APRIL TO MAY.

I am speeding away;
So, my fair daughter May,
The earth will soon be in your keeping.
You'll find everything new
And in very good form,—
In the air stores of dew,
And the winds softly warm
To coax up the crocuses, peeping.

You will find the hills green,
And in valleys between
Wild violets telling the story
Of how I caressed them
With sun waves and shower,
And fed them and dressed them,—
Yes, every small flower
That smiles in its blue-purple glory.

And my dearest child May,
If you find things delay—
Like buds, which oft linger brown-coated—
Do not worry or fret,
But wait gently awhile;
That a frown never yet
Did the work of a smile
Is something I often have noted.

—*June Ellis Joy, in St. Nicholas.*

My Pre-Existence.

BY HENRY O'NEILL.

It was an afternoon of fog and slush and bitter cold. My business led me through Leicester square. I passed the Alhambra Theater, and entered the shop of a dealer in foreign stamps, coins, and other curiosities. On concluding my business with him, I was about to depart, when a man came in at the front door and passed me, as if about to enter by the door at the back of the shop leading to the private part of the house. A lodger, I concluded, as I turned up the collar of my coat previous to sallying forth into the fog.

Before I had crossed the threshold a hand was laid upon my arm, and a low, rich, and eloquent voice said:

"Pardon me, young sir, but we must have met before. You are Crito."

I confess I felt not only astonishment, but alarm at this address, and turned suddenly to see what manner of a man had spoken to me. There was no appearance of insanity in that well-formed, intellectual face, with the most remarkable pair of eyes I had ever seen. They seemed to look me through and through, and to hold me, in spite of myself, as the eyes of the Ancient Mariner held the wedding guest.

"You are mistaken, sir," I replied; "I am not Crito. My name is Henry O'Neill, at your service," and I took out my card-case.

He waved away the card I offered him a little impatiently, I thought, as he said:

"Alas! alas! that the bonds of the flesh so bind down the majority of mankind; but for these we should indeed be as gods. My good sir, I knew you intimately—let me see—yes, in Athens, three hundred and thirty-five years before the birth of Christ."

That I had met a madman I had now no doubt. I turned to the shopman, who might have heard the conversation.

There was nothing to alarm me in his face. He merely smiled serenely, as if the meeting with a stranger who claimed to know one over two thousand years ago was a matter of every day occurrence.

The stranger, too, smiled when I again looked at him, not as a madman would smile, but pityingly, I fancied.

"We cannot converse here, my dear friend, for I must so call you. Will you do me the favor to step up stairs into my sitting-room, where I can explain how I know you and give you a glimpse of your former life, which ought above all things to interest you."

Without waiting for a reply, he opened the door at the back of the shop, and began to ascend a flight of stairs which a gaslight in the passage revealed. I turned to the shopman and spoke in a low agitated voice, for I was greatly agitated by curiosity and doubt.

"Is he a little deranged?" I asked.

"No, sir," he replied, with a stare of surprise. "Why, every body knows him; he is professor of languages in ——"

I knew him well by reputation, a wonderful linguist, a Grecian among Grecians, an old Roman, an Assyrian, an Egyptian, a decipherer of ancient hieroglyphic inscriptions. I shall not give his real name at present, for it would be a breach of confidence, and many persons might brand a clever man a madman, as I did on the first impulse. I followed him to his sitting-room on the first floor. It was comfortable, if not luxuriously, furnished. A fire leaped and flamed in the low, wide grate, and the curtains were drawn closely over the pair of windows.

With a motion he invited me to be seated. I obeyed, and waited for my companion to speak. He had fixed his eyes on the fire, and seemed to forget my presence. I studied his features closely—the straight nose, the well-shaped, firm mouth, the flowing, silvery beard, and the hair parted in the middle of his head and falling on his coat collar. As I gazed a wonderful sensation came over me. I felt as if I had known that face always, as if it was linked in my memory with my father and mother, sister and brother; as if, in short, I had grown up with it before and around me through all my short life, for I am scarcely twenty-two. He looked up suddenly, and I blushed.

