

MY OPEN GRATE.

BY SAMUEL WILLIAMS COOPER.

I.
Oh! sing to me not of your wood fire so charming.
'Tis unsatisfactory, that I know well;
It sometimes looks well, but 'tis useless for warming.
Of smoke and gives out an abominable smell.
I revel in my nature the good days of olden,
But now give me things that are not out of date;
For iron, give me trinkets of silver or golden;
For wood fire, a warming, hard-coal, open grate.

II.
When a green log of wood on the andirons was smoking,
How pleasant it was to get down on your knees
And blow till you gasped, while with dust you were choking,
And draughts down the chimney compelled you to sneeze.
No longer need sparks fly around in the gloaming,
And burn the new carpet and uproar create;
No longer with ax in the back yard we're roaming;
We cozily sit by our warm open grate.

III.
Why cut down the forests where birds' nests are swinging?
In no green smoking log can a poet find soul.
The ancient wood-fire but discomforts was bringing.
True poetry now is found only in coal.
By a register even a poet may ponder
And warily weave rhymes with a mind that's clear;
Of the many inventions that cause me to wonder
The best of them all is my open coal grate.

PETER WHITNEY'S FATE.

"Mr. Whitney?"
"Sir?" replied the individual addressed.
"I want you to cross to France this evening."
"Very well, sir," said Mr. Whitney, quietly.
"Or to-morrow morning will do. Here are your instructions. Read these papers carefully; make the best arrangements you can. I may want the house—you will see all about it in these documents."
"Am I to purchase the premises, sir?"

"No, no; they have come to me—to the firm—in consequence of an advance made by my old partner, who, you know, died the other day. Take possession; see what the place is like; whether it will do for a summer residence. You know the kind of thing I want to take the children to, and I can depend on you."

Mr. Whitney bowed and said he thought Mr. Barnstone might depend on him. He took the deeds, made his arrangements at the office, tidied and tied up his papers on his desk, and then strolled homeward at three o'clock to pack his portmanteau. He was a man of about forty—good-natured, trustful, and trustworthy—a man of whom little children always stopped to inquire "the time," and were satisfied even if he did not drag out his watch—a man who piloted old ladies and blind men over dangerous London crossings—a man beloved by animals and children, and who cherished an affection for a cat, which followed him as faithfully as a dog in and about his house at Brixton.

Such was Peter Whitney—a somewhat impulsive man, like his great namesake—a person deserving of every confidence in the legal employment which he pursued, but not likely to make a very large fortune in anything—he was too easy-going as well as too good-natured.

Mr. Whitney strolled homeward, first to Ludgate Hill Station, to take a train to Brixton, where in bachelor apartments he passed his quiet evenings. He was crossing Chancery Lane, by the post-office, when a young and decidedly pretty girl, a French girl, stopped him, and said in broken English:

"Sare, would you be so kind?—you look very kind—could you tell me where I can find the Lincoln's Inn Fields?"
"Lincoln's Inn, mademoiselle; mais certainement; je—"

"Ah! monsieur parle francais," she exclaimed, interrupting him with a pleased expression.

Then Whitney, who was a French scholar, addressed her in her native tongue, and walked with her a few paces in order to put her in the right direction. So they went through Lincoln's Inn, chatting, and he found her destination was none other than Mr. Barnstone's office.

Having parted with his young companion at the office, he hurried away to Ludgate again. He had learnt from a slip of paper she gave him that the fair foreigner's name was Pulcherie Malais, but he did not inquire her business in Lincoln's Inn Fields after he had announced her arrival to the clerk in charge.

"A very pretty girl indeed," murmured this middle-aged bachelor; "a charming face; and what a pretty name! Pulcherie; quite fitting, too, for a wonder. Malais is not so nice, but it may one day be changed. Ah me!"

Thinking of Pulcherie, Peter Whitney entered the train; still thinking of her, he went home, and packed "Pulcherie" in his portmanteau. But somehow that young person escaped, for she was with him all the evening, in the train to Newhaven; she crossed the channel with him in the Normandy, and reached Dieppe with him in the warm autumn daylight, as bright and fresh a memory as ever! Oh, Peter, Peter! truly thou art in love!

The premises which Peter Whitney had to investigate and arrange for were situated some little distance up the coast, at or near a village which boasted a small river and a fishing population of amphibious habits. The place shall not be more particularly described, but the river flowed through the valley of the Ange, and the stream and the increasing village bear the same name.

