



Old South Leaflets.

No. 157.

The Lowell Offering.

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A WEEK IN THE MILL.

Much has been said of the factory girl and her employment. By some she has been represented as dwelling in a sort of brick-and-mortar paradise, having little to occupy thought save the weaving of gay and romantic fancies, while the spindle or the wheel flies obediently beneath her glance. Others have deemed her a mere servile drudge, chained to her labor by almost as strong a power as that which holds a bondman in his fetters; and, indeed, some have already given her the title of "*the white slave of the North.*" Her real situation approaches neither one nor the other of these extremes. Her occupation is as laborious as that of almost any female who earns her own living, while it has also its sunny spots and its cheerful intervals, which make her hard labor seem comparatively pleasant and easy.

Look at her as she commences her weekly task. The rest of the Sabbath has made her heart and her step light, and she is early at her accustomed place, awaiting the starting of the machinery. Everything having been cleaned and neatly arranged on the Saturday night, she has less to occupy her on Monday than on other days; and you may see her leaning from the window to watch the glitter of the sunrise on the water, or looking away at the distant forests and fields, while memory wanders to her beloved country home; or it may be that she is conversing with a sister-laborer near, returning at regular intervals to see that her work is in order.

Soon the breakfast bell rings. In a moment the whirling wheels are stopped, and she hastens to join the throng which is pouring through the open gate. At the table she mingles with a various group. Each despatches the meal hurriedly, though not often in silence; and, if, as is sometimes the case, the rules of politeness are not punctiliously observed by all, the excuse of some lively country girl would be, "They don't give us time for *manners.*"

The short half-hour is soon over. The bell rings again, and now our factory girl feels that she has commenced her day's work in earnest. The time is often apt to drag heavily till the dinner hour arrives. Perhaps some part of the work becomes deranged and stops. The constant friction causes a belt of leather to burst into a flame; a stranger visits the room, and scans the features and dress of its inmates inquiringly; and there is little else to break the monotony. The afternoon passes in much the same manner. Now and then she mingles with a knot of busy talkers who have collected to discuss some new occurrence, or holds pleasant converse with some intelligent and agreeable friend, whose acquaintance she has formed since her factory life commenced; but much of the time she is left to her own thoughts. While at her work the clattering and rumbling around her prevent any other noise from attracting her attention, and she *must think*, or her life would be dull indeed.

Thus the day passes on, and evening comes, the time which she feels to be exclusively her own. How much is done in the three short hours from seven to ten o'clock. She has a new dress to finish, a call to make on some distant corporation, a meeting to attend. There is a lecture or a concert at some one of the public halls, and the attendance will be thin if she and her associates are not present; or, if nothing more imperative demands her time, she takes a stroll through the street or to the river with some of her mates or sits down at home to peruse a new book. At ten o'clock all is still for the night.

The clang of the early bell awakes her to another day, very nearly the counterpart of the one which preceded it. And so the week rolls on, in the same routine, till Saturday comes. Saturday! the welcome sound! She busies herself to remove every particle of cotton and dust from her frame or looms, cheering herself meanwhile with sweet thoughts of the coming Sabbath; and when, at an earlier hour than usual, the mill is stopped, it looks almost beautiful in its neatness.

Then approaches the Sabbath—the day of rest! If the factory girl keeps it well, it must be at church; for there are some in every boarding-house who find an excuse for staying at home half the day at least. One of her room-mates is indisposed, another says she *must* write a letter to her friends, another has to work so hard during the week that she thinks she *ought* to make this *literally* a "day of rest," so that retirement and meditation are out of the question. But in the Sabbath-school and sanctuary her time is well spent. No one is more constant at church or earlier in her seat than the operative who has been trained to know the value of the institution of the gospel. The instructions which she receives sink deep into her heart, giving her a fund of thought for the coming week. Her pastor and her Sabbath-school teacher are felt to be her best friends; and their kindness is a strong allurement to her spirit, often keeping her long from her less-favored home. If it is said that many a one has here found a grave, shall it not also be said that many a one has here found the path to heaven?

The writer is aware that this sketch is an imperfect one. Yet there is very little variety in an operative's life, and little difference between it and any other life of labor. It lies

“half in sunlight—half in shade.”

Few would wish to spend a whole life in a factory, and few are discontented who do thus seek a subsistence for a term of months or years.

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WANDERINGS WITH THE PAST.

