

GREAT
FROM
MASTER
MINDS
THOUGHTS



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REMEMBRANCE.

COLD in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
Thy noble heart for ever, ever more?

Cold in the earth—and fifteen wild Decembers,
From those brown hills, have melted into spring:
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
While the world's tide is bearing me along;
Other desires and other hopes beset me,
Hopes which obscure, but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
No second morn has ever shone for me;
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
And even Despair was powerless to destroy;
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened, and fed without the aid of joy.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion—
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain;
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

EMILY BRONIE.

TIME.

THE looseness of idea which is traceable in many of our semi-philosophic phrases and opinions offers a curious subject for reflection. Habitually, partly from indolence, probably partly from inherent unscientific carelessness of mind, we are satisfied with approaches to an idea about, or an explanation of, the phenomena which catch our attention,—with what Dr. Chalmers used to call "the inkling of an idea,"—not so much with half an idea as with the raw materials of an idea. We are content with feeling that a conception, and probably a true conception, lurks under the expressions we hear and repeat; and under cover of this inarticulate sentiment (for it is usually nothing more) we absolve ourselves from the exertion analysing the conception, embodying it in appropriate language, or even carrying it so far as distinct and expressible notions. We use a phrase, and then fancy we have done a thing,—have elucidated a fact or given utterance to an idea. We employ words not to express thought, nor (as Talleyrand suggested) to conceal it; but to hide its absence, and to escape its toil.

No word has been oftener made to do duty in this way than Time. We constantly say—speaking of material things—that "Time" destroys buildings, effaces inscriptions, removes landmarks, and the like. In the same way—speaking of higher matters appertaining to men and nations, to moral and intellectual phenomena—we are accustomed to say that "Time" obliterates impressions, cures faults, solaces grief, heals wounds, extinguishes animosities; as well as that under its influence empires decay, people grow enlightened, errors get trodden out, brute natures become humanized, and so on—that the world "makes progress," in short. Now what do we mean when we speak thus; or do most of us mean anything? What are the mighty and resistless agencies hidden under those four letters, and embodied in, or implied by, that little word?

W. R. GREG.



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FROM

MASTER MINDS.

Open my leaves and you shall find,
Treasures for the enquiring mind;
Thoughts from the tablets of the sages,
Proverbs and maxims for the ages;
Visions of Nature, gleams of Art,
And poems which refresh the heart.

R. P. D.

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PREFACE TO VOL. XXXV.



Voices of the great and pure,
Uttering thoughts which will endure
Through all time, and grandly roll,
From responsive soul to soul.

Lend us your celestial might,
"While we battle for the right ;
Thrill us with your sacred fire,
While we struggle and aspire.

Banish all our idle fears,
Wipe away our bitter tears ;
Lift us from the dust and slime,
Link our lives with the divine.

R.P.D.



GAIN we place in the hands of our readers a new volume, not inferior we trust to any of the thirty-four which have preceded it.

When we first took up our task, that now silent preacher, the king of men, C. H. Spurgeon, said:— ' I greatly fear that your venture will not succeed, for to-day men want funny bits and not 'Great Thoughts.' " We found however, at the outset, an audience, fit though few, and that audience has so increased with the years that the success of our effort may now be regarded as assured.

For this we are deeply thankful, not only because it turns our loss into a profit, but because we still retain the conviction that nothing is more needed in our age and nation than pure and ennobling ideas and ideals. We are the children of our thoughts—the offspring of our ideals. They fashion us after their own likeness. If base they mar us by their baseness, if noble they exalt us by their purity.

Men and nations are insensibly, but surely, moulded by the ideas they cherish. Though silent and unseen, ideas shape men and nations as clouds are shaped by the subtle action of the wind. There is no escape from the power of a dominating

thought—a thought so cherished that it must ripen into deeds. It blows no trumpet before it and leads no noisy battalions in its train, yet it is mightier than the clamours or the artillery of war. The civilization of to-morrow is folded in the ideas we cherish to-day. Tell us what the ideas of a nation are and we may safely venture to predict the character of its institutions. Tell us what a man really believes and admires and we will tell you how he will live.

A few examples taken from actual life will illustrate what we mean. Here is a young man who cherishes the idea that the end of life is pleasure, sensual pleasure. He follows pleasure “as she flaunts along on her wide down-way with her flying locks and her poisoned lips.” The result is ruin, the loss of all nobleness, emaciation and degeneration alike of body and soul.

Here is another man, not so young, who has adopted the fixed idea that the great object of life is to make money. Money means comfort, money means power, money means homage from the world, therefore he says, “I must get money at whatever cost.” He gets money, but he pays too dearly for it, in the loss of principle, the sacrifice of self-respect, and in the heritage of a mean, narrow and selfish soul.

Here again is a man who cherishes the idea that the end of life is duty. His purpose is to render to God and man that which is their due. To the weak and defenceless he gives protection, to the ignorant—enlightenment, to the wretched—assistance. His conviction is that the strong ought to help the feeble, the rich to aid the poor, the fortunate to commiserate the unfortunate. The result is that “his eye, e’en turned on empty space, beams keen with honour,” and that he contributes light and strength to the conscience of the world.

Did our space permit we could go on to show that what is true of individuals is equally true of nations. They also are exalted or debased by the ideas they cherish, and by the nature of the ends toward which they aspire.

Hence the necessity for pure thought and noble ideals in literature and in life.

It is with these we deal. It is by these we are content to stand or fall. The summons which reaches us daily, and to which we must respond, is that of Longfellow, in the lines which read—

Arouse him then ; this is thy part ;
Show him the claim ; point out the need,
And nerve his arm, and cheer his heart ;
Then stand aside, and say, “ God speed ! ”