Fishermen, dealers in cattle—for the valley is pastoral—lace-makers, these

are the inhabitants, and they follow their peaceful occupations contentedly. It was a very fine morning when Mr. Whitney reached the village; he had walked over from Dieppe the day after his arrival in that town, and found the people *en fete* in the village.

It was a holiday—a holy-day, apparently, for the inhabitants had just come from the church, and the girls were dressed in holiday garb, walking in picturesque groups; laughing, chattering, and while avoiding, yet glancing saucily at the young men, who, standing or seated, also in pairs or threes, would discuss the fishing and the cattle, while always keeping the young ladies in sight. A happy, pleasant picture; and Peter Whitney looked on at the scene with great delight.

He determined to give himself a holiday, too. So he made friends directly, and inquiries indirectly concerning the premises he had come to take over and have transferred. He learned that the house lay away from the village; it was a mere farm-house amid trees, inclosed by a wall and paling. It had been untenanted some time. The family had sold everything, and quitted the village some weeks before.

"They were poor?" suggested the Englishman.

The man addressed shrugged his shoulders as he replied:

"Well, not entirely. The good man and his wife had died. His sister and their daughter lived in the house till the last harvest. The son was away in the army of Africa. Young Mr. Desmoulins, the miller's son, had paid much attention to the young lady, and had been repulsed by her. So, being the owner of the property, he had taken his revenge, and managed to frighten them away. Poor girl! He was a *mauvais sujet*!"

"But he had no right to do so," said Whitney. "The house was mortgaged to an Englishman. He is dead now. It was handed over as security for advances to the young soldier's father." That is as may be. The house is closed up, the *affaires* of the sale are on the door; it is desolate, empty.

"Is it far from here?"
"Well, no. A walk of perhaps half an hour or so will bring you there—through the trees yonder. You see those tall poplars, those to the eastward?"

Peter Whitney nodded assent.
"Up there you will find the place; it stands above the road on your right hand; a little path leads up to the house. You cannot mistake it."

"Thank you, monsieur," replied Whitney. "I think I will go and see it."

Peter Whitney made his way toward the poplars, and passed them. He then plunged into a more wooded country, and the road tended south-east. Then he came to a gate and a path on the right, as indicated. He entered and ascended the path, passing in the direction where he had come. But in a moment he recoiled in astonishment.

Seated on a ruined portion of a wall was a young soldier, apparently on furlough. A small bundle lay beside him in the rank grass; a short stick was still hooked within it. The man's attitude exhibited the deepest dejection. His head rested, hatless, on his arm. His attitude, the limp and hanging right arm, the hidden face, the whole pose of the poor fellow told a sad tale of disappointment. He had returned full of life and ardor to the place, perhaps his home, and found it deserted, the torn bills of the sale still flapping idly in the autumn wind which stirred his tangled locks.

Peter Whitney, notwithstanding his very unromantic name and calling, was eminently sympathetic. Of course he had no business to be so, but Nature, though she may fit us for certain callings, does not deprive us of our better feelings. We may harden ourselves, and pride ourselves upon our sternness. But Peter didn't. Lawyer though he was, he was tender-hearted.

"Poor chap!" he mentally remarked; "he has found his home deserted. Our house, by the way. Ah! I shall gain some information here."

It was rather a contrast with the scene which the Englishman had just left by the shore. Here the solitude tended to sorrow and to love; to the pity which is born of sorrow, and akin to love. The setting sun threw its glory upon the tree-tops in the southwest, and the poor young soldier lay despairing, travel-stained, and overcome with grief, as the shadows crept slowly along the ground in sympathy.

The spectator, after a while, advanced, and then paused. Again he advanced and touched the young man, who arose with suddenness, angry at being disturbed.

He glanced at the Englishman, and turned round again without speaking.

"My friend," said Mr. Whitney, kindly, "can I assist you? You are ill, sorrowful; I may help you. Do you know this place?"

Know the place, indeed! Was he not a native of it? Had he not lived there until the conscription came, and when he was paid to take the place of another young man? The money was welcome.

So much the stranger managed to gather from the half-indignant remarks of the soldier, who at length yielded to the kindly influence the Englishman generally exercised. He sat up, this young Frenchman, and, after a few minutes, recovered his vivacity. He told how he had been treated.

"You went as a substitute, then?"
"Yes; my relatives were poor; the man had held out threats. I loved my sister—oh! where is she? Monsieur, we were not always poor; we held up our heads once. The Republicans brought our family down. We were for the old regime, we others, but I went. My poor sister promised for marriage by her enemy and mine! Oh,

Pulcherie! ma belle sœur, ma pauvre petite!"

"Pulcherie your sister! Not Pulcherie Malais?"

