke,

"So be it. The first three years after I left home, I—I spent, Paul, in—in a—" She stopped, her eyes fell, she slipped her little wasted hand wistfully into his.

"Go on," he said hoarsely. "You—you have begun; I must hear all now. You spent in a—"

"Lunatic asylum, a pauper lunatic asylum outside London."

"My darling! Oh, my poor darling!" he cried, covering her hand with kisses, in a burst of compassion and relief. "Our—our little son was born there," she continued softly, after a slight pause, "and after a few weeks of life went peacefully to Heaven. He—he was a nice little child, they told me, Paul, with fair hair like yours, and very dark eyes. I—I don't remember him at all; but they kept me this lock of his hair; it's pretty and soft, isn't it? Poor little mite! I never gave him a thought or a tear; he was as well without, I dare say."

"The night you left me you went straight to—the asylum?" he prompted, after a long pause, during which they had sat with trembling hands close clasped.

"No, no, to the river—to the river," she answered quickly and feverishly, a bright spot burning on her cheek. "I was mad, you know, quite—quite mad, though I knew what I—I was trying to do, and remembered it afterwards. You got my letter? You heard you—how they all deceived you—yes?" She paused to take breath, then went on quickly as if she were repeating a lesson she loathed, but was forced to say—

"I wanted to kill myself and end it all—I saw no harm. I jumped off the first bridge above the churchyard where the water was deep, and the weight of my clothes kept me under until I was half drowned; then nature asserted itself. I could swim, you know, in the wildest seas, and, no longer able to bear the agony of suffocation even in my madness, I struck out for the bank, and then I suppose—for I remember nothing clearly after that—wandered aimlessly across the country all night and next day. I was taken up as a homeless vagrant, lodged in a poor-house, and thence sent to the asylum, where after a couple of years memory by degrees came back to me."

(To be Continued.)

## "COLD" ICE HIS SPECIALTY.

Peculiar Cry Adopted by an Itinerant Vendor of Chicago.

From Chicago Democrat: "It is queer what devices men will resort to in order to sell their wares," said a well known man about town yesterday. "Advertising is quite a science these days, but a friend of mine from the south side tells a good yarn of an ice dealer. This dealer was one of those wanderers who have a few pounds of ice in a spring wagon and who have no regular customers. They haunt the alleys on hot days bawling their wares after the 'regulars' have made their rounds. They pick up quite a few nickels in the course of a day. It was one of the hottest days of the late fall, a Sunday, and the regular wagons had long since retired for the day. My friend was about half out of ice and placed his fate in the hands of the peripatetics. He was on watch to nail the first one who came along. He has a keen sense of fun and enjoyed the sport. Finally, when he had about given up, he heard the long and eagerly wished-for cry. An iceman was progressing down the alley. My friend went forth, waited and was rewarded. The dealer was a colored man who was earnestly appealing for all to buy. 'Ice!' he bawled, looking about as his nag moved slowly along. 'Ice, cold ice!' 'What kind of ice is that?' asked my friend, dubiously. 'Cold ice, sir; it's the coldest in town.' 'Well, I'd take some if I wasn't afraid the heat would spoil it,' was the retort, as my friend turned to re-enter the house. The colored man looked after him in amazement, but made no reply. He proceeded on his rounds, but changed his cry, for he seemed to fear the coldness would prove a hoodoo instead of a blessing."

## Plants Killed by Heat.

The ordinary furnace-heated house is a bad place in which to grow plants. The air seems to have had all the dampness removed, and that moist condition so conducive to a good growth in plants is not found. This may in a measure be overcome by means of evaporation, which, while not supplying a great amount of moisture, should do something toward relieving the bad condition of the atmosphere. Place jars or pans of water in, around or about the furnace, hang buckets of water down inside the furnace pipes, below the registers, or place them anywhere that rapid evaporation may be induced. Keep all the plants in light, airy locations, but away from drafts. Never consign a well-grown specimen palm to a corner of the room, though it may look better there. Its beautiful appearance will last a short time only in the dark, close place. It may seem strange to some, but the very best place in the house, if the temperature can there be maintained at an even point, is the kitchen, because of the constant evaporation of the water as it puffs forth from the spout of the tea as it puffs forth from the mouth of the teakettle.

## Bravery.

Watts—I noticed a photograph of a wildcat not long ago, taken just when the beast was about to spring at the photographer. Potts—That is nothing. Peck has a snapshot he took of his wife as she was coming at him with a kettle of hot water.—Indianapolis Journal.

