

the devotion of a warm and constant heart;" and the proposal of marriage which Adolphus made that very day was declined.

But we must now return to our hints and cautions to young ladies. It is but too true that some of them, as soon as they are engaged to one gentleman, begin boasting about their conquests over others. This style of conversation is not at all pleasing to a suitor, not only because it tends to excite jealousy, but also because it suggests the idea that the lady will, should an opportunity offer, make him also the subject of her boasts.

We own that boasting ladies are less likely to be troubled with the painful passion of jealousy than those who are more diffident about their own powers to please; but very great self-confidence is by no means attractive. To the possessor of it, it is not a source of misery, like jealousy; but a very conceited girl is as displeasing as a jealous one. When Phoebe exclaims, "Oh, I think too well of myself to be jealous of any one else! where could my Thomas find any one equal to me?" hearing this remark, Thomas felt almost tempted to try; but what confirmed him in the idea that he might find some one, at any rate as much to his taste, was the disagreeable evening which Phoebe caused him to spend when he was last in her company. Let us listen to his own account of it, as given to a friend, who had also been visiting a young lady. This friend he met on leaving Phoebe's abode.

After the usual greeting, William D—, Thomas's friend, who was quite in his confidence, observed: "I suppose you've been spending a most delightful evening with Miss Phoebe? In fact, to tell you the truth, you seem to me still in 'Love's young dream.'"

"I'm not dreaming, I assure you," replied William. "I am very weary; and no wonder. For hours I have had to listen to Phoebe's account of her former conquests. The retrospect was so pleasing to herself that she did not perceive it was far from being so to me. She has such a retentive memory where her own praises are concerned, that she spared me neither the fine speeches made to her nor the copies of verses sent her. Last of all she stopped, positively for want of breath to go on.

"Oh, how different she was in the early part of our acquaintance! I really believe that, as soon as she knew my heart was her own, she ceased to value it.

"You know her mother is a nice, sensible woman. I could see how much her daughter's voluble boasting displeased her; but Phoebe was too much taken up with her delightful reminiscences to attend to any disapproving looks. When I perceived by the time-piece that it was ten o'clock, I rose, and, wishing the fair boaster and her mamma good night, took my leave, resolving not to repeat my visit in a hurry; and now come home with me, and take some refreshment."

"Oh!" replied William, "I have just left Miss L—'s house, where I have made a most excellent supper."

"I'm not surprised at that," answered Thomas; "Miss L— is a domestic young lady, and her great object is to make every one in the house comfortable. I'm sure she admires you, William; I wonder you do not propose."

"I think I should have tried my fate this evening," said William, "had I been left alone with her. When I dropped in she was reading to her father. On my entrance the book was laid aside, and, what

with conversation and music, the hours succeeded each other only too rapidly. Miss L—, or, as her father calls her, Patty, plays very pleasingly on the piano, and she accompanied me in some of my favourite songs. When love was the subject I'm sure I sang expressively. The old gentleman was highly delighted with the performance. A little

DEVIZES.

ONE of the pleasantest towns in the west of England is Devizes, which stands on an eminence nearly in the centre of the county of Wilts. The early history of the town is involved in a good deal of obscurity, and the origin of its rather singular name can with difficulty be traced.

In ancient records we are told the place is called *Devisæ*, which has a Roman sound; and Burnham, some four miles distant to the north-west, is the site of a Roman station, called *Verlucio*. At the latter place some remains, consisting of a bath and a tessellated pavement, were discovered about one hundred years ago. Further than this, we have no data by which to connect Devizes with the Romans. The town is called in other ancient documents *De Vies*, and *Divisis*.

The existence of the town seems to date from the reign of Stephen, when a strong fortress was erected here by Roger, Bishop of Salisbury. Nigel, Bishop of Ely, his nephew, afterwards garrisoned the fortress with troops, but was compelled to surrender it to Stephen, who threatened to starve his uncle Roger and the Bishop of Lincoln, if he refused to yield. The castle was afterwards seized by Robert Fitz-Hugh for Matilda; but on her arrival he refused to deliver it up, and was subsequently hung as a traitor to both parties. About the end of the reign of Edward III. the castle was dismantled, and scarcely a vestige of it now remains. The town, which gradually grew up around this fortress, received its first charter of incorporation from the Empress Matilda.

