

tion, is very much like a caterpillar in so much that he has been termed the worm of the dust. He is in a sluggish mood, and is composed of the products of the earth. When, in the eyes of his Creator he has reached, through the many influences he has passed, that state at which he is prepared for a higher sphere, this form he forgets, and soars away to the throne of his Master. But, you ask, what is it, that thus puts on an immortal hue? It is the germ, living and reasoning, which, like the butterfly has changed its earthly, for a higher, purer sphere. It is that principle, only of a different form, by the many impressions it has received, that once actuated the human body—this we once called mind, we now call spirit. Then as impressions are received so is the spirit modified. Hence these are the instruments, delicate and rare, by which we color our future garment. They are divine gifts direct from God's own hands. Let no man, then, consider them carelessly; for they descend like snowflakes, and their origin is as high as heaven. They fall silently and slowly around us, and when the burning Sun appears they are restored to their former positions, or sent through the turbid stream, leaping cataracts, at last reaching a great and stormy ocean. F. M. L.

Pictures.

How many times have I longed for an artist's pencil, not that I have any idea that the world would be astonished by the beauty of my conceptions, but because certain lovely tints and groups and postures have haunted me through almost my whole life and I long to express them. Perhaps these pictures of long-a-go beauty are cherished the more tenderly that for some three years past nothing much more striking in color or form has presented itself to me than these prairies now bare and brown—these few trees which yet have such a decisive, matter-of-fact way of giving up the ghost that, to a person brought up in sight of eastern forests death is their crowning glory. It is deplorable in the extreme. Towards Autumn without warming or change of tint except the sad turning to dullest brown, the leaves of these trees grow hard and crisp and rattle to the gaound.

Yet even here I have seen the shadows playing and chasing each other in a marvelous manner over the gently rolling hills. Here is a leaf from the record of my first year in Nebraska:—"The Spring is just changing the brown prairies to faintest green—the sun is just throwing up golden banners to herald its approach—a meadow-lark of sweetest song—the herders' voices sound distinct through the morning stillness as they shout to the cattle and to each other. Between two hills the roof and chimney of a cottage is visible with the purple smoke wreathing upward, and, now, behold, the hills step out before me, the one in purple, the other in palest rose!" Here, too, the sunsets are almost Italian in their far-reaching brilliancy, but I have a picture in my mind of one seen at Long Branch more wonderful than any of these. There was the low sad murmur of the sea in the distance, otherwise all around a solemn silence and mellowness of light while in the west a great canopy of densest cloud was suspended directly over the sinking sun and as the prismatic beams shot up one after another and died away, it was alternately lined with rarest shades of purple and gold and rose.

Again I wonder if I can present to your minds a picture which filled with admiration myself and all who saw it. See—a great Newfoundland dog and a pet lamb inseparable in rest as in motion; beside them, his elbow on the dog and his tired head on his hand, a child of some two or three summers, with loose brown curls falling his shoulders; with eyes the most remarkable for pensive pleading and angelic beauty I have ever seen! There was something about this picture that filled with admiration and, at the same time, with inexpressible sadness the heart of everyone who saw it—that occupied the mother's heart for years after the dear child and its playmates were taken out of her sight forever.

Again I see this same mother receiving two gentlemen guests with a sweet child-like embarrassment of manner, yet all unconscious of three great yellow lilies which the little fellows' hand had fastened in the coil of her glossy black hair. I remember, child as I was, how the pretty unsuspecting perk of her red mouth charmed me!

Once more—and, oh! most graceful picture, which no artist can portray—a snake riding the water! Note the superb poise of the head, the graceful undulations of the body, and more than all, the absolute silence of his course—how exquisitely harmonious and beautiful a picture! You can not believe that you have heard no sound for your ear seems to vibrate as to some spirit-like melody!

Another little picture seen when I was six years, I see as distinctly yet as this snow covered prairie before me. Imagine then (for I cannot paint) two children standing in a marshy meadow with sweet grass and flags and brooks at their feet, a lonely crow sitting in the top of a dead hemlock and a sad-voiced little Phebe crying in the distance—a most wonderful mingling of golden light and shadow flooding the whole earth and sky and lighting up with a kind of glory the shining golden heads of the little girls!

Again, imagine—but, no, we must stop. There is no end to the pictures and sweet, beautiful and touching, if only we have the eyes to see them, the heart to open and take them in! But how unsatisfactory are all my words! If I could only take up a brush and, with a few touches, tell you just what I mean! A. C.

Signs and Superstitions.

As I seat myself to write something my mind seems, as it were, to float through the mysterious regions of somewhere that appears entirely incomprehensible and far beyond the reasoning power and mathematical calculation of weak humanity. The first object that my mind fairly and squarely strikes in its inestimable flight is an old saying that I have heard, originated somewhere between the lids of the Good Book, and runs somewhat in this wise: "O! ye wicked and perverse generation, that are continually seeking for a sign; but I say unto you there shall no sign be given, except the sign of the Prophet Jonah." As I ponder for a while upon that saying, I am very favorably impressed with the first part of it; for it is plain to see that there are some human beings (if I am allowed to call them such,) who persistently insist upon planting their potatoes in the moon and are foolish enough to believe that if they did not get them in the dark part of the moon, the seed would be sure to rot.