## TALMAGE'S SERMON.

### "A GREAT WOMAN." LAST SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

From the Text, "Elisha Passed to Shunem, Where Was a Great Woman"—2 Kings, Chapter iv., Verse Number 8—Lodging a Christian Prophet.

The hotel of our time had no counterpart in any entertainment of olden time. The vast majority of travelers must then be entertained at private abode. Here comes Elisha, a servant of the Lord, on a divine mission, and he must find shelter. A balcony overlooking the valley of Esdraion is offered him, in a private house, and it is especially furnished for his occupancy—a chair to sit on, a table from which to eat, a candlestick, by which to read, and a bed on which to slumber, the whole establishment belonging to a great and good woman. Her husband, it seems, was a goodly man, but he was entirely overshadowed by his wife's excellences; just as now you sometimes find in a household the wife the center of dignity and influence and power, not by any arrogance or presumption, but by superior intellect and force of moral nature wielding domestic affairs and at the same time supervising all financial and business affairs. The wife's hand on the shuttle, or the banking-house, or the worldly business. You see hundreds of men who are successful only because there is a reason at home why they are successful. If a man marry a good, honest soul, he makes his fortune. If he marry a fool, the Lord help him! The wife may be the silent partner in the firm, there may be only masculine voices down on exchange, but there oftentimes comes from the home circle a potential and elevating influence. This woman of my text was the superior of her husband. He, as far as I can understand, was what we often see in our day, a man of large fortune and only a modicum of brain, intensely quiet, sitting a long while in the same place without moving hand or foot, if you say "Yes," responding "Yes;" if you say "No," responding "No"—inane, eyes half-shut, mouth wide open, maintaining his position in society only because he has a large patrimony. But his wife, my text says, was a great woman. Her name has not come down to us. She belonged to that collection of people who need no name to distinguish them. What would title of duchess, or princess, or queen—what would escutcheon or gleaming diadem be to this woman of my text, who, by her intelligence and her behavior, challenges the admiration of all ages? Long after the brilliant women of the court of Louis XV. have been forgotten, and the brilliant women who sat on the throne of Russia have been forgotten, some grand-father will put on his spectacles, and holding the book of the other side the light, read to his grandchildren the story of this great woman of Shunem who was so kind and courteous and Christian to the good prophet Elisha. Yes, she was a great woman.

In the first place, she was great in her hospitalities. Uncivilized and barbarous nations have this virtue. Jupiter had the surname of the Hospitable, and he was said especially to avenge the wrongs of strangers. Homer extolled it in his verse. The Arabs are punctilious on this subject, and among some of their tribes it is not until the ninth day of tarrying that the occupant has a right to ask his guest "Who and whence art thou?" If this virtue is so honored among barbarians, how ought it to be honored among those of us who believe in the Bible, which commands us to use hospitality one toward another without grudging?

Of course I do not mean under this cover to give any idea that I approve of that vagrant class who go around from place to place, ranging their whole lifetime, perhaps under the auspices of some benevolent or philanthropic society, quartering themselves on Christian families with a great pile of trunks in the hall and carpet-bag portentous of tarrying. There is many a country parsonage that looks out week by week upon the ominous arrival of wagon with creaking wheel and lank horse and dilapidated driver, come under the auspices of some charitable institution to spend a few weeks and canvass the neighborhood. Let no such religious tramps take advantage of this beautiful virtue of Christian hospitality. Not so much the sumptuousness of your diet and the regality of your abode will impress the friend or the stranger that steps across your threshold as the warmth of your reception, the reiteration by grasp and by look and by a thousand attentions, insignificant attentions, of your earnestness of welcome. There will be high appreciation of your welcome, though you have nothing but the brazen candlestick and the plain chair to offer Elisha when he comes to Shunem. Most beautiful is this grace of hospitality when shown in the house of God. I am thankful that I have always been pastor of churches where strangers are welcome. But I have entered churches where there was no hospitality. A stranger would stand in the vestibule for a while and then make a pilgrimage up the long aisle. No door opened to him until, flushed and excited and embarrassed, he started back again, and, coming to some half-filled pew, with apologetic air, entered it, while the occupant glared on him with a look which seemed to say, "Well, if I must, I must." Away with such accursed indelicacy from the house of God. Let every church that would maintain large Christian influence in community culture Sabbath by Sabbath this beautiful grace of Christian hospitality.