Alas! when assailed by sickness, how often do we thoughtlessly murmur without stopping a moment to reflect on the querulousness of our complainings. Not unfrequently may sickness be traced to some violation of the laws of our physical natures; but instead of attributing it to its true source, we are apt to regard it as a direct visitation from God, and in our selfishness secretly accuse Him of injustice. I say *secretly*, for I believe few have the hardihood openly to arraign their Creator; but the guilty feeling is not the less reprehensible even though it be hidden in the deep recesses of the heart. A few days' prostration by sickness, although many miles from the home of my youth and childhood's sunny haunts, have been passed by me not unpleasantly. While suffering, through bodily pain, my mind wandered back, and in imagination I lived over bygone days of pure unadulterated happiness. Again in the thoughtlessness of happy childhood I chased the gaudy butterfly as it sported from flower to flower, ever eluding my grasp. Once more I rambled over flowery meadows without any definite object in view, heedlessly plucking buttercups as I ran, admiring them merely for their bright colors, without ever thinking how they came to be scattered over the meadows so profusely, giving them a rich and glittering appearance, resembling the brilliant star-lit canopy over my head; and then at nightfall, when wearied Nature could exert herself no more, I eagerly sought my mother's side, and, placing my head in her lap, the low-murmured tones of a mother's unselfish love soon brought sweet and refreshing sleep, a welcome visitor, to my weary eyelids.

Again, I ran hand in hand with my youthful school companions, over hill and dale, and in greenwood shade, plucking forest flowers to crown the head of some little favorite, to whom we gave the romantic name of the wood-nymph. Among our number was one who was not undeserving this title. Anne N—— was truly beautiful. Her skin was of a pure white, and so transparent that the blood could be seen coursing through the blue veins of her temples; her cheek was tinged with that roseate hue which lends such an irresistible charm to the fashionable belle, but is still sweeter seen on the happy innocent face of the young school-girl; her auburn hair fell in natural ringlets over her neck and

shoulders; and her deep blue eyes sparkled with feeling and intelligence. Such was the outward form of Anne N——, and, when crowned with a wreath of simple wild flowers, she did indeed appear unlike one of earth's children. But not long was our wood-nymph permitted to remain with us. She was too pure and beautiful for earth, and, ere she had numbered fourteen summers, the Angel of Death transplanted her to a more congenial clime, where her pure spirit rests on the bosom of its God, and forever enjoys the fulness of His love. For a time the spirit of sadness seemed to reign over the before happy group. The woods no longer rang with merry laughter, the very flowers which had been so eagerly sought for wore a sickly hue, and no hand rudely snapped them from their parent stems. The brilliant rays of the sun appeared less dazzlingly beautiful, and finally all Nature seemed to mourn with us the loss of our favorite wood-nymph. Sadness cannot long sit enthroned in youthful hearts, and many suns had not risen and set before Anne was apparently forgotten by the light-hearted group; but there were some few of the number who *could not* forget, and they often breathe a sigh and drop a tear to her memory.

Fancy carried me still on until I entered an academy some miles distant from my father's, where I found another gay group of laughter-loving girls, who were ready to be my companions in hours of merriment and study; but, oh, how slowly sped time! 'Twere an age in fancy before I was recalled to make one of the happy group that gathered round my father's fireside; and here I would, but *cannot*, picture my enjoyment,—'twas happiness,—a happiness which can be felt, but not uttered. Again, in fancy I enjoyed the society of parents, loved brothers and sisters, once more we read and worshipped together, and then came those delightful moonlight rides on Otsego's lovely lake, whose pure waters reflected the happy faces that filled our frail barque. And when, at length, imagination became wearied with roaming 'mid past scenes, and returned to take cognizance of what passed in present time, I mentally thanked my God that, though suffering through bodily pain, my mind was untrammelled, and free to review not only past and present, but also to speculate on future scenes of happiness.

E. D. P.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY. NO. II.

RECOLLECTIONS OF L. L.

(Concluded.)

A DREAM, OR THE PALACE OF HAPPINESS. One evening young Anna wandered to the side of a brook, and, seating herself on the soft moss which covered its banks, she fell asleep. She thought she saw something upon the water that looked like an eggshell. As it approached, she perceived that it was a small boat, containing a fairy, who was not much larger than a grasshopper. Anna sat gazing with surprise, when the fairy got out of the boat, and said, "Follow me!" Anna obeyed; and the fairy led the way to a rock which was near. She knocked three times, and then the rock opened, and a train of fairies, dressed in sky-blue, appeared. "We are now at the gate of my palace," said the fairy: "you must follow me

still." Anna followed her into a room hung with curtains of every color of the rainbow around which stood fairies, who bowed as they passed. They proceeded through a long passage into a garden, at the end of which was a bower. Here they sat down; and the fairy said, "My name is the Queen Innocenta, and this palace is called the palace of Happiness; those fairies whom you saw are my subjects. I have long known you, and have wished to give you something as a mark of my love." She rang a little bell, and two of the fairies appeared. She whispered something to one of them, and they both disappeared. Anna did not know what this meant, and was about to ask the queen, when they came again, and with them three of the most lovely creatures she ever saw. "My love," said the queen, "I give you these three maidens to watch over you, and protect you. Their names are Modesty, Piety, and Humility; and"— She was about to add more when Anna awoke; and the crickets were chirping, and the nightingale singing, so she traced her path home. L.