"The same, monsieur. How could you know! You are English," said the astonished Frenchman.

"Yes; but I am also interested in this house and in her. An English firm owns the property; the rent has not been paid; the former owner, an Englishman, is dead; all is chaos; but your sister—"

"Yes, yes; tell me of her."
"She is in London—was in London a few days ago."

"Then Peter Whitney told the young man of his meeting with the young lady, and of his having escorted her to Lincoln's Inn Fields.

"Ah, yes! it is there her benefactor used to live. She has, no doubt, gone to him. Our aunt knew him well. He was a lawyer—an *avocat*!"

"What! an English solicitor? What was his name?"

"Bernardin—M. Jules Bernardin—he was our friend. He helped us; he assisted my father—my poor father—and lent him money on security. Then mon pere, he died, and my mother already had passed to heaven. My sister and my aunt remained. Young M. Desmoulins assisted us, for he pretended to love Pulcherie, monsieur; and I, like a fool, went away and left her. His attentions aroused the fears of my aunt and sister. They wrote to me. I was in the South; I could not come. Then they found the wretch Desmoulins had a claim on them; he broke up their home. Oh, monsieur, I wish I had died!"

Peter Whitney noticed that the young man felt very bitter against the young Desmoulins, and feared he would proceed to violence, so he said:
"Never mind; I can explain it. M. Bernardin is dead. Julius Bernardin was the partner in my patron's office. I have come to claim the property. I will manage M. Desmoulins. Leave him to me."

A sudden inspiration had seized the middle-aged bachelor lawyer. He had already a romance; he would find Desmoulins and Pulcherie, and then—

So he persuaded the young soldier to return with him, and assume his civilian attire; to quit the army if he liked afterwards, but first to come to England and find Pulcherie and the kind aunt. After much parley, this was all agreed to.

Next day the lawyer called on M. Desmoulins; found him a bully and a rascal; quelled him by stern threats of exposure in the tribunal and in the village, where he was hated. Finally, he succeeded in getting from him a quittance of all claims, and, with the French *avocat* who had accompanied him, took his leave.

In fifteen hours he was in London. The business had developed into a romance, and Peter Whitney was as eager as a boy.

"Then you do not think the place will suit me," said Mr. Barnstone, after talking the matter over. "It is dull, quiet, not near the sea. No; I will let it to some young couple who want to live and love alone. They may have it for a song. It's no use to me, and only a farm-house after all!"

"May I—have the—refusal, sir?" asked Peter, timidly.

"You, Whitney, you? Are you going to be a benedict, after all? Well, I am surprised. My good sir, certainly. You are a faithful, good fellow. Take it as a wedding present. It will cost me little, remember, and may do you good," he added, hastily. "No thanks, please."

"Miss Mallys wants to see you, sir," said a lad at this juncture.

"Let her come up," said Mr. Barnstone. "My charming French client," he added: "You shall see her. She is connected with this very house—my tenant. Ah! here she is."

As he finished speaking, Mademoiselle Pulcherie entered with a little woman, whom she called "ma tante." She at once greeted Peter Whitney, and in broken English and more voluble French explained to Mr. Barnstone and her aunt alternately how she had become acquainted with the "monsieur."

"Then you actually directed mademoiselle here?" said Mr. Barnstone. "If you had known, you might have saved yourself the journey. Have you any news of your nephew, madame?"

"Alas! no; he was in Africa, in the 144th of the line. He will come and find it desolate—our home. We must return, monsieur, to Dieppe. You have been an angel to us, indeed."

"Not a bit, madame, only doing my duty; in this instance a positive pleasure. Have you—pardon me—all necessities for your journey?"

"Madame need take no journey to see her nephew," said Peter, in French.

"How, monsieur? Is it possible—he is—he is dead?"

"No, madame; alive, well, and in London. He returned with me; I will bring you to him. I met him near the old home yonder."

Then Peter, in his plain but sympathetic way, told his story, and the ladies' eyes filled with tears of joy and happiness.

"Go," said Mr. Barnstone, wiping his spectacles. "Run away, good people; I am busy."

So they went and found Antoine, as had been promised, and after awhile the three returned to Dieppe. The following month, plain, good Peter Whitney crossed the Channel, and spent three weeks in France near his new friends. Lo and behold! the year after the old farm-house was again inhabited; not by Antoine, who had gone away on promotion—an officer; not by the kind aunt, for she lay in the village churchyard; but by "M. and Madame Vee-

nee," as they were called, who had come for "their honeymoon."