Again, this woman of my text was great in her kindness toward God's messenger. Elisha may have been a

stranger in that household, but as she found out he had come on a divine mission, he was cordially welcomed. We have a great many books in our day about the hardships of ministers and the trials of Christian ministers. I wish somebody would write a book about the joys of the Christian minister, about the sympathies all around about him, about the kindness, about the genial considerations of him. Does sorrow come to our home, and is there a shadow on the cradle, there are hundreds of hands to help, and many who weary not through the night watching, and hundreds of prayers going up that God would restore the sick. Is there a burning, brimming cup of calamity placed on the pastor's table; are there not many to help him drink that cup and who will not be comforted because he is stricken? Oh! for somebody to write a book about the rewards of the Christian ministry—about his surroundings of Christian sympathy. This woman of the text was only a type of thousands of men and women who come down from mansion and from cot to do kindness to the Lord's servants. I could tell you of something that you might think a romance. A young man graduated from New Brunswick Theological Seminary was called to a village church. He had not the means to furnish the parsonage. After three or four weeks of preaching a committee of the officers of the church waited on him and told him he looked tired and thought he had better take a vacation of a few days. The young pastor took it as an intimation that his work was done or not acceptable. He took the vacation, and at the end of a few days came back, when an old elder said: "Here is the key of the parsonage. We have been cleaning it up. You had better go up and look at it." So the young pastor took the key, went up to the parsonage, opened the door, and lo! it was carpeted, and there was the hot-rack all ready for the canes and the umbrellas and the overcoats, and on the left hand of the hall was the parlor, sofaed, chaired, pictured. He passed on to the other side of the hall, and there was the study-table in the center of the floor with stationery upon it, book-shelves built, long ranges of new volumes far beyond the reach of the means of the young pastor, many of these volumes. The young pastor went up-stairs, and found all the sleeping apartments furnished; came down-stairs and entered the pantry, and there were the spices and the coffees and the sugars, and the groceries for six months. He went down into the cellar, and there was the coal for all the coming winter. He went into the dining-hall, and there was the table already set—the glass and the silverware. He went into the kitchen, and there were all the culinary implements and a great stove. The young pastor lifted one lid of the stove and he found the fuel all ready for ignition. Putting back the cover of the stove, he saw in another part of it a lucifer match, and all that young man had to do in starting to keep house was to strike the match.

Where are the feet that have not been blistered on the hot sands of this great Sahara? Where are the soldiers that have not bent under the burden of grief? Where is the ship sailing over glassy sea that has not after awhile been caught in a cyclone? Where is the garden of earthly comfort but trouble hath hatched up its fiery and panting team, and gone through it with burning plowshare of disaster? Under the pelting of ages of suffering the great heart of the world has burst with woe. Navigators tell us about the rivers, and the Amazon, and the Danube, and the Mississippi have been explored; but who can tell the depth or the length of the great river of sorrow, made up of tears and blood, rolling through all lands and all ages, bearing the wreck of families, and of communities, and of empires, foaming, writhing, boiling with agonies of six thousand years. Etna, Cotopaxi and Vesuvius have been described, but who has ever sketched the volcano of suffering retching up from its depths the lava and scoria, and pouring them down the sides to whelm the nations? Oh! if I could gather all the heartstrings, the broken heartstrings, into a harp, I would play on it a dirge such as was never sounded. Mythologists tell us of Gorgon and Centaur and Titan, and geologists tell us of extinct species of monsters; but greater than Gorgon or Megatherium, and not belonging to the realm of fable, and not of an extinct species, a monster with an iron jaw and a hundred iron hoofs has walked across the nations, and history and poetry and sculpture, in their attempt to sketch it and describe it, have seemed to sweat great drops of blood. But thank God there are those who can conquer as this woman of the text conquered, and say, "It is well; though my property be gone, though my children be gone, though my home be broken up, though my health be sacrificed, it is well, it is well!" There is no storm on the sea but Christ is ready to rise in the hinder part of the ship and hush it. There is no darkness but the constellation of God's eternal love can illumine it, and through the winter comes out of the northern sky, you have sometimes seen that northern sky all ablaze with auroras which seem to say, "Come up this way; up this way are thrones of light and seas of sapphire and the splendor of an eternal heaven. Come up this way."