"Your old trick, Crito—blushing like a school girl."

"Sir," I stammered, "you confuse and bewilder me. Many would believe you were mad, but I—I seem to have caught the infection, if it be madness, for I fancied just now that I had known you all my life."

"Yes, yes; it could not be otherwise, Crito," he said eagerly, "You know what Lord Tennyson says of this feeling:

As when with downcast eyes we muse and brood
And ebb into a former life, or seem
To lapse far back into a confused dream
To states of mystical similitude;
If one but speaks, or hems, or stirs in his chair,
Even the wonder waxeth more and more,
So that we say, 'All this hath been before,
All this hath been, I know not when or where.'

"Sir Walter Scott was also a believer in the fact of pre-existence. All men of great soul—men who have little of the animal nature—believe in it, because they feel it. The individual soul passes through many prison-houses. Man's soul dies, alas! when he is born, and is emancipated when the body dies, but to be imprisoned again and again. Think not, young man, that this fact overturns Christianity. It is rather a key to the many mysteries of Providence which we cannot comprehend. What does Plato tell us?—that 'all knowledge is recollection.' Pythagoras believed in the doctrine; and Southey, Lord Lytton, and Milton also subscribed to it. But pardon me; it is not to convert you that I invited you here, but to try an experiment."

"Excuse me interrupting you," I said; "but how is it that you recognize in me one you knew in a state of pre-existence two thousand years ago?"

"The question is a natural one, and very easy to answer. You are at present a journalist—that is how you make your living. But there is something you love—something to which you devote every spare moment of your time."

"That is quite true, sir," I stammered; "but it is a secret. No one knows of my fancy."

"And that fancy, as you call it, is a love for astronomy. Am I not right?"

"Quite right," I replied in amazement. "I am passionately fond of astronomy."

"Just so. You were the same when I called you Crito, when you lived at Athens. The expression on your face, in your eyes, is the same as it was then. Your present body resembles the one you wore as Crito more in expression than in form. That is how I recognized you. And now I want to repeat all I remember concerning you. It is a repetition of how they used to bring up children in Athens, and may serve you to turn an honest penny in an article."

He smiled, and again I found myself blushing, for that idea had naturally enough entered my mind. He continued:

"For the first five years of your life you were allowed to grow without any attempt at educating you, except a slight punishment for faults might be so-called, nor were you permitted to keep the company of the slaves and servants. Before the age of seven your father secured to you the privilege of a citizen, enrolling you by the name of Crito in the public register, called in Athens 'the archives of the curia.' I dwelt near the Temple of Theseus. I had been a pupil of Plato, and to my school were you sent. The laws of Athens ordered schools to be opened at sunrise and closed at sunset. I taught you the form and value of letters; I taught you to trace those I formed on tablets with your stylus. I gave due attention to your punctuation. We read the 'Fables of Æsop' together; you learned to enumerate the troops who went to the siege of Troy, and thus became familiar with the names of the most ancient families in Greece. I was careful to instil pure pronunciation; to cultivate that melody and cadence in your voice which gave such sweetness and charm to Athenian orators. You were not only taught to sing with expression, but to accompany your voice on the lyre. You were taught arithmetic, not for the purpose of commerce, but to enlarge the powers of your mind and prepare it for the reception of geometry and astronomy. Geometry, it was supposed, would aid you when you led an army to battle; in placing your troops, and conducting sieges scientifically. Astronomy was taught you simply to prevent you being alarmed at the natural phenomena of the heavens. This science altogether absorbed you, however.

"Your father believed that it was better for you to remain ignorant of the many things rather than have you acquire so much as to form a confused jumble in your mind, and he insisted that you should be taught only that which would prove eventually useful. You were taught to dance, to swim, to ride.

"One day you put a question to me which proved that your mind was opening rapidly."