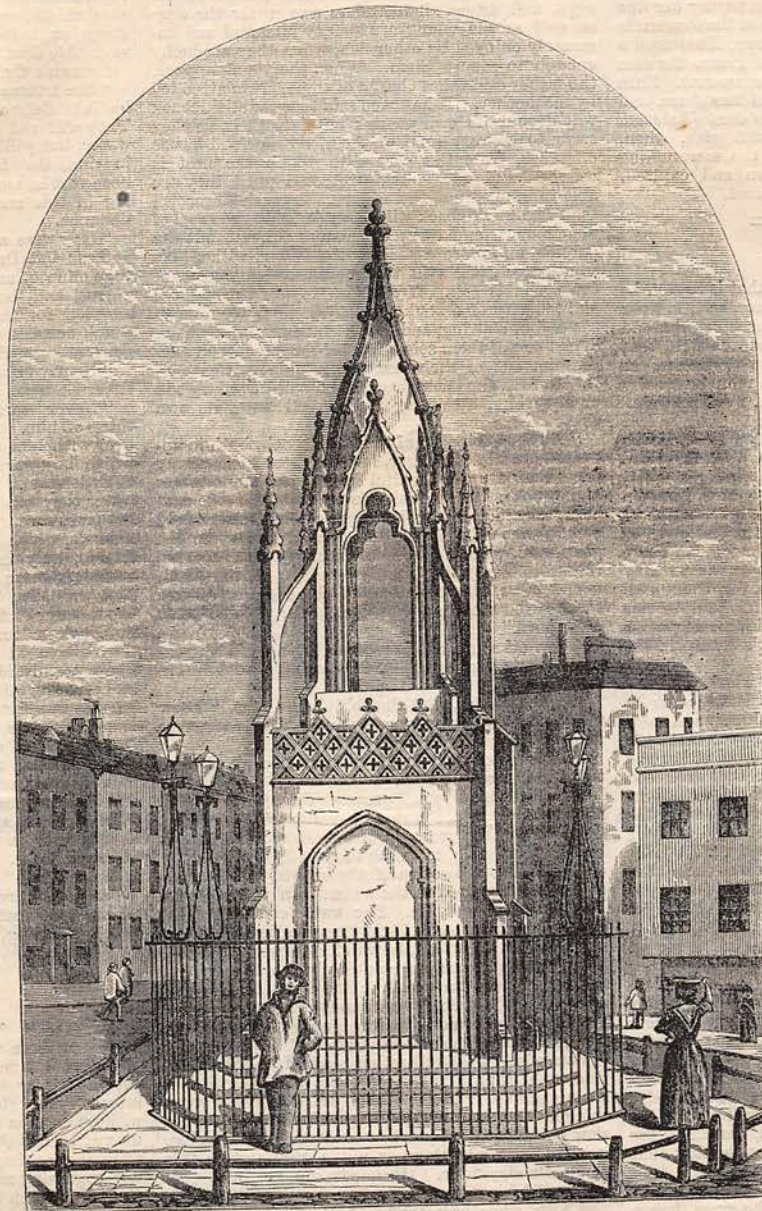
Devizes was besieged by Sir W. Waller in the Parliamentary war. The Royalists in the town were on the point of capitulating when Lord Wilmot—better known as the profligate Earl of Rochester and favourite of Charles II.—who had been dispatched by the king from Oxford, appeared before the town with 1,500 horse and two pieces of artillery. Sir W. Waller raised the siege and attacked Lord Wilmot, but was totally discomfited.

The modern town of Devizes is clean, well built, and well paved; and only a few old houses, of timber and plaster, still remain in various parts of the town to remind us of a former age. So far back as the reign of Henry VIII. the town was celebrated—as it still is—for an extensive corn market; and it is also remarkable for manufactories of silk, crape, and sarsenet, on which a portion of its

population depend for subsistence. Since the time of Edward III. Devizes has returned two members to Parliament; but the new Reform Bill proposes to remove one of these. The registered electors are under 400, and the population in 1851 was 6,554; the number of inhabited houses being then 1,292. Among the *habitués* of an inn in this town the genius of Sir Thomas Lawrence, the painter, received its first public recognition.