But the predominant taste was for rhyming. Out of the "acres" of poetry we select a few.

SUNSET.

Sunset! when the bee to his home wings his way.
 Sunset! when children love dearly to play
 'Mid the flowers and the trees, on the soft tender grass;
 And chase the gay hours till thy red light is past.

At sunset the reaper returns from his toil.
 Sunset with dew-drops refreshes the soil.
 Sunset sheds richness and glory around
 Which through the long day but rarely are found.

Sunset! we love thee! we love thy cool hours,
 When the sun's parting ray gilds our garden of flowers!
 And often, oh! often at sunset may we
 Be thankful to God, and low bend the knee.

TO AN EARLY FRIEND.

Full many a year has passed away
 Since we were wont to range
 O'er hill and dale, so blithe and gay,—
 But with the years we change.

Our childhood's happy days are gone.
 Then we were never sad;
 In flowery paths we tripped along,
 And all around seemed glad.

And we've been thoughtless, giddy girls,
 Fluttering in each gay scene;
 Round pleasure's vortex lightly whirled,—
 'Twas like a witching dream.

The dream has fled; and we have found
 Earth's joys unreal are;
 They're but a name, a hollow sound,
 And false as they are fair.

6

Though life's bright morn has not declined,
We oft have tasted grief;
And pleasures of the world, we find,
Afford us no relief.

We know for every wounded one
A sovereign balm there is:
Then we will leave earth's joys alone
And seek this heavenly bliss.

LIFE.

Childhood's like a tender bud
That's scarce been formed an hour,
But which, ere long, will doubtless be
A bright and lovely flower.

And youth is like a full-blown rose
Which has not known decay,
But which must soon—alas! too soon —
Wither, and fade away.

Old age is like a withered rose,
That bends beneath the blast;
But though its beauty all is gone,
Its fragrance yet may last.

THE FAIRY'S INVITATION.

Oh, come with me, maiden! oh, come with me!
Far over the hills, far over the sea,
Where the eagle his eyry has built in the cliff,
Or glide with me in my light little skiff.

We'll fly to the clouds! we'll down to the sea!
We'll go where the dolphins are sporting in glee;
We'll dive through the waves to the coral halls
Where the sea-fairies hold their midnight balls!

Come! visit our palace at dead of the night!
Come! visit our fairy-land, merry and bright!
Where riches and splendor and happiness dwell;—
Oh, come!—if you do not, I'll bid you farewell!

FAR AWAY.

Far away, o'er the blue hills far away,
'Mid the mountains and vales of my own dear home,
My weary soul wanders through darkness and day,
And longs for the time of returning to come,
Far away! far away!

Far away! oh, my hope soars far away
 To a happier home, beyond the blue skies!
 Then may I, when done with this temple of clay,
 Reach that home where the pure in heart will rise,
 Far away! far away!

L.

THE VOICE OF PEACE.

I heard a voice come from a leafy bower,
 I stood, enchanted by its magic power;
 'Twas in the birds' sweet warbling, soft and clear;
 'Twas in the murmuring of the summer breeze;
 'Twas in the rustling foliage of the trees;
 In those sweet sounds it whispered, "Peace is here!"

I heard a voice come from a cottage hearth,
 Where sate a peasant group, in happy mirth,
 Singing their rustic song, devoid of fear.
 And, as I slowly trod my thoughtful way,
 It rose, and with the cotter's evening lay
 It loudly, gladly warbled, "Peace is here!"

I heard a voice come from the churchyard's gloom;
 From the dread calmness of the silent tomb;
 It wandered through the foliage dry and sere;
 'Twas where the willow's weeping branches wave
 Above the lonely stillness of the grave;
 And mournfully it echoed, "Peace is here!"

After a while some of those pieces were inserted in a paper which was formerly published in the city. This was the first time the writer had appeared in print, and she had, of course, a due appreciation of the honor, to which she had looked as something quite unattainable.