" 'Master, by what criterion should I judge the merit of a book?' you asked. Aristotle happened to be present in the school, and he replied, 'When the author has said everything he ought, nothing superfluous, and says what he does say as he ought, you will surely find merit in his book.' I encouraged in you the propensity of virtue by accustoming you to virtuous actions, so that any other course would bring you real misery. I taught you that beauty of person and inherited riches might belong to you, but were not part of you. Your soul, possessing the divine light of wisdon, was entirely yours; and this light, fanned into a flame by cultivation, would lead you to the source of all truth and light. I taught you that you should aim at distinguishing yourself—not for the empty applause of the multitude, but for the approval of that tribunal feared by all men before which we all shall stand one day to render account for the deeds done in our lives. I did my duty to you honestly; the result I left to the gods.

"On reaching your eighteenth year you were enrolled in the militia, and solemnly swore in the temple to sacrifice your life rather than quit any post assigned you, and to aim at the good of your country before your own. For a year you underwent the usual discipline with the other youths, and regularly mounted guard. At the end of the first year of trial you presented yourself with your companions in the theater, where you were publicly praised for your conduct, and received your lance and shield.

"On the death of your father you were appointed to the magistracy, but you refused the appointment, and being your own master now, you determined to devote your life to your favorite study of astronomy. I advised you against it, but you were persistent. You made the acquaintance of Euclid, and became his disciple. He gave you all the knowledge he had gained from the Egyptians and the Chaldeans, adding the fruits of his own observations. He taught you to divide the day into twelve parts, varying in length according to the different seasons. These parts were marked on dials for each month, with the length of the shadow corresponding to each. The shade of the gnomon corresponded to the hands of our clocks and watches, as it was usual to ask, 'What shade is it?' or to send our slaves to consul the public dial. Euclid taught you the use of the celestial planisphere, on which you learned to know the principal stars, the motions of the sun and moon and the five planets. But after long wanderings in the sky, and after you had learned all your master could teach you, your craving for more light grew insatiable. You would fathom infinity. You sought for truth, and strove to discover it by means of abstract ideas taken from the wretched heap of errors and contradictions misnamed philosophy, and wanting in that power of true philosophy, which, discerning the point where mystery begins and where reason must yield to faith, reveres the mystery. Unsatisfied and craving, you sought the oracles. At your request, I accompanied you to the cave of Trophonius, one of the most celebrated of the oracles.

"It comes before my mind now as if only yesterday we had made the journey. We crossed the hill of Helicon, where the plants were so health-giving that in eating of them the very serpents were said to lose their venom. We slept one night at the Hamlet of Asera, the country of Hesiod, and on the following morning we passed through the grove sacred to the Musos, where the statues, carved in pure marble, were to be seen. Tripods of bronze, upon which perfumes were burnt, were also plentiful, dedicated by those who had been victors in music to their inspiring muse. We reached the mouth of the cavern, which appeared like a sort of vestibule surrounded with balustrades of white marble, with here and there brass oblisks upon them. From this vestibule we entered a grotto hewn out of the solid rock, eight cubits high and four wide. Here I was not permitted to accompany you farther, for here the entrance to the mysterious cave of Trophonius once stood.

"You bade me farewell for the time, and descended by a ladder; at its foot you passed through a narrow aperture, feet foremost, and then you were hurried on with the speed of lightning to the bottom of the cavern, where were two famous fountains—one named Lethe, which effaces the memory of all your former life, and the other Mnemosyne, which for ever fixes on the mind whatever is to be seen or heard in the dread cavern. You refused to drink of Lethe, but took of Mnemosyne, so you told me on your return; but what you saw you would not reveal, even to me.

"A settled melancholy seemed to have fallen upon you; you avoided society, and after vainly endeavoring to restore you to your former self, I saw you, with regret, flee from the world and take up your abode in a cavern, cut out of a rock, a short distance from Athens. Here you lived and studied, attended only by a faithful slave, who had waited upon you from your youth up. Your friends supposed you would soon tire of this manner of life, but they were mistaken. For five years you persisted in it, and became every year more fond of solitude.

