

ANACREON.

“Nor has he ceased his charming song, but still that lyre,
Though he be dead, sleeps not in Hades.”

Simonides' Epigram on Anacreon.

WE lately met with an old volume from a London bookshop, containing the Greek Minor Poets, and it was a pleasure to read once more only the words,—Orpheus,—Linus,—Musæus,—those faint poetic sounds and echoes of a name, dying away on the ears of us modern men; and those hardly more substantial sounds, Mimnermus—Ibycus, Alcæus—Stesichorus—Menander. They lived not in vain. We can converse with these bodiless fames, without reserve or personality.

We know of no studies so composing as those of the classical scholar. When we have sat down to them, life seems as still and serene as if it were very far off, and we believe it is not habitually seen from any common platform so truly and unexaggerated as in the light of literature. In serene hours we contemplate the tour of the Greek and Latin authors with more pleasure than the traveler does the fairest scenery of Greece or Italy. Where shall we find a more refined society? That highway down from Homer and Hesiod to Horace and Juvenal is more attractive than the Appian. Reading the classics, or conversing with those old Greeks and Latins in their surviving works, is like walking amid the stars and constellations, a high and by-way serene to travel. Indeed, the true scholar will be not a little of an astronomer in his habits. Distracting cares will not be allowed to obstruct the field of his vision, for the higher regions of literature, like astronomy, are above storm and darkness.

But passing by these rumors of bards, we have chosen to pause for a moment at Anacreon, the Teian poet, and present some specimens of him to our readers.*

* The following, with the odes to the Cicada and to Spring, in the ninth number of the Dial, pp. 23, 24, are, in the opinion of the translator, the best that have come down to us.

There is something strangely modern about him. He is very easily turned into English. Is it that our lyric poets have resounded only that lyre, which would sound only on light subjects, and which Simonides tells us does not sleep in Hades? His odes are like gems of pure ivory. They possess an ethereal and evanescent beauty like summer evenings, ὃ χροῖ σὲ νοεῖν νόου ἀνδρεί, *which you must understand with the flower of the mind*, — and show how slight a beauty could be expressed. You have to consider them, as the stars of lesser magnitude, with the side of the eye, and look aside from them to behold them. They charm us by their serenity and freedom from exaggeration and passion, and by a certain flower-like beauty, which does not propose itself, but must be approached and studied like a natural object. But, perhaps, their chief merit consists in the lightness and yet security of their tread;

“The young and tender stalk
Ne'er bends when *they* do walk.”

True, our nerves are never strung by them; — it is too constantly the sound of the lyre, and never the note of the trumpet; but they are not gross, as has been presumed, but always elevated above the sensual.

ON HIS LYRE.

I wish to sing the Atridæ,
And Cadmus I wish to sing;
But my lyre sounds
Only love with its chords.
Lately I changed the strings
And all the lyre;
And I began to sing the labors
Of Hercules; but my lyre
Resounded loves.
Farewell, henceforth, for me,
Heroes! for my lyre
Sings only loves.

TO A SWALLOW.

THOU, indeed, dear swallow,
 Yearly going and coming,
 In summer weavest thy nest,
 And in Winter go'st disappearing
 Either to Nile or to Memphis.
 But Love always weaveth
 His nest in thy heart. * * *

ON A SILVER CUP.

TURNING the silver,
 Vulcan, make for me,
 Not indeed a panoply,
 For what are battles to me?
 But a hollow cup,
 As deep as thou canst.
 And make for me in it
 Neither stars, nor wagons,
 Nor sad Orion;
 What are the Pleiades to me?
 What the shining Bootes?
 Make vines for me,
 And clusters of grapes in it,
 And of gold Love and Bathyllus
 Treading the grapes
 With the fair Lyæus

ON HIMSELF.

THOU sing'st the affairs of Thebes,
 And he the battles of Troy,
 But I of my own defeats.
 No horse have wasted me,
 Nor foot, nor ships;
 But a new and different host,
 From eyes smiting me.

TO A DOVE.