The Cross, the subject of our engraving, stands in the market-place, and bears the following inscription:—"This Market Cross was erected by Henry, Viscount Sidmouth, as a memorial of his grateful attachment to the borough of Devizes, of which he has been Recorder thirty years, and of which he was six times unanimously chosen a representative in Parliament. Anno Domini, 1814."

On the opposite side of the Cross is a tablet with another inscription, conveying to successive generations the following solemn narrative:—"The mayor and corporation of Devizes avail themselves of the stability of this building to transmit to future times



THE CROSS, MARKET-PLACE, DEVIZES.

while before supper was brought in, Patty disappeared. I am sure it was to superintend the preparation of the refreshments. Among other things at supper there was a dish of poached eggs, served up on excellent buttered toast. Patty's black eyes sparkled when I praised the dish and the cook, and she said with a smile, that of that particular dish she was herself the cook. She added, that she was rather fond of cooking, because her father always seemed to relish anything she had prepared. I thought to myself whether the wish to please me would ever rouse her to fresh exertions in any kind, domestic occupation; but when I gazed on her, and reflected on all her excellent qualities, I feared I could never aspire to such a treasure.

"Nonsense!" replied Thomas; "with your good position, and your reputation for steady conduct, I'm sure you'd be accepted directly by the father as a son-in-law, and by the daughter as a husband—I only wish I'd set my affections on a girl as likely to make me happy as Miss L— is sure to render you."

(To be continued.)

the record of an awful event which occurred in this market-place in the year 1753, hoping that such record may serve as a salutary warning against the danger of impiously invoking the Divine vengeance, or of calling on the holy name of God to conceal the devices of falsehood and fraud. On Thursday, the 25th of January, 1753, Ruth Pierce, of Potters, in this county, agreed with three other women to buy a sack of wheat in the market, each paying her due proportion towards the same. One of the women, in collecting the several quotas of money, discovered a deficiency, and demanded of Ruth Pierce the sum which was wanting to make good the amount. Ruth Pierce protested that she had paid her share, and said, "she wished she might drop down dead if she had not." She rashly repeated this awful wish, when, to the consternation and terror of the surrounding multitude, she instantly fell down and expired, having the money concealed in her hand!"

A FISH STORY.

My friend Jones is a naturalist; that is to say, he has made the fish, the birds, the trees, and, in fact, all of Nature's handiwork, his especial study, and can tell you tales of the forest and the field that would not only surprise my fellow-townsmen, as they have often surprised me, but more especially the dwellers among these unheeded wonders themselves.

As for myself, having been born and bred in the country, I have found it difficult to bring my mind to like the amusements of the metropolis; so that, whenever I can snatch a day from business, I hasten off to some rural district, and, armed with a gun or a fishing-rod, I proceed to punish the feathered or finny tribes that fall in my way. On some of these excursions I have persuaded Jones to accompany me; and I like to have him with me, for, though he knows very little about handling a fowling-piece or a fishing-rod, I always find his talk amusing when we are quietly resting after a day's tramp in the sun.

Often, when thus resting in the shade of some "spreading chestnut-tree," after a sunny walk in search of game, I have turned to Jones, and said, "Now, Jones, old boy, for some of your scientific stories!" and he has taken his text from either the bird I had just bagged or the tree that sheltered us, and told me of the wonders hidden, to all but the eye of the naturalist, within the feathers of the one or the branches of the other; and I have answered, that the study of natural history is a truly noble pursuit, and "none are so blind as those that will not see." The book of Nature is spread open before us all, and we have only to turn to its pages and read—to comprehend, to wonder, and adore!

One day last summer Jones accompanied me on one of my usual trips along the banks of a pleasant little stream in my native county.

How we got to our destination, and how many fish I caught, I do not intend to relate, my business being with a conversation that took place "under the shade of melancholy boughs," in the afternoon. I will mention, *en passant*, that Jones did not succeed in securing one solitary fish, as he had sadly neglected to attend to his line, but had followed his usual propensity of wandering about, searching for and picking up any object of natural history that attracted his attention.