"One morning—how well I recollect it!—your slave entered the city, beating his breast and throwing dust upon his head. I felt that some calamity had happened, and rushing from my house, I questioned him of his master. With some difficulty I extracted the facts from him. It seemed that you had frequent conversations in an unknown tongue with some mysterious stranger, who would appear when you made certain cabalistic signs, and who would vanish without using the door of the cavern as a means of exit. The slave was too docile and obedient to question the will of his master, although he lived in mortal fear of the strange visitant. Late on the night previously you summoned this familiar spirit, and he stayed so long the slave fell asleep and slept till dawn. On awaking he found all that remained of his master,—a pair of sandals, a gold-embroidered tunic and a heap of ashes.

"There was a strong smell of burning in the cave when I entered, an hour later, and the slave insisted that there had been no fire, but simply the oil lamp, which still burned freely.

"The Athenian magistrates caused a strict investigation to be made, for you were a wealthy man, and highly connected. I aided the unfortunate slave to escape, for I feared that suspicion might ultimately fall upon him and in my soul I believed his story implicitly."

He thereupon paused, evidently overcome and exhausted.

"I thank you for your information as to my life so many years ago," I said. "But even although it seems to me the echo of one vivid dream, what good can it possibly do me to know it?"

"That is not the true Crito who speaks, he replied. "In your soul you are eager to swallow my words; they fill your mind with a thousand fancies; through these my hopes may be realized, for he is a wise man who can decide what is fact and what is fancy. You may be able to recall what took place in the cave of Trophonius—what that familiar spirit revealed to you. Perchance you may again be able to command him to your aid."

"Ah, if that were only possible," I said with a sigh, "and by so doing I did not peril my immortal soul, willingly would I summon a spirit to aid me in unfolding mysteries and bewilderments. The more I know of astronomy, the more I feel my ignorance, my littleness."

"Come to me again, if you wish," said this old acquaintance, rising to his feet. "Think over what I have told you, dream of it, and should any light penetrate your mind, any memory of your former self return upon your soul, come to me. I will aid you, not for a purely unselfish motive, but for me to put the fact of pre-existence beyond a doubt in the eyes of those disposed to cavil, for in the mouth of two or three witnesses is a truth established."

I again thanked him for his communication, and bowed myself out.

As I plodded through the slush, my eyes smarting with the dense, smoky fog, I asked myself if I had fallen asleep somehow on my feet and dreamt it all, or if I had just passed through a sober reality. Evidently I had spent a much longer period than I thought possible in listening to the craze of an undoubtedly clever man; for I had not read that "genius is to madness close allied?"

I missed my train and had a weary wait at the station. At length I was off, and reached my home in the suburbs. After partaking of a light supper I retired for the night. It is not at all unnatural or surprising that I should repeat the whole story told me of myself in a dream; but I think it rather curious that in my dream I acted and spoke as an Athenian child, and I knew my master as Isocrates. But on awaking, I felt convinced that he had not mentioned his name in the course of the story.

An Egyptian Funeral

A funeral in Egypt is, indeed, a strange sight, and the first one the visitor sees astonishes very much. At the head of the procession march a corporate body of the blind and a certain number of men, who proceed at quick step, singing a most jubilant air, while swinging themselves from right to left. Behind them comes the funeral car, or rather a sort of bier, bearing a great red shawl, in which the body is deposited. At the extremity of the bier, on a perch, is placed the turban or the tarbouche of the defunct. Two men carry this bier. They follow with such high spirits the movements of the head of the cortege that the corpse, rocked in every direction, seems to jump under the shawl that shrouds it. The women bring up the rear, some on asses, some on foot. The first row is formed of weepers or rather screamers, who send forth toward heaven at each step the shrillest notes. The weepers hold in their hand a handkerchief, with which they are not solicitous of wiping their eyes perfectly dry, but which they pull by the two ends behind the head with a gesture that would be desperate if it were not droll. On arrival at the cemetery they take the corpse from the bier to cast it, such as it is, into the grave. The grand funerals, however, take place with much more solemnity. An important personage is hardly dead in Egypt before his friends and acquaintances hurry to the house; during one or two days they eat and drink at the expense of the dead, or rather his heirs, indulging in the noisest demonstrations. When the hour of interment arrives, a scene of the wildest character is produced. The slaves and women of the household throw themselves on the corpse and feign a determination to hinder it from passing the threshold. This lugubrious tragedy is played conscientiously; they snatch away the coffin; they belay each other with blows, and the most violent and frightful clamor is heard. At last the procession leaves the house and repairs to the cemetery, preceded by camels loaded with victuals, which are distributed to the poor hurrying in crowds along the road. All along the road the mourners and friends of the family fight for the honor of bearing the bier for an instant, and thus passes, or rather bounds, from hand to hand amid the most frightful disorder. The interment ended, every one returns to the house of the dead to recommence the festivities, dancing and the mortuary demonstrations.—*Brooklyn Magazine.*

