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A LITERARY RAMBLE.

ALONG THE THAMES FROM FULHAM TO CHISWICK.



A FAMOUS river is a natural conductor of tradition. We stand by this or that decaying monument, in this or that deserted chamber, and often find them as unsuggestive as the primrose was to Peter Bell. But with a river the case is different. It is alive. It was the contemporary of yesterday, as it is the contemporary of to-day,— as it will be of tomorrow when we shall no more tread its banks. For myself, I confess that I never look upon the Thames — that Thames which to me, as an impenitent Londoner, is far above either Amazon or Mississippi — without feeling that my apprehension of the past, or at all events that portion of the past with which I am best acquainted, is strangely quickened and stimulated. Beside the broad, smooth-flowing stream, now, alas! sadly harried of fussy steam-launches and elbowed of angular embankments, I have merely to pause, and memories

press thick upon me. I can see Steele landing at Strand Bridge, with “ten sail of Apricock boats” from Richmond, after taking in melons at Nine Elms; I can see “Sir Roger” and “Mr. Spectator” embarking at the Temple Stairs in the wherry of the waterman who had lost his leg at La Hogue. Yonder there is a sound of French horns, and Mr. Horace Walpole’s barge comes sliding past, with flashing oars, carrying Lady

Caroline Petersham and “Little Ashe” to mince chicken at Vauxhall, and picking up Lord Granby *en route* — “very drunk from Jenny’s Whim.” Or it is Swift, with “that puppy Patrick” in attendance to hold his nightgown and slippers, bathing by moonlight at Chelsea, and by and by posting home to tell Mrs. Dingley and Stella, in the famous “Diary,” that he has lost his landlady’s napkin in the water, and will have to pay for it. Lower down, at the Dark House at Billingsgate, there is the merry party of Hogarth’s “Five Days’ Tour,” setting out at one in the morning on their journey towards Gravesend, lying on straw under a tilt, and singing “St. John” and “Pishoken” to keep up their spirits. Or lower down again, at Rotherhithe, it is Henry Fielding, sick of many diseases, but waiting cheerfully (only that his wife, poor soul, has a “raging tooth!”) to start in the *Queen of Portugal*, Richard Veal, master, on his last voyage to Lisbon. Or again . . . But there would be no end to the “agains.” Moreover, I am but newly alighted at the Fulham and Putney Bridge Station of the Metropolitan District Railway (how bare and modern the words look!), and

am bound, under charter of my title, on a pilgrimage from Fulham to Chiswick.

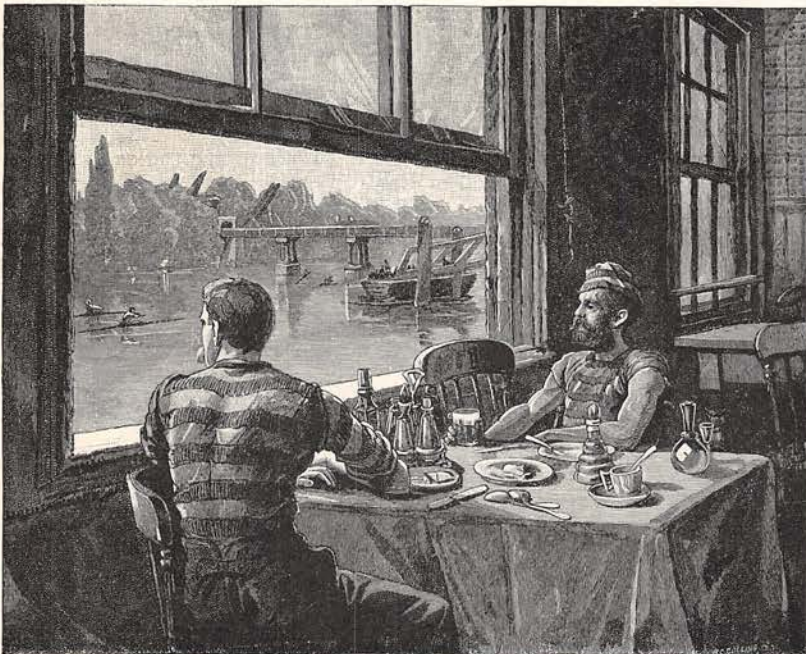
There is but little of antiquity about the Fulham of to-day; and it must be sadly changed since the time when Sir Robert Walpole, spurring hard from his royal master at Hampton Court, found it impossible to cross the river from Putney, because the Tory ferrymen, perfectly alive to his presence, were caressing at the "Swan" on the opposite bank. With those who incline to the romantic side of history, this incident is supposed to have been the prime cause of the fine old wooden bridge — the oldest, indeed, existing in the metropolis — which is now so soon to be supplanted by a more modern structure. For the moment it is still standing, with its picturesque toll-house, reminding one vaguely of that chamber over the gate which Longfellow has sung. But its days are numbered; and the mangle-mangle of sheds, and masonry, and snorting engines, and all the noisy concomitants of the new works, make it impossible to recover much of the ancient aspect of the town, still less to conceive it as a village remote from London, where Joshua Sylvester sunned himself under his uncle's "plumb-tree," and John Florio and George Daniel — nay, possibly even *William Shakspeare* himself — hobnobbed their parcel-gilt goblets over a sea-coal fire in the deep chimneys of the "Golden Lion." As I pass by Sir William Powell's pretty almshouses into the church-yard, and