LOVELY Dove,
Whence, whence dost thou fly?
Whence, running on air,
Dost thou waft and diffuse
So many sweet ointments?
Who art? What thy errand?
Anacreon sent me
To a boy, to Bathyllus,
Who lately is ruler and tyrant of all.
Cythere has sold me
For one little song,
And I'm doing this service
For Anacreon.
And now, as you see,
I bear letters from him.
And he says that directly
He'll make me free,
But though he release me,
His slave I will tarry with him.
For why should I fly
Over mountains and fields,
And perch upon trees,
Eating some wild thing?
Now indeed I eat bread,
Plucking it from the hands
Of Anacreon himself;
And he gives me to drink
The wine which he tastes,
And drinking, I dance,
And shadow my master's
Face with my wings;
And, going to rest,
On the lyre itself do I sleep.
That is all: get thee gone.
Thou hast made me more talkative,
Man, than a crow.

ON LOVE.

LOVE walking swiftly
With hyacinthine staff,
Bade me to take a run with him;
And hastening through swift torrents,
And woody places, and over precipices,
A water-snake stung me.
And my heart leaped up to
My mouth, and I should have fainted;
But Love fanning my brows
With his soft wings, said,
Surely, thou art not able to love.

ON WOMEN.

NATURE has given horns
To bulls, and hoofs to horses,
Swiftness to hares,
To lions yawning teeth,
To fishes swimming,
To birds flight,
To men wisdom.
For woman she had nothing beside;
What then does she give? Beauty, —
Instead of all shields,
Instead of all spears;
And she conquers even iron
And fire, who is beautiful.

ON LOVERS.

HORSES have the mark
Of fire on their sides,
And some have distinguished
The Parthian men by their crests;
So I, seeing lovers,
Know them at once,
For they have a certain slight
Brand on their hearts.

TO A SWALLOW.

WHAT dost thou wish me to do unto thee—
 What, thou loquacious swallow?
 Dost thou wish me taking thee
 Thy light pinions to clip?
 Or rather to pluck out
 Thy tongue from within,
 As that Tereus did?
 Why with thy notes in the dawn
 Hast thou plundered Bathyllus
 From my beautiful dreams?

TO A COLT.

THRACIAN colt, why at me
 Looking aslant with thy eyes,
 Dost thou cruelly flee,
 And think that I know nothing wise?
 Know I could well
 Put the bridle on thee,
 And holding the reins, turn
 Round the bound of the course.
 But now thou browses the meads,
 And gambolling lightly dost play,
 For thou hast no skilful horseman
 Mounted upon thy back.

CUPID WOUNDED.

LOVE once among roses
 Saw not
 A sleeping bee, but was stung;
 And being wounded in the finger
 Of his hand cried for pain.

Running as well as flying
 To the beautiful Venus,
 I am killed, mother, said he,
 I am killed, and I die.
 A little serpent has stung me,
 Winged, which they call
 A bee — the husbandmen.
 And she said, If the sting
 Of a bee afflicts you,
 How, think you, are they afflicted,
 Love, whom you smite?

H. D. T.

WHAT IS BEAUTY?

BY L. M. CHILD.

"Then had I all sorts of strange thoughts, which would hardly have agreed with sense. *It was as if the secret of Creation lay on my tongue*; how God, by the power of his voice, had called every thing forth, and how music repeats in each breast this eternal will of Love and Wisdom." — *Bettine*.

THE two creative principles of the universe are LOVE and WISDOM. Their union, and perfect proportion, constitutes BEAUTY.

In common modes of speech, this word is, obviously enough, applied to mere *forms* of Love and Truth, in which the perfect proportion is at once felt, rather than seen, and we instinctively name it harmony. But I am now striving to define the abstract and universal *Idea*; and this I believe to be a harmonious proportion of the two great Creative Principles.

From a healthy union of Affection and Thought flows Energy. When we love to do that which we perceive it right to do, we cannot otherwise than embody it in earnest action. This is *moral* beauty.

When truth is perceived through the transparent medium of affection for it, it embodies itself in *intellectual*