Wade Hampton's Belief in Prayer.

The love and admiration in which he is held by the people of South Carolina are illustrated in an incident related by Gen. Hampton when he was recovering from his sickness.

"I am certain," he said, "that my life was saved by the fervent prayers of the people of South Carolina. I was at the point of death and had lost all interest in life when I received a letter from an old Methodist minister, a friend, telling me of the deep and devout petitions put up for my restoration to health by the Methodist conference then in session at Newberry. The letter closed by begging me to exercise my will to live in response to the supplications of the people of the whole state, who were praying for me night and day in every household. When I heard the letter read I promised my sister that I would heed the kind, loving words of the man of God, and arouse my will to live. That night I fell into a deep sleep and dreamed most vividly that I was in a spacious room, in which I was moved to all parts of the state, so that I met my assembled friends everywhere. I remember most distinctly of all old Beaufort, where I had last been. I saw immense assemblages, and as I looked down upon them a grave personage approached me and touched me on the shoulder and said to me: 'These people are praying for you. Live! Live!! Live!!!' I never realized anything like it before. It seemed a vision. I woke the next morning feeling the life-blood creeping through my veins, and I told my family that the crisis was passed and that I should get better."—*Z. L. White, in The American Magazine.*

The Appetite of Birds.

Of all animals birds possess the quickest motions, the most energetic respiration, and the warmest blood, and they consequently undergo the most rapid change of substance and need the most food. Although few creatures are so pleasing to the æsthetic tastes of a poetical-inclined person as birds, the breeder knows that most of them are to be looked upon as hearty or excessive eaters. Anyone who closely observes birds and their conduct will soon remark that all their thoughts and efforts, aside from the few days they spend in wooing and their short period of resting, are directed to getting something to eat. With what restless earnestness do titmice plungh through the bushes and trees! Not a leaf is left uninvestigated, every chink in the bark is examined for whatever eatable it may be hiding, and a sharp look is cast into every joint of a branch. How industriously does the ousel turn and thrash the leaves on the ground of the woods all day long, spying its game with a glance of its sharp eye, and snapping it up on the instant! After observing a few such incidents we can easily believe the stories that are related of the fish-eating powers of the cormorant and the fruit eating birds that are able to consume three times their weight every day.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

AERIAL NAVIGATION.

An Intricate Problem That a San Francisco Man Claims to Have Solved.

The Aerial Steam Navigation company, of San Francisco, is a corporation organized in accordance to the statutes of California, and its object is to startle the world if the dreams of the projectors are ever to be realized. It is no less than the construction and operation of an air-ship. The hour of trial is said to be near at hand. The great "vessel of the air" is approaching completion, and a trial trip will be made within a few months. The everlasting fortune of the company will then be made or it will utterly collapse.

The moving spirit in the enterprise is "Prof." William Patterson, who is not unknow to fame on the coast. The company had its inception in July of last year, Mr. Patterson being sponsor. He was modest and fixed the capital stock at only $100,000, or fifty thousand shares at $2 each. Upon these articles of incorporation the following officers were chosen. President, J. G. Severance; secretary, Charles E. Travers; treasurer, Howard Livingston; manager, Will am Patterson; engineer, J. A. Haste; directors, J. G. Severance, S. S. Tilton, Howard Livingston, C. M. Seeley, M. D., and William Patterson.