up its pleasant avenue of limes, I am impressed by the recollection that no fewer than nine bishops lie in this quiet God's-acre. But my pilgrimage is literary above all; and I am more interested in searching for the resting-place of Vincent Bourne, that delicate eighteenth-century Latinist who put Hogarth's "Midnight Conversation" into hendecasyllabics, and whose delightful "Cornicula" Cowper translated as delightfully:

"There is a bird who by his coat,
And by the hoarseness of his note,
Might be supposed a crow," etc.

Cowper's publisher Johnson, the Johnson of the "Olney Hymns" and of Darwin's "Botanic Garden," is also buried here. And opposite the chancel is a tablet to Theodore Hook, the novelist, to whom I shall presently return.

With the exception of Ruddle's musical peal of bells, there is little to detain one in the church itself. Successive restoration, some of it quite recent, has taken the bloom off its old-world air, and it is notable chiefly for its ornaments. One of these, in the tower porch, is to Mordaunt of Avalon, father of Swift's "Mordanto," that gallant and eccentric Earl of Peterborough who married Anastasia Robinson, the singer. The statue in its center is by Bird, obviously the Bird of whose Cloudesley Shovel at Westminster Addison speaks with such contempt in a well-known



A WINDOW IN THE "STAR AND GARTER" AT PUTNEY.



FULHAM CHURCH.

“Spectator.” “That brave rough Admiral,” that “plain gallant man,” says he, “is represented on his tomb by the figure of a beau, dressed in a long periwig, and reposing himself on velvet cushions under a canopy of state.” My Lord Mordaunt’s effigy is designed in the same misguided spirit. He was constable of Windsor, and therefore appears in the full costume of an antique Roman, brandishing a baton of office, and turning his right leg out neatly so as to show the inside of the calf. Other curious monuments are those of Lady Dorothy Clark and Lady Margaret Legh. The latter is majestic in a wheel-farthingale, ruff, and veil. In her lap she has a quaint little swaddled figure, and a second stands on end at her side.

To the left of the church-yard runs Church Lane, at the corner of which is a curious pseudo-gothic house of the Strawberry Hill pattern, called Pryor’s Bank. The back looks towards the church; the front, with its gardens, faces the river. Its present name was

given to it in 1834, when it came into the possession of two kindly disciples of Captain Grose, who filled it with good-fellowship, and an *omnium gatherum* of

“auld nick-nackets,
Rusty airn cups, and jingling jackets,”

long since dispersed under the hammer, but of which Mr. Crofton Croker has given a minute account in his “Walk from London to Fulham.” Farther down the lane, on a spot now occupied by the unsightly aqueduct which crosses the river at the old bridge, stood Egmont Lodge, where Theodore Hook resided for the last ten years of his life. He was a frequent guest at Pryor’s Bank, and an indispensable ally in the mediæval mummeries and modern high-jinks which delighted its antiquarian proprietors. Barham has left us a passing idea of this secluded little retreat, with its high-walled garden and pet gulls; but his unwilling picture of the failing joke-



ALONG THE TOW-PATH.

spinner, sinking deeper and deeper into debt, over-burdened with literary work, and making desperate efforts (with the aid of brandy and water) to sustain his reputation as a diner-out, is a profoundly depressing one. It was while Hook was at Egmont Lodge that the author of "Ingoldsby Legends," calling one day at the house in its master's absence, left the following impromptu lines behind him — lines which Mr. Locker has thought good enough to be preserved in "Lyra Elegantiarum :"

"As Dick and I
Were a-sailing by
At Fulham bridge, I cocked my eye,
And says I, 'Add-zooks!
There's Theodore Hook's,
Whose Sayings and Doings made such pretty books.