We may, like the ships, by tempest be tossed On perilous deeps, but cannot be lost; Though Satan engage the wind and the tide The promise assures us, the Lord will provide. Again, this woman of my text was great in her application to domestic

duties. Every picture is a home picture, whether she is entertaining an Elisha, or whether she is giving careful attention to her sick boy, or whether she is appealing for the restoration of her property. Every picture in her case is one of domesticity. Those are not disciples of this Shunemite woman who, going out to attend to outside charities, neglect the duty of home—the duty of wife, of mother, of daughter. No faithfulness in public beneficence can ever atone for domestic negligence. There has been many a mother who by indefatigable toil has reared a large family of children, equipping them for the duties of life with good manners and large intelligence and Christian principle, starting them out, who has done more for the world than many a woman whose name has sounded through all the lands and through the centuries. I remember when Kossuth was in this country, there were some ladies who got honorable reputations by presenting him very gracefully with bouquets of flowers on public occasions; but what was all that compared with the plain Hungarian mother who gave to truth and civilization and the cause of universal liberty a Kossuth? Yes, this woman of my text was great in her simplicity. When this prophet wanted to reward her for her hospitality by asking some preferment from the king, what did she say? She declined it. She said: "I dwell among my own people," as much as to say, "I am satisfied with my lot; all I want is my family and my friends around me; I dwell among my own people."

What I want to impress upon you, my hearers, is that you ought not to inventory the luxuries of life among the indispensables, and you ought not to depreciate this woman of the text, who, when offered kingly preferment, responded: "I dwell among my own people." Yea, this woman of the text was great in her piety. Just read the chapter after you go home. Faith in God, and she was not ashamed to talk about it before idolaters. Ah, woman will never appreciate what she owes to Christianity until she knows and sees the degradation of her sex under paganism and Mohammedanism. Her very birth considered a misfortune. Sold like cattle on the shambles. Slave of all work, and, at last, her body fuel for the funeral pyre of her husband. Above the shriek of the fire-worshippers in India, and above the rumbling of the Juggernauts, I hear the million-voiced groan of wronged, insulted, broken-hearted, down-trodden woman. Her tears have fallen in the Nile and Tigris, the La Plata, and on the steppes of Tartary. She has been dishonored in Turkish garden and Persian palace and Spanish Alhambra. Her little ones have been sacrificed in the Indus and the Ganges. There is not a groan, or a dungeon, or an island, or a mountain, or a river, or a lake, or a sea but could tell a story of the outrages heaped upon her. But thanks to God this glorious Christianity comes forth, and all the chains of this vassalage are snapped, and she rises from ignominy to exalted sphere and becomes the affectionate daughter, the gentle wife, the honored mother, the useful Christian. Oh! if Christianity has done so much for woman, surely woman will become its most ardent advocate and its sublimest exemplification.

## Christmas Day.

For 1,400 years Dec. 25 has been set apart by Christendom as the day on which shall be celebrated, with devotional exercises and great rejoicing, the birth of Jesus Christ. Learned men have disagreed for centuries regarding the actual day, or even season, that the Savior was born, but custom has fixed upon our "Christmases" as the "birthday."

With the spread of Christianity this greatest of all Christian holidays took the place of more ancient festivals. The Romans had long celebrated June 21, the longest day in the year, as a midsummer festival, or "Saturnalia." Then the masters served the servants and the Romans gave themselves up to feasting and revelry and misrule generally. From this celebration many of our Christmas customs took their origin—the custom of decking the houses with laurels and evergreens, the custom of giving presents and the practice of engaging in lively games and sports.

In the north of Europe semi-barbarous peoples kindled huge bonfires in honor of the gods Odin and Thor, and the Druids gathered mistletoe, then a sacred plant, particularly if found growing on the oak. These customs were adopted as part of the Christmas celebration. The early Goths and Saxons celebrated Dec. 21, the shortest day of the year, as the time when the sun ceased to look coldly upon the earth, and when the days began to lengthen with the approach of spring. Then was cut the "yule log"—for the season was called Yule, or Yuletide. In later years the yule log was placed on the hearth on Christmas eve and allowed to burn till bedtime. Then it was carefully pulled out of the coals and placed in the cellar for use in lighting the yule log of the following year. It was believed that the preservation of this charred log protected the house from fire during the subsequent year. In this custom originated the one of preparing the Christmas yule log, so popular in England.

So, when you play "snapdragon" and a host of other Christmas games, or if you act with unusual license under the mistletoe, or sit around the yule log and tell hobgoblin tales while the corn pops and the coal cracks, you may remember that you are doing somewhat as did the old Romans, and as did the barbarous nations of the north long before Christ was born.