But as to the latter part of the saying, I am inclined to think that if a few of the old "fogies" were to receive the same sign of whales that Jonah did our world would be no worse off.

Since my mind seems to wander at present upon these old superstitious ideas, it makes me think of an old rhyme that I verily believe was made in the time of Noah; but whether any of the old patriarchs was the author of it or not I will never tell; if they were they were certainly greater "lunies" than I have taken them to be. It is upon the art (?) of sowing turnip seed, and, according to the grangers, must be lived up to or your turnips (as they say) will come out at the little end of the horn. "On the 21st of July, sow your turnips, wet or dry." Strange to say, some people are such strong adherents to this rule that, if they did not sow their turnips that day it would be a sure sign that the frost would come early and nip them in the bud. Hence as a certainty no turnips would be planted. Nevertheless this is a day of progress and civilization, and all of these superstitious ideas are gradually dying out. One by one these old "ignoramuses" are departing from the long list of human know-nothings, and the world is, from this very reason, growing better and wiser. Here again we see an old granger wending his way through the middle of the street, with a loaf of ginger-bread under one arm and a pitchfork under the other, gazing in a torishment at some of the signs and, summing the whole thing up, wondering in what art of the moon they were planted. He, too, is

All dressed up in his very best gear,
With two be-tailed dogs trotting in the rear,
And an old plug-hat with the rim torn off,
Stands on his head like a coffee-pot.
A pipe in his mouth; he is puffing away
With all of his strength. It is a warm day,
And the sweat from his forehead rolls in drops,
Down to his boots and then it stops.

The tails of his coat stand out from the waist,
Which proves that he is in very great haste,
And the dogs, poor curs! to follow about,
Must run so fast that their tongues hang out.

He is a constant reader of the almanacs, and studies the signs of the zodiac as carefully as the student does his mathematics, and I dare say, with a great deal more interest. An old woman, whose haggard face and wrinkled forehead would show that sixty long summers had passed since first she took charge of the farm and garden, and began to study the "signs of the times," and make aerial ascents in order to find out whether the moon was made of green cheese, and, if it was, at what time it indicated rain &c. She says that she must plant her cabbage seed on the last day of March, or the cabbage heads when they come to maturity will surely "bust," and smell exceedingly harsh when made into *southern*. Still these old "codgers" are continually seeking for some new sign; and, finding no other way to substantiate their theories, they must organize a grange where they can meet and consult as to the best method and time of the moon to plant beets &c. Yet when you prove to them that all these things are in contradiction to common sense, they turn around and hiss in your ear: "Jist git 'way from yer with your new fangled igees, for our forefathers taught us these things and we'll stick to 'em or bleed." Although the world is in such a stage of progression, still when we look at the past and judge by it our future condition, when we see all around us still those that curse and abhor the truth, and cling with a death-like grip to these old

and played-out absurdities, we can say, and without fear of very harsh criticism, that "The fools are not all dead yet."

BUCK.

Almost an Encounter.

In our perambulations about the University building one day, our sensitive ear was saluted with sounds harsh and discordant. On the spur of the moment we made up our mind that it was a freshman up in the cupola rehearsing his declamation, but upon a nearer approach we found two "preps" engaged, not in deadly strife, but in a terrible war of words. We are timid and after taking in the situation concluded to quietly depart; but an incomprehensible something seemed to root us to the spot, and we were an unwilling spectator of a most unpleasant scene. *Oh Hercules!* how those "preps" wanted to run! but like a brace of bar-tams, each felt unwilling to make the start. There seemed to be no lack of words on either side, and both parties expressed themselves fluently and forcibly. Without cessation or diminution those sturdy "preps" continued the strife, and our sympathetic nature was aroused upon seeing one of our gallant "sophs" placed in such a position that escape was out of the question, and, though suffering from the keenest fear (and a variety of other emotions too numerous to mention, all of which were depicted on his classic countenance,) there he remained until the combatants were pleased to adjust their "unpleasantness." But I digress. Louder and still louder waxed the disciples of Heenan; the hot blood found its way to their pale and book-surfeited faces—the perspiration rolled from their noble brows—the muscles in their necks swelled almost to bursting, and there was seemingly every prospect for a trial of muscle, but circumstances again proved that, it is always darker just before the dawn. After relating a few biographies and being, at times, somewhat personal and pointed in their remarks, they gave evidence of weariness and ennui, in sundry grimaces, the unsophisticated, though a "senior," could not err there in or mistake the meaning.

What a striking scene! not exactly striking either, but approximately so. The parties separated and all was soon quiet and serene where such a short time before all had been wild commotion. The "soph" escaped from his unpleasant situation and with a long drawn sigh of relief left the spot evidently painfully and fearfully moved. Being left to ourselves we fell to moralizing thusly: Those noble youths doubtless belong to the class of bad boys we read about in our Sunday School books, and they will perhaps come to some miserable end, as such boys most always do. It is impossible for them to live to become men, under the circumstances; for have not all bad boys from time immemorial died early in life? But perhaps those youths may reform and become good boys, or, possibly, politicians, and thus blot out this foul stain on their names and the names of their ancestors. Indeed, there is something so grand in thinking and cogitating upon the affairs of others, that we might perhaps have been taking a Rip Van Winkle sleep over the matter, had not a friend aroused us, and we again assumed the duties of actual life.

What goes most against a man's grain—A reaper.