The practical aeronaut of the concern is Mr. Patterson. The airship in course of construction is designed by him and approved by the engineer, in the latter case no regard being had to the old saw, the more haste the less speed." Mr. Patterson is exceedingly enthusiastic and confident. He has the theory of aerial navigation down pat, and is confident that he will solve the interesting problem. The grave obstacles that others have encountered count not with him. He has an apparently abiding faith in its ultimate success. The faith of Darius Green in his flying machine was not greater. In conversation with a *Chronicle* reporter yesterday, he said:

"O yes, there have been obstacles to overcome. Capitalists have been slow to take hold, but, mark my words"—pointing his index finger straight at the scribe's south eye and raising his voice to a concert pitch—"mark my words: we'll get there just the same."

Having forever settled that particular point, the Professor took a drawing of the proposed airship from his inner coat pocket and proceeded with a minute description of the same.

The drawing shows the vessel to be cigar-shaped, the upper portion being the balloon proper, the lower half the deck upon which the freight and passengers are to be carried.

"You will observe," continued the aerial navigator, "that the deck of the vessel is closely connected with the baloon itself, the two forming one cylindrical whole. In this my ship differs from any which has ever been constructed. The propulsive force, being at the point where the baloon and car are joined, I am able to obtain a much better control of the vessel than other aeronauts have who have had the propulsive force placed in a car suspended at a distance below the balloon. In such cases a head wind could not be prevented from driving the balloon backward while the aeronaut endeavored to propel it ahead."

"There are other essential differences between my ship and all others, said the balloonist. "For example, I do not propose to be encumbered with sandbags or any other kind of ballast. In lieu thereof I intend carrying machinery which will enable me to create the force necessary both to propel and to raise and lower the ship."

"What machinery will you carry?"

"Three twelve-horse engines, one set to operate the two auxiliary propellers, at equal distances from each other at the bottom of the car, and one operating the driving propeller at the stern, which latter also acts as the rudder.

"The sole office of the propellers first mentioned is to aid in raising and lowering the ship without the loss of gas."

"What sort of fuel will you use?"

"A coal-oil and steam spray, fed to the furnaces by an injector. The boiler, which has already been negotiated for, will be a forty-horse power Herschoff, and will be furnished by Cole Brothers, of Lockport, N. Y. Pure hydrogen gas will be used, and will be generated in the usual way, by iron turnings and steam.

"Where is the work being prosecuted?"

"Some parts right here in San Francisco, where the vessel will be launched."

"When will it be launched?"

"Well, not later than the 1st of the coming August. The balloon part of the ship will be built in Philadelphia, as there are in San Francisco no facilities for its manufacture. The material is to consist of an external and internal layer of some kind of tough silk, interlaid with a thin sheet of rubber, the whole covered by a tape netting, which being free from knots, will give the very smallest amount of friction possible."

"What rate of speed will you be able to attain, do you imagine?"

"Under ordinary circumstances, a mile a minute. With everything favorable, a much greater speed."

"How will you avoid head winds and adverse currents?"

"Simply by rising above or descending to a level below them. This will be easily done by operating the auxiliary propellers in opposite directions. These, you must understand, are similar in shape to a ship's screw, one motion causing the vessel to rise and the opposite motion drawing her down."

"Suppose the balloon should break when at a high altitude?"

"That will be absolutely impossible, as it will be provided with safely valves, which will not allow of a pressure above a given degree. Aside from this precaution, a rent in any part of the balloon need not result disastrously, as, by means of a parachute formed by the overhanging sides of the decks, it will be an easy matter to lower the ship to the earth as gently as a mother would lay down her babe. I have taken even another precaution against accidental collapses. The balloon is itself divided into three compartments, separated from each other by a partition of the same material of which it is constructed, and each entirely independent of the other; so that if any of them should collapse the others will remain intact, thus preventing anything like a disaster."

"Where will your San Francisco works be located?"