"'I wonder,' says I,
Still keeping my eye
On the house, 'if he's in—I should like to try.'
With his oar on his knee,
Says Dick, says he,
'Father, suppose you land and see!'



HAMMERSMITH MALL.

“‘What, land and sea,’
Says I to he,
‘Together! why, Dick, why, how can that be?’
And my comical son,
Who is fond of fun,
I thought would have split his sides at the pun.

“So we rows to shore,
And knocks at the door—
When William, a man I’ve seen often before,
Makes answer and says,
‘Master’s gone in a chaise
Call’d a *hominibus*, drawn by a couple of bays.’

“So I says then,
‘Just lend me a pen’;
‘I will, sir,’ says William, politest of men;
So having no card, these poetical brayings
Are the record I leave of my doings and sayings.”

Omnibuses, it will be perceived, were still strange objects in June, 1834. Somewhere near Hook’s house must have stood the old Swan Inn from which the ferrymen defied Wal-

pole, and to which Marryat refers in “Jacob Faithful.” It was supposed to date from William III., and was burnt down as late as 1871. But I am straying from my route, which lies by Fulham Palace.

As I pass out between Pryor’s Bank and the church-yard, I enter upon the Bishop’s Walk. The river flows by me to the left, and on the right the moat separates me from the grounds of the time-honored manor-house of Fulham, so long the home of successive bishops of London. The elms and chestnuts are covered with sparks of spring, and ragged urchins fish, as always, in the half-dry moat. Across the trim lawns and between the tree-trunks come glimpses of the old chimney-stacks and patchwork of architecture, which have grown up under a long line of episcopal occupants, most of whom sleep in the adjacent church-yard. What Bishop Fitzjames added, what Bishop Blomfield preserved,

the library of Bishop Porteus, the chapel of Bishop Tait, the avenue of Bishop Compton, the summer-house where grim old Bonner interrogated his victims,—all these would be delightful to gossip about, if I were writing on elephant folio in a monster magazine. But space, in *THE CENTURY* at least, is limited. Meanwhile, strolling slowly along the Bishop's Walk, and watching the wide stream, where

ing across the river from this point, Barn Elms is nearly opposite. Here once lived left-legged Jacob Tonson, the bookseller; and here, in a room which he built for the purpose, the famous "Kit Cat Club" assembled. Here, too, dwelt Heidegger of the Masquerades, whom Pope and Fielding and Hogarth satirized; and plain-speaking Cobbett of the "Rural Rides." But the historical resident of



CHISWICK AIT AND GRASS BOATS.

a panting Kew-bound steamer is turning up the waves in such a track of molten silver as the late Cecil Lawson would have delighted in, I find I have reached the inlet known to oarsmen as the Bishop's Creek. Here, deviating slightly from the river, and leaving to my right a lofty avenue of elms, I strike into a lane which leads between meadows and thrush-haunted market gardens to the Crab-Tree Inn, a little hostelry at the end of a *cul de sac* by the waterside. There is nothing of interest on the way but Craven Cottage, a now rather dilapidated Gothic house, built by the Margravine of Anspach. Tradition speaks of remarkable internal decorations, palm-tree columns, and so forth; but its chief interest to me lies in the fact that it was once tenanted by Bulwer, who wrote some of his novels in it. Look-

Barn Elms was the poet Abraham Cowley, seeking in 1663 that "little Zoar" in the country which seems always the dream of the town-dweller. He did not find it, of course,—who does? The "small House and large Garden" of his aspirations was but "hired"; the air disagreed with him; his tenants cheated him; his neighbors put their cattle in his pastures. Moreover, the spot that he had "taken for an hermitage" was a favorite resort of cockney pleasure-seekers. Garrulous Mr. Samuel Pepys, sailing in his boat "as far as Barn Elms" and fortifying himself by "reading of Mr. Evelyn's late new book against solitude," sees with admiration "gallant ladies and people come with their bottles, and basket, and chairs, and form, to sup under the trees by the waterside." All this must have been fatal to "alma