At two o'clock we rested under a large tree, and, throwing ourselves at length along the grass, began to talk—or, rather, Jones talked and I listened. His discourse was to the following effect:—

"I passed by a pond just now, in which there was a populous community of sticklebacks. Most interesting sight!"

"Interesting!" I exclaim. "What interest can possibly attach to that which is neither beautiful nor useful?" But I check myself, for I remember that the commonest objects, the ugliest forms of life, are those which Jones most frequently selects as the subjects of his discourses.

"The stickleback," he continues—not heeding my exclamation—"is one of the few fish which builds a nest. The nest of the stickleback is not merely an excavation in the gravel, but is built of sticks and weeds interlaced. It is the male that is the worker, not only constructing the habitation, but taking charge of the eggs also."

I open my eyes, and utter an ejaculation of surprise, at which Jones looks pleased.

"The mode of building the nest is extremely interesting, and, as almost every one who has kept these little creatures in an aquarium has seen the operation, I can describe it to you with ease and certainty. The male fish begins by collecting por-

tions of wood, sticks, and such like matters, in his mouth, and carries them to some secluded corner, where he proceeds to arrange them in the form of a short tube, open at both ends. When he has fashioned it to his taste, he looks about for his mate, and allures her to the new abode. Here she spawns, and, her portion of the business being completed, retires. The gentleman now takes charge of the eggs, and drives all intruders away; for the eggs as well as the young are dainty bits, and are immensely enjoyed by other fish, when they are lucky enough to secure them. When the young appear, the father still takes charge of them, often attended by the mother. It has been said that the stickleback will devour its own young; but I doubt it, as they seem to be very fond of them, not as food but as offspring, from the care with which the nest is watched and the young protected until they are able to take care of themselves. A much larger fish than the stickleback will often dash into a crowd of young ones, and carry off many of them; but the parents, and more especially the father, with all his spines erect, will fight to the last, as long as one of the brood is left. If you wish to test the courage and tenacity of a stickleback, just tie a worm on to the end of a string, and drop it into a shoal of them. When one of them seizes hold of the worm, you may lift him out of the water without his leaving go of it. In fact, the stickleback is the bull-dog of a pond or aquarium, attacking fish several times its own size.

"As the antipodes of the stickleback, both in appearance and demeanour, look at those little pigmy dae that are so plentiful in many of our streams and brooks. These fish are extremely docile and easily tamed. I once had four of them that would come to the side of the tank when I tapped on the glass, and, when I fed them from my hand, seemed rather to like being gently stroked. They died, poor fellows, all except one of the slime—a disease which often attacks gold fish, and for which I know of no cure."

Jones asks me if I have ever kept gold-fish confined in a glass globe? I acknowledge that I have done so.

"And do you, oh! Smith," Jones says, "know that by so doing you were torturing the poor creatures, and slowly but surely killing them?"

At this I feel, am sure I look, alarmed, and want to know the reason why.

"Then I will tell you," proceeds Jones. "All fish, as perhaps you are aware, breathe air as well as other living creatures. But they have no lungs, as have land animals, in which to revivify the blood by exposing it to the action of the oxygen in the atmosphere, or dissolved in the water. In the place of lungs they have gills. The water containing the air passes into the gills, and there is brought into contact with the blood, to which it imparts new life, by removing its carbon combined with the oxygen of the air. These go off in the form of carbonic acid gas—an extremely poisonous compound, which, if allowed to accumulate in the water, will, after a time, destroy all animal life therein."

I am afraid I looked rather puzzled by this scientific mode of putting the case, and also alarmed at the appalling knowledge that I am doing the same thing as the fish, and aiding and abetting in the slow poisoning of my fellow-creatures. I therefore want to know why there is not a stop put to this wholesale slaughter. He heeds me not, and proceeds with his discourse:

"Now, when you confine half a dozen or more gold-fish in a globe of water scarcely large enough to turn round in, you compel them to become their own poisoners, and, though you give them fresh water every day, having been exposed to the action of the dread carbonic acid gas for even one half hour, their health has been attacked. The debility increases, and they eventually die before the proper period. Gold-fish never breed in globes, therefore they are not in a proper state of existence."