So Peter Whitney, the "old bachelor," met his fate—a charming wife and some fortune—in Pulcherie Malais—all, as some think, "by the merest accident," but you and I know better.

Furniture for Millionaires.

There is some wonderful furniture that I have seen. The suite consists of two very large couches, a piano, music cabinet, tables, chairs, footstools and curtains. They are designed and made for a New York millionaire, who has given no limit so far as price is concerned, so that the very finest material and the most skilled work have been secured. The designs are by Alma Tadema, whose picture, "A Reading from Homer," now in the Academy, is to be hung in the drawing-room for which the furniture is intended. I hear rumors of friezes and panels by Sir Frederick Leighton, of Roman sculptors at work upon the marble for the same fortunate room, and of other details, which lead me to the conclusion that if money is the root of all evil, it is also the root of all art.

The couches, chairs, and stools are upholstered in silk of a beautiful shade of pure gray, traversed by bands of exquisite embroidery in colors which are rich, but carefully subdued, as one sees them in Mr. Tadema's pictures. The ground of this embroidery is also silk, the color being precisely that of the bloom of a ripe plum. Upon this the tints of gold and orange, blue, red and brown, with slender curved lines of pure white, giving a peculiar delicacy to the whole, form a beautiful scroll-pattern. A rich trellis fringe of mingled gray and gold runs along the edges of the couches, and beneath it is a deep silk fringe of the plum-bloom color, which does not show, except in the effect of depth and richness it imparts to the upper fringe.

The woodwork of all this is simply incomparable, being a mixture of cedar wood, ebony, ivory and boxwood, inlaid with the finest mother-of-pearl to be had. Wherever there is a corner, a swan's head is carved out of the ebony, large caruncles forming the eyes. The labor of bending the ivory has been immense, for it is essentially a brittle substance. On the arms of the couches there are long, curved lines of tapering ivory, which gradually approach each other closely at the base, but gradually increase the interval of width as they rise.

The piano is not yet completed. The upper part of the musical cabinet is a copy of an Asiatic temple. The pillars are of fluted cedar-wood, the delicious red-brown of that beautiful wood coming out with great effect by reason of the carving. The capitals are carved ivory in a mellow tint of warm cream color. The rest is ebony inlaid with various woods and with exquisite mother-of-pearl, which glitters like jewels. The curtains that veil the recesses intended for holding the music are of gray silk embroidered in soft, rich colors, a lyre occupying the center. A large curtain is also of gray silk, with a curious embroidered dado, the ground of which is plum-bloom silk with a quaint design in sections, in each of which is a straight piece in blue and red.

The round tables are too lovely. The woodwork matches that of the other furniture, but is not a repetition. In fact, no two designs are precisely alike. There is something to study in each back of a chair, each side of a stool, each arm of a couch. The tops of the tables are of Algerian onyx, and they are like bits of golden sunsets caught and fixed to be a joy forever. So delicately, purely, transparently, effulgently pink is the ground of one of these, that it looks as soft as a rose leaf, though marble cold. Dashes of yellow and orange are splashed upon this ground and have a cloudy, dreamy look that makes one think of summer skylines.—*London Truth*.

Breaking Wild Horses an Old Art.

A recently published volume on the Russian art, by Mr. Maskell, shows that the great horse-tamer, Rarey, and his immediate successors, have merely revived a lost art. He describes a remarkable vase in a St. Petersburg museum, the frieze of which, composed of detached figures, represents the methods of breaking the wild horses of the steppes, as practiced by the Scythians two thousand years ago. "Most curious it is," he says, "to see here the lassoing and taming of wild horses as it is practiced at the present day by the Guachos of South America; and not only so, but in the minuteness of the details we observe characteristic parts of the method of horse-breaking which but a few years ago was introduced into England by Mr. Rarey, and excited so much wonder and curiosity. In the center of one side two wild horses are peacefully grazing on the plain, still in the enjoyment of their liberty. Next they are lassoed by the Scythians, and finally brought to the ground. In the center of the front of the vase is represented the method employed by Rarey. A Scythian is engaged in strapping up one of the forelegs of a horse, which he will presently bring on its knees by another cord, and, by wearing out its patience, show that he is the master (these cords were originally fine wires of silver, which were found beside the vase when it was first discovered, but have since been lost). To the right of the last-mentioned group stands a horse already broken in, and saddled and bridled. His master is engaged attaching hobles to his forelegs so that he may leave him partly at liberty while he joins the others in their work.

The children of Israel now number about 3,777,000 the world over.

HUMOR.

A MAN tried to piccolo note out of a piccolo, but it fluted to his head.—*Texas Siftings*.