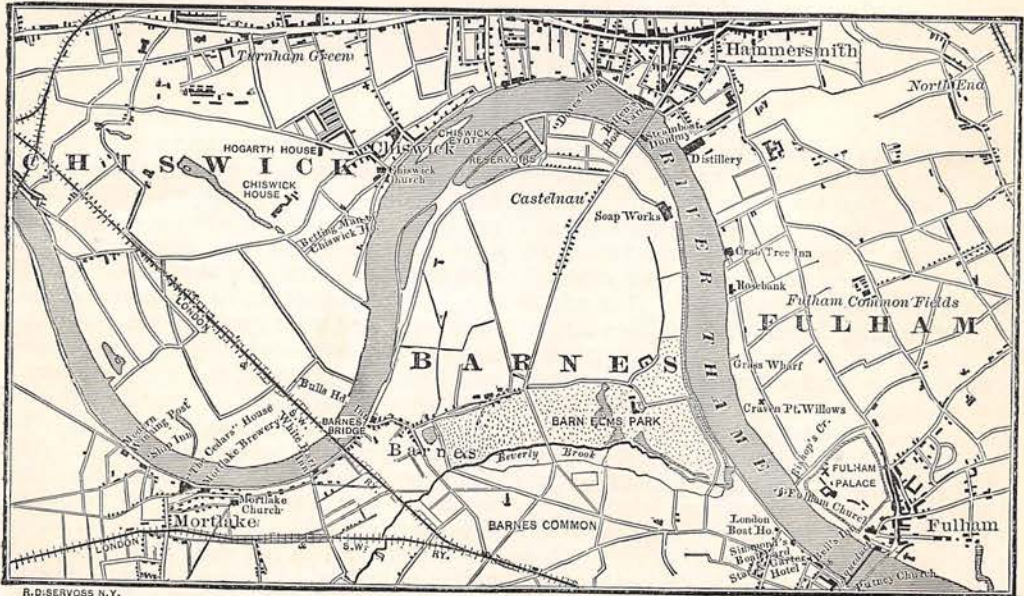


BARNES RAILROAD BRIDGE.

Quies" and her votary, who moved not long afterwards to Chertsey, where he died.
 There are barges with dead-leaf sails — such barges as Whistler used to delight in before he took to symphonies and *nocturnes* — unloading slates in front of the Crab-Tree Inn when I reach it. The name of the little ale-house is a misnomer now, for the old tree

with seats in the branches, which I so well remember, has gone the way of trees and men. Probably before long this peaceful "angle of the earth" also, from which so many seasons have seen

"Up the imperial stream flash the imperious eights," as the Collins-cum-Cayley line has it, will be



R. D. SERVOS, N. Y.

MAP OF THE UNIVERSITY COURSE.



HOGARTH'S TOMB.

surrendered to the brick and mortar destroyer. Ominous notice-boards, as to "desirable sites" and "capital frontages," are already beginning to appear in the neighborhood, and it is with a boding sigh that one turns from the river, a peep of which is thus afforded, into the Fulham Palace road. Thenceforth the journey lies through the ordinary Arabia Petraea of the suburbs, with nothing more delectable than a fly-blown announcement in a gin-palace window to the effect that it is the rendezvous of the "Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes." Farther on, in a humbler house of call, is a notice that a "Nose Club" has been held on the premises since 1867. This, with its highly realistic cartoons of the members, and its suggestion of the "Ugly Club" in the "Spectator," is my sole consolation until I reach Hammersmith Church.

At Hammersmith the work of "improvement" is going on even more actively than at Fulham. Already the church-tower has disappeared, and in its place is rising a spick and span modern edifice "of Mansfield stone, with fluted pillars of Belgian marble." Under this, what remains of the older building nestles forlornly. As I peer into it, I see dimly the time-black altar-piece which Gibbons carved and Cipriani decorated, and wonder mournfully what its ultimate fate may be. It can scarcely be transferred to the new church. Perhaps it will be purchased by the South Kensington Museum! In the nave is the monument of that stanch royalist Sir Nicholas Crisp, surmounted by a bronze bust of Charles I. Under this, in an urn, was the good knight's heart, which (says Faulkner) it was long the custom to "refresh" annually with



HOGARTH'S HOUSE.

a cup of wine. Worlidge the etcher is buried here, and Fielding's first biographer, Arthur Murphy. In the old days Hammersmith Church had its pulpit hour-glass, of which a late example may be seen in Hogarth's "Sleeping Congregation." Gay, too, refers to it in the "Shepherd's Week," when he says that the parson, preaching Blouzelinda's funeral sermon,

"Spoke the Hour-Glass in her Praise quite out."