I look inquisitive, and for awhile Jones yields to my supplicating look. I want to know how it is that there are any fish living; or, if he comes to that, how there happens to be any animals living—how he lives himself? He proceeds to explain:

"All animals take into their lungs the gas oxygen, which exists mixed—not combined, mind you, but mixed—with the gas nitrogen in the atmosphere. This oxygen is used as a carrier of a useless substance from the body, for when it enters the lungs it unites with the carbon presented to it in the blood, and, forming therewith carbonic acid gas, escapes at the mouth again. As this operation is continually going on, after awhile all the oxygen would be converted into carbonic acid, and animals would die of suffocation. The Almighty has, how-

ever, provided for any such want, and plants have been created. Plants take up the carbonic acid, and, appropriating the carbon to build up their tissues, give off the oxygen in a free state to be again breathed by animals. The carbon again makes its way back into the bodies of animals through the agency of plants; for, though we should abjure all vegetable food and live entirely on beef and mutton, we shall still owe our food to plants; for the ox, the sheep, or, in fact, all animals we use as food, live on vegetable diet."

I remark that all flesh is grass.

"See! there goes an eel by. What a big fellow he is! Eels are, I believe, the toughest of fish. They will not only bear passing from salt to fresh water, but will travel overland if the pond or stream in which they have lived be dried up. They have been met in some numbers, in warm weather, travelling in this manner, like snakes, for a considerable distance."

"Eels were supposed to have no scales on their bodies; but Dr. Backland discovered that they are very minute, and have diffused over them a slimy mucus, and, being concealed, they are admirably adapted for the mode of life of these creatures, which consists of imbedding themselves in mud, or penetrating under stones and rock."

"Nearly related to the eels is the Mud-fish of the River Gambia."

"Never heard of him? Well, I'll tell you something of him. A certain Captain Chamberlain took over with him to England three balls of hard mud, which he presented to the Crystal Palace Company at Sydenham. When these mud balls were put into water they broke up, and inside were seen membranous sacs which opened to let out three curious animals, which at first sight appeared to be water-lizards, only having, instead of legs, four curious members more like tails, but by means of which they propelled themselves through the water after the manner of fish. They had lain inclosed in their mud prisons for eight months, so that when they were liberated you may suppose that they were hungry, and did full justice to the meal of worms and insects that was placed before them. The longest was sixteen inches in length; and for a long time they were supposed not to be fish, in spite of their mode of progression. Professor Owen, however, decided that they were fish, from certain peculiarities, and called them by the name of *Lepidosteira annectans*. This creature is of a rather graceful form, and a mud colour, having its greenish chocolate sides well set off by numerous elegantly-arranged lines, and some well-defined leopard-like spots, and—"

Jones is here interrupted by a strange noise, coming apparently from some object close at hand, and, on turning, finds I am asleep!

Oddities.

We often hear reference made to the Gipsy Queen. We meet with her in romances, hear of her in songs, encounter her in operas and melodramas. What interest does she impart to the *Troatore!* and without her the *Bohemian Girl* would lose half her interest. But Gipsy Queens in real life are not so attractive as they are in fictions. The accompanying engraving represents one of the most famous—Margaret Finch by name.

Margaret Finch belonged to the mysterious and unhappy Bohemian race. She was born at Sutton, in Kent, in 1631, and for eighty years was known in most parts of England, travelling from place to place, telling fortunes, and the rest of it; while the English were busy beheading one king, banishing another, setting up various forms of government, and pulling them down again. The Finch family suffered not by these civil turmoils. Margaret reigned over the gipsies as their queen for a long period of years, her throne unshaken, her crown undisturbed, at the time when greater monarchs were laid in the dust. When she became too old to wander about with the tribes, she fixed her court at Norwood in a cave in the hill-side. Night and day she remained in this place, sitting in oriental fashion, smoking a clay pipe, and taking, besides this, very little refreshment. She was extremely poor, but her indigence was voluntary; she might, had she so pleased, have reaped a golden harvest. Her celebrity as a fortune-teller brought large numbers of visitors, ready to cross her hand with gold or silver; but she cared neither to exercise her art, nor to accept the rewards they were willing to give. Just as she is shown in our engraving, with her dog and her pipe, she was to be seen for years in her