

membrance is worth many nights of indoor slumber. We never found a week in the year, nor an hour of day or night, which had not, in the open air, its own special beauty. We will not say, with Reade's Australians, that the only use of a house is to sleep in the lee of it; but there is method in even that madness. As for rain, it is chiefly formidable indoors. Lord Bacon used to ride with uncovered head in a shower, and loved "to feel the spirit of the universe upon his brow"; and we once knew an enthusiastic hydropathic physician who loved to expose himself in thunder-storms at midnight, without a shred of earthly clothing between himself and the atmosphere. Some prudent persons may possibly regard this as being rather an extreme, while yet their own extreme of avoidance of every breath from heaven is really the more extravagantly unreasonable of the two.

It is easy for the sentimentalist to say, "But if the object is, after all, the enjoyment of Nature, why not go and enjoy her, without any collateral aim?" Because it is the universal experience of man, that, if we have a collateral aim, we enjoy her far more. He knows not the

beauty of the universe, who has not learned the subtle mystery, that Nature loves to work on us by *indirections*. Astronomers say, that, when observing with the naked eye, you see a star less clearly by looking at it, than by looking at the next one. Margaret Fuller's fine saying touches the same point,—“Nature will not be stared at.” Go out merely to enjoy her, and it seems a little tame, and you begin to suspect yourself of affectation. We know persons who, after years of abstinence from athletic sports or the pursuits of the naturalist or artist, have resumed them, simply in order to restore to the woods and the sunsets the zest of the old fascination. Go out under pretence of shooting on the marshes or botanizing in the forests; study entomology, that most fascinating, most neglected of all the branches of natural history; go to paint a red maple-leaf in autumn, or watch a pickerel-line in winter; meet Nature on the cricket ground or at the regatta; swim with her, ride with her, run with her, and she gladly takes you back once more within the horizon of her magic, and your heart of manhood is born again into more than the fresh happiness of the boy.

BY THE DEAD.

PRIDE that sat on the beautiful brow,
 Scorn that lay in the arching lips,
 Will of the oak-grain, where are ye now?
 I may dare to touch her finger-tips!
 Deep, flaming eyes, ye are shallow enough;
 The steadiest fire burns out at last.
 Throw back the shutters,—the sky is rough,
 And the winds are high,—but the night is past.

Mother, I speak with the voice of a man;
 Death is between us,—I stoop no more;
 And yet so dim is each new-born plan,
 I am feebler than ever I was before,—

Feebler than when the western hill
Faded away with its sunset gold.
Mother, your voice seemed dark and chill,
And your words made my young heart very cold.

You talked of fame,—but my thoughts would stray
To the brook that laughed across the lane;
And of hopes for me,—but your hand's light play
On my brow was ice to my shrinking brain;
And you called me your son, your only son,—
But I felt your eye on my tortured heart
To and fro, like a spider, run,
On a quivering web;—'twas a cruel art!

But crueller, crueller far, the art
Of the low, quick laugh that Memory hears!
Mother, I lay my head on your heart;
Has it throbbed even once these fifty years?
Throbbed even once, by some strange heat thawed?
It would then have warmed to her, poor thing,
Who echoed your laugh with a cry!—O God,
When in my soul will it cease to ring?

Starlike her eyes were,—but yours were blind;
Sweet her red lips,—but yours were curled;
Pure her young heart,—but yours,—ah, you find
This, mother, is not the only world!
She came,—bright gleam of the dawning day;
She went,—pale dream of the winding-sheet.
Mother, they come to me and say
Your headstone will almost touch her feet!

You are walking now in a strange, dim land:
Tell me, has pride gone with you there?
Does a frail white form before you stand,
And tremble to earth, beneath your stare?
No, no!—she is strong in her pureness now,
And Love to Power no more defers.
I fear the roses will never grow
On your lonely grave as they do on hers!

But now from those lips one last, sad touch,—
Kiss it is not, and has never been;
In my boyhood's sleep I dreamed of such,
And shuddered,—they were so cold and thin!
There,—now cover the cold, white face,
Whiter and colder than statue stone!
Mother, you have a resting-place;
But I am weary, and all alone!

AARON BURR.*

THE life of Aaron Burr is an admirable subject for a biographer. He belonged to a class of men, rare in America, who are remarkable, not so much for their talents or their achievements, as for their adventures and the vicissitudes of their fortunes. Europe has produced many such men and women: political intriguers; royal favorites; adroit courtiers; adventurers who carried their swords into every scene of danger; courtisans who controlled the affairs of states; persevering schemers who haunted the purlieus of courts, plotted treason in garrets, and levied war in fine ladies' boudoirs.

In countries where all the social and political action is concentrated around the throne, where a pretty woman may decide the policy of a reign, a royal marriage plunge nations into war, and the disgrace of a favorite cause the downfall of a party, such persons find an ample field for the exercise of the arts upon which they depend for success. The history and romance of Modern Europe are full of them; they crowd the pages of Macaulay and Scott. But the full sunlight of our republican life leaves no lurking-place for the mere trickster. Doubtless, selfish purposes influence our statesmen, as well as the statesmen of other countries; but such purposes cannot be accomplished here by the means which effect them elsewhere. He who wishes to attract the attention of a people must act publicly and with reference to practical matters; but the ear of a monarch may be reached in private. Therefore there is a certain monotony in the lives of most of our public men; they may be read in the life of one. It is, generally, a simple story of a poor youth, who was born in humble station, and who, by painful

effort in some useful occupation, rose slowly to distinguished place,—who displayed high talents, and made an honorable use of them. Aaron Burr, however, is an exception. His adventures, his striking relations with the leading men of his time, his romantic enterprises, the crimes and the talents which have been attributed to him, his sudden elevation, and his protracted and agonizing humiliation have attached to his name a strange and peculiar interest. Mr. Parton has done a good service in recalling a character which had well-nigh passed out of popular thought, though not entirely out of popular recollection.

As to the manner in which this service has been performed, it is impossible to speak very highly. The book has evidently cost its author great pains; it is filled with detail, and with considerable gossip concerning the hero, which is piquant, and, if true, important. The style is meant to be lively, and in some passages is pleasant enough; but it is marked with a flippancy, which, after a few pages, becomes very disagreeable. It abounds with the slang usually confined to sporting papers. According to the author, a civil man is "as civil as an orange," a well-dressed man is "got up regardless of expense," and an unobserved action is done "on the sly." He affects the intense, and, in his pages, newspapers "go rabid and foam personalities," are "ablaze with victories" and "bristling with bulletins,"—the public is in a "delirium,"—the politicians are "maddened,"—letters are written in "hot haste," and proclamations "sent flying." He appears to be on terms of intimacy with historical personages such as few writers are fortunate enough to be admitted to. He approves a remark of George II. and patronizingly exclaims, "Sensible King!" He has occasion to mention John Adams, and sa-

* *The Life and Times of Aaron Burr.* By J. PARTON. New York: Mason, Brothers. 1857.