To Hammersmith Suspension Bridge from Hammersmith Church is but a stone's throw. At the bridge foot is the old Mall, extending, with its rows of boats, along the river to Chiswick. A foot-bridge over a creek, round which lies a malodorous and populous district known as Little Wapping, divides it into the Upper and Lower Mall; and it is still shaded in parts by

tall elms which date from William and Mary, when its bastion-like frontage was also constructed. There are few houses of note in the Lower Mall; but between it and the Upper Mall, and next to the "Doves" public-house (where, by the way, is to be seen one of the last survivals of the ancient game of "bumble-puppy"), is a cottage called "The Seasons," from which Thomson is supposed to have inspected the frozen Thames and written part of "Winter." In the Upper Mall lived Charles the Second's neglected wife, Catherine of Braganza, and Queen Anne's physician, Dr. Ratcliff. Sussex House was the residence of Marryat, who filled it with sailor-like hospitality and farce *à la* Theodore Hook. But the most original dweller in the Upper Mall was Louis Weltje, cook to George IV., and owner of the hideous Pavilion on the Steyne at Brighton.



CHISWICK HOUSE GATE.

He died at Hammersmith, where his imperturbable Teutonic humor and excellent table attracted many illustrious visitors. In Angelo's chatty reminiscences there is a capital account of one of these gastronomic symposia, at which Bannister, Munden, and Rowlandson the caricaturist assisted, and the host mixed sauces, and told stories in his funny German-English. "Fon I got to de fost dumbpike beyond Kensington, from town, de goach stobed some time, fon me say 'Ged on'; fon de dumbpike say, 'Sir, dere be nobody on de bokes,'" etc. The charioteer, in fact, had fallen drunk off his perch, and was snoring comfortably under a hedge—while there were still hedges between Hammersmith and Kensington.

A little beyond the Upper Mall, but with its back to the water, is Hammersmith Terrace, a quiet, old-fashioned street, not without its memories. Here, for a time, lived Murphy, already referred to as buried in Ham-

smith Church, and here, as his dedication to Burke shows, he translated Tacitus. Here, too, lived and died the marine painter Philip de Louthembourg, who went mad about that queer impostor Brothers the prophet, and persuaded himself that he had the gift of healing, until the mob cured him by breaking his windows. Here, again, in our own day, lives one of the most learned of modern art critics, Mr. F. G. Stephens of the "Athenæum."

As, turning slightly to the left, I come upon Chiswick Mall, and see once more the shining water with its long eyot or islet of osiers, my pilgrimage is drawing to a close. Wandering slowly down the rows of pretty old houses, with their small-paned windows and quaint iron gates, I look almost instinctively for that famous "academy for young ladies," at the door of which, in the first act of her checkered Odyssey, Miss Rebecca Sharp of Vanity Fair

flung Johnson's "Dixonary" at poor good-natured Jemima Pinkerton. But, if I do not find this, I find something more important, and that is the house once occupied by Alexander Pope. It is No. 5 in a lime-fronted red-brick range, known now as Mawson's Row, but in Pope's day as "ye New Buildings, Chiswick." Here, after he left Binfield, and before he settled finally at Twickenham, Pope lived quietly with his father and mother, translating Homer, quarreling with Curll and Cibber, and writing Platonic notes to the blue-eyed Martha Blount. But, according to Carruthers, he was half ashamed of his Chiswick sojourn, "as forming an undignified episode between Binfield and Twickenham," and "he omitted all reference to it in his printed letters." Just beyond the turning out of the Mall which leads to Mawson's Row is the "Red Lion," at the door of which hangs an old whetstone, which, its inscription affirms, has "sharpened tools on this spot about 1000 years" (the last "o" has a most suspicious look!); and then, after a glance at Barnes Bridge in the distance, I come suddenly upon Chiswick Church.

And a restoration, desecration, desolation!

Chiswick Church, too, is being reconstructed. At Hammersmith the tower was gone, and the church left; here the church is down, but the tower is standing. Hoardings shut off the major part of the grave-yard, and the tea-caddy tomb of William Hogarth, now almost reached by the new-rising walls, is piously planked up from possible injury. Louthembourg's monument, with its inordinate epitaph, is still visible at the back; but for the resting-places of Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, of the beautiful lady of Ranelagh, of Richard, Earl of Burlington, and his architect Kent, one must take the word of the guide-books. Even the curious stone in the church-yard wall, placed there by the first Lord Bedford, has, for the moment, disappeared. It will be replaced much as the artist has here drawn it; but Chiswick church-yard will never be quite the same again, and the little picture of it in these pages chronicles a something of the past.