THE grandest performance out—Niagara in her great cataract.—*Texas Siftings*.

THE man with the most faults grieves at his neighbor's one little shortcoming.—*Whitehall Times*.

It is said that Jay Gould's maxim is: "Buy an editor when you can—get him in jail when he won't sell."—*Detroit Free Press*.

THE man who can keep heaven in his heart while he has the other place in his stomach is the proper sort of Christian to tie to.—*Chicago Ledger*.

"Tis sweet to love.
But, oh! 'tis honey
To love a girl
Who's got the money."
—*Washington Hatchet*.

AN editor at Wickliffe, Ky., is also the undertaker of the place. It is needless to say he has the journalistic virtue of liking his bier.—*St. Paul Herald*.

"THEY tell me you have acquired a snug fortune, Mr. Grimes?" "Perhaps I have." "What was the secret of your success?" "Minding my own business, sir."—*Chicago Ledger*.

CHURCH music never sounds so thrilling as when the organ is playing "I seek no wealth but Jesus' love," and the deacons are pattering around the aisles with the contribution boxes.—*Fall River Advance*.

"MAMMA," said a little girl, "I think I will raise a mustache." "Impossible," replied the mother, "girls cannot raise a mustache." "Yes, they can, for I saw Annie raise cousin Charlie's mustache last night when she kissed him."—*Carl Pretzel's Weekly*.

REV. MR. TALMAGE says the average of newspaper life is five years, and that "most of them die of cholera infantum." An impression prevails that most of them die of cramp—of cramp, that is, in the publisher's pocket book. A weak circulation also proves fatal to many of them.—*Norristown Herald*.

If mail carriers are to be changed off, let them be succeeded by female carriers. It would save a good deal of annoyance. They would read all the postal cards, of course, and an arrangement might be made with them to throw away all the duns and circulars.—*Indianapolis Herald*.

A SCIENTIFIC writer says that to discover how an insect breathes, "take, say, a wasp or a hornet." He may mean well, but we shall not take either a wasp or a hornet. The person who takes a wasp or a hornet to discover how an insect breathes, is pretty apt to do some very rapid and vigorous breathing himself before he proceeds very far with the investigation. Better take an insect that doesn't violate the law against carrying concealed weapons.—*Norristown Herald*.

WHO IS HE? EH?
Behold him as he walks the streets,
With head erect,
Saluted by the boys he meets
With great respect.
His large blue eyes with pride aglow,
And lofty air,
He seems a master spirit, though
His feet are bare.
How jauntily his hat he wears,
The back pulled down,
Although some tufts of reddish hairs
Peep through the crown!
Now who may be this lovely bud?
Your ear incline:
He's captain of the champion club,
The small boys' "nine."
—*Boston Courier*.

COURTSHIP IN UTAH.—"Well, good-night, dearest George; I hope you will reach home safely. Cannot you call again to-morrow evening?" "No, dearest. To-morrow evening I go to see Ethelinda." "Well, the evening after?" "Sorry; but that's Angelina's night. It's a fact, dearest Aurora. Every night in the week is occupied now, and I have three matinees to do besides. But cheer up, dearest, we'll have a grand wedding some of these days, when I will be able to clasp you all to my heart, never more to separate." Then, pressing a fond kiss on his darling's lips, the lover takes his departure.—*Exchange*.

A WOMAN is far more sensitive than a man. She has finer feelings and a more delicate mind. There are a very few men who realize this, and in consequence woman is made to endure much unnecessary suffering. One of our merchants was going to church with his wife, Sunday morning, when she suddenly stopped and put her hand to her head. "What's the matter?" he asked, startled by the look of her face. "O! I have got on my brown hat." "Eh?" ejaculated the astonished man. She burst into uncontrollable tears. "What, Martha, what is the matter with you?" he demanded. "Don't you see what is the matter?" she returned in a sobbing voice; "I've got on my brown hat with my striped silk. O, what will people say?"—*Exchange*.

Eat Cheese.

Buy several cheeses and keep them through the winter. As they ripen, get older, they taste better and digest easier. Every American family should make cheese an article of diet, taking the place of more costly foods. Our basis for eating cheese is all wrong. It is eaten with pie. Do away with the pie, and eat cheese in the place of meat or as a partial substitute for it. To crowd pie and cheese into the stomach already crammed is to invite the doctor and encourage patent medicine. Better eat cheese as a food, spiced with good sauce, and patronize your own welfare. More cheese, more cows. More cows, better farms and more comforts at home.—*Exchange*.

THE Laplanders now number only 30,000 souls, and are constantly decreasing.