"Upon that we have not as yet definitely decided. We have several offers of vacant lots upon which to carry on the work of putting the various parts together as they arrive from the east. It is quite likely we will decide upon a vacant lot on Haight street, at the terminus of the cable-car line."—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

CHARMING HOMES.

Work of Loving Hands in Making the House Beautiful.

Women the world over have, during the last few years, become profoundly interested in the art of making home beautiful, and their efforts in that time show them to be possessed of no mean talent for decoration. A few years ago (not so very many) all this sort of thing was left to the professional decorator and furnisher; those who were not able to pay for such luxuries were content, as a rule, to forego anything that smacked of æstheticism or high art in their surroundings. Of course there were exceptions, but they were so rare as to become noticeable, and were, it is safe to say, inspired by latent genius of an extraordinary kind. But the women of the world have been growing very rapidly of late years in artistic knowledge. The facilities for getting about have increased. The shops have become magazines of art. There are glorious opportunities for self-culture that our grandmothers dreamed not of, and women have been quick to avail themselves of these privileges. Owing, perhaps, to the Yankee element in their composition American women are particularly shrewd imitators, and, even where they lack the power of originality, appear to make up such lack by their genius for adapting to their own uses the designs of others. It is this happy quality that has transformed the homes of the people from their former state of ugliness into a pleasing, even where it is not a genuinely artistic, condition.

Especially in the way of coloring has the taste of the people been improved. The middle-aged among us can remember how religiously the color line used to be drawn. The blues and greens were rigidly separated; so were the reds and pinks. It was a daring experiment to combine blue and pink, and for many years only the more audacious of womankind accepted it. And there was a sterling honesty about colors in those days, the remembrance of which makes one shudder even now. The distinct and dreadful blues and greens, and uncompromising reds! Magenta and solferino strike terror to the soul, even at this distance of time. Happily, we have outgrown these things and have no more of them. Greens and blues have become united and harmonious until they half puzzle you as to which predominates. Reds are toned down, although they are not all less bright, and the pinks carry with them a fascinating tint of yellow. Of course the colors did not change without a reason. The fact is that taste had grown until such change was demanded. It did not come in advance, and had no part in working a revolution. The people had simply grown until they could no longer tolerate such atrocities of coloring. They had learned something of the laws of harmony and contrast, and began to have minds of their own. And lo! how great a change has been wrought. The humblest cottage now disports itself in artistic array; aestheticism marks the costume of the simplest village maiden.

To keep pace with these changes in popular sentiment the wit of manufacturers and dyers is often severely taxed. Women have come to know what they want and to insist upon having it. They think more, too, of the effect of the juxtaposition of various articles than ever before. The wise housewife with a few hundred dollars to spend in the furnishing of the modest little nest doubtless bestows more thought upon fitness and harmony than was given to the furnishing of the costliest mansion a few years ago. This is as it should be, for with a very limited outlay the unpretentious domicile may be transformed into a veritable Mecca to all lovers of the beautiful.—*Philadelphia Record.*

Storm Effects on Mentality.

It has been argued, with more or less warmth, that one's disposition is largely affected by the kind of weather which prevails when one is born. While this is possible, it is also fanciful, and but few put any faith in it. There is however, another weather phenomenon in which I believe: I am convinced that thought is influenced, in a very considerable degree, by the weather. My notice was first drawn toward this by a line in one of Voltaire's letters, in which he said: "My work has been murky to-day, because the weather was murky." From this time on, I took close and careful account of my mental condition during various kinds of weather. * * *

Once, as an experiment, I planned two novels, to be worked on simultaneously. The one plot was shaped during a stormy period, and the other during a brief season of sunshine and summer glory which immediately followed. Whenever it was stormy, I worked upon the storm-planned novel; and whenever the weather was bright I worked upon the other. In each instance, I wholly surrendered myself to the moods which the weather stirred up within me, and made no effort to shake off the good cheer of the one or the despondency with which the other encompassed me. As a result, the novel upon which was settled no shadow of the storm-taint was cheerful and good humored; but the other was so bitter, mournful and vindictive that I never printed it.—*George Sand, in North American Review.*