Hogarth's tomb, however, naturally suggests Hogarth's house, and my steps lead me mechanically from the church-yard to Burlington Lane, and so past the Feathers Inn and the crossways, to the well-worn, narrow gateway, flanked by its dingy urns.

Here, it is true, there is no restoration going on, and a little judicious repair (not reconstruction) would be of advantage, for the aspect of the place is ruinous in the extreme. The picturesque old red-brick house is wofully dilapidated; the great overhanging bow-window has a nodding, crazy look, and a jumble of pig-sties and rubbish encumber what, not so many years since, was a pretty well-grown garden. The mulberry-tree, nevertheless, which dates from the painter's day, still drags on a maimed but healthy existence, and at this precise moment of time serves for picket to a lean horse who is cripp-cropping the scanty grass-plot at its base. If, like Tennyson's "Talking Oak," it could

"plagiarize a heart
And answer with a voice,"

what would it not tell us! This scarred and blackened trunk, which spring, even now, is dressing with bright leaves, must have known William Hogarth in the flesh! It must have watched him scratching with a nail that homely mural tablet of Dick the bullfinch, which so mysteriously disappeared; it must have watched him playing ninepins in his filbert avenue, or strutting through the walks in the red



A PETER BOAT.

roquelaure he wore at Leicester Fields. It must have been acquainted, also, with those friendly guests who filled up the three-cornered inclosure on sunny afternoons. Hither, no doubt, when the "Epistle to William Hogarth" was yet unwritten, Mr. Charles Churchill would stroll with his pointers from Acton, bringing as his companion, it may be, that squinting patriot, "the heaven-born Wilkes." Or, to go back somewhat earlier in time, Dr. Benjamin Hoadley of the "Suspicious Husband" would ride up from Chelsea, or Dr. Ralph would look round to have a chat about the "Analysis," or worthy Justice Welch would make the dusty pilgrimage from Holborn. He it was who wrote that capital description of the "March to Finchley," in Christopher Smart's "Student"; and he has just said good-bye to Fielding at Gravesend. He has little hope of seeing his old colleague again, has honest Welch; and Mr. Ranby, Hogarth's neighbor and the King's Sergeant Surgeon, shakes his head in

confirmation. The famous author of "Amelia" has dropsy, and gout, and jaundice, and he is wasted to a shadow. When he was at Ealing, says Mr. Welch, the women were afraid to visit him, his aspect was so ghastly. But his heart is as brave as ever, and his cheerfulness is marvelous, and he is going to keep a journal of his voyage to Lisbon. So, I fancy, they sat and chatted, and puffed at their long pipes of Virginia, under the mulberry-tree in Hogarth's garden, "when George was King."

Turning down Hogarth Lane again, I almost expect to meet the compact and springy little figure of Mr. David Garrick, coming to make one of the party. But I am speedily restored to the land of realities. There are notice-boards again among the apple-blossoms as I pass by the gate of Chiswick House into the lime-shaded Duke's Avenue. The suburban builder once more becomes rampant; and my walk is at an end.

Austin Dobson.



THE TWO BELLS.

LONG years ago, so runs the ancient story,
Two bells were sent from Spain to that far clime,
New found, beyond the sea, that to God's glory
And in His house together they might chime.

And to this day one bell is safely swinging
Within its shel'ring tower, where, clear and free,
It hallows each day with its mellow ringing,—
The other bell, the mate, was lost at sea.

And when in gentle chimes the bell is pealing,
The people listen; for they say they hear
An echo from the distant ocean stealing,—
It is the lost one's answer, faint yet clear.

Ah, love, like those two bells we sailed together,
And you have reached your holy work and rest,
But stormy was the way and rude the weather,
And I was lost beneath the wave's white crest.

Over my buried heart the waters glisten,
Across my breast the sea-weeds wave and twine,
Dead is my soul's best life, save when I listen
And hear your spirit calling unto mine.

Then the old longing wakes, I start, I shiver,
I try to break the bonds which hold me dumb,
I turn, I strive with many a throe and quiver,
I feebly answer, but I cannot come.

Bessie Chandler.