A little article of hers, entitled the "Voice of Peace," received in the same paper an elegant *puff*, or one which would have been elegant, had it not been spoiled by a ludicrous typographical error. It was mentioned as being written by "a young lady of thirteen," who was beyond a doubt "inspired by the *nurses*" instead of "*muses*."

The Diving-Bell was discontinued on account of the family again breaking up. Several of its contributors wrote for the Offering after its commencement, although none of them yet have become, and probably do not expect to be "great characters among the folks."

The writer became a member of the first Improvement Circle in Lowell, after it was established. She well remembers the first evening she met with them. She had a deep sense of her inferiority, for they were all young ladies, while she was but a child; and when, after they had read their sensible and well-written articles, she was called upon to read her poor little piece, commencing so loftily, "What a noble and

beautiful thing is mind!" it really seemed as though she would have an age fit. But she soon got over that, and became as bold as almost any of them.

When the Offering was started, she was living in her native town, but returned a few weeks afterwards. One article of hers, entitled "My Burial Place," was inserted in the first series. When the "Operatives' Magazine" was commenced, being well acquainted with its writers and publishers, she lent it the aid of her effusions. Since the Magazine and Offering were united, she has been a constant contributor. She has written because she loved to write, because it pleased her friends, and because she thought the object a good one. And, in conclusion, she craves the reader's pardon (if she has one) for the foolish things she may have said of herself, and claims the printer's thanks for sparing his "I's."

L. L.

LINES ADDRESSED TO MY MOTHER DURING ABSENCE.

Mother, thy child is lonely now,
And fain would she recall
The moments when her childish brow
Was free from sorrow's pall.
I'm weary of this loneliness,
This solitude of heart,
My spirit finds a wilderness
Whence it would fain depart.

I care not for the festive hall,
The brilliant and the fair;
Their mirth is but a mockery all,
'Twill never bind me there.
Give me one hour within my home,
Beside my mother's knee;
'Tis better far than sleepless nights
In halls of revelry.

It seems but yesterday since I
Clung closely to thy side,
In infant glee, nor dreamed of care
And its dark heaving tide.
Oft hast thou watched, nor tho't of rest,
Beside my weary bed,
And pillowed on thy tender breast
My aching drooping head.

Oft 'neath the mantle of thy love,
At eve, I've sunk to rest,
While innocence, like that above,
Was cradled in my breast.
Pure as the robe that winter wears
Was my young spirit then,
Nor trace was found, where troubling Care's
Dull step had ever been.

Mother, I feel a change hath come
Upon my spirit now,
Hope over life's blue arch hath flung
Wide her resplendent bow.
This earth appears all beautiful
Clad in her radiant smile,
Tis the bright gleam that Heaven hath given,

Our pathway to beguile;
And in this heart are yearnings deep
For all that's pure and high,
A void which all the mists of time
Can never satisfy.

And thou, too, mother! thou art changed,
Time's withering hand hath strewn
Sere leaves of age about thy path;
And that sweet kindly tone,
That voice so full of tenderness,
I seem to hear it now,
Mingles a sad and mournful strain
That tells of hopes laid low.

Thy silvered hair, thy bended form,
And faltering step proclaim
That darkening change hath passed o'er thee,
For thou art not the same
As in the days of early youth,
When from thy soul-lit eye
Beamed joy and hope; and sunny hours
On golden wings flew by.

But art thou changed? Changed! No: to
me

Thou art the very same
As when in hours of infant glee
I learned to lisp thy name,
And on the altar of my heart
Thy love-fires glow as bright
As when they first were kindled there
In childhood's golden light.

No; tell me not that change can come
Upon the faithful heart;
A mother's deep and ardent love
Is of herself a part;
It slumbers not in the cold grave,
It may not heed Death's chains,
And, till her sun of being sets,
A mother's love remains.

M. A.

THE SPIDER AND THE FLIES.

A cunning spider, having one day spread his fly-trap at the entrance of his dwelling, seated himself in his easy chair, to doze away the time until he should hear the welcome sounds of his victims. He had not long to wait, however, before he heard the merry tones of the flies, and well he knew that the alluring temptation which he had spread for them would beguile them from their path. So he arose and stretched his lazy limbs, and walked to the door, and there he beheld a number of them sipping the delicious juices. Then the old fellow rubbed his hands in ecstasies of delight, as he saw them getting more and more entangled in the silken meshes of his web; for he knew he should reap a rich harvest. And what cared he for the suffering of the poor creatures, so long as he stripped them of all they possessed?

But, Mr. Spider, beware! A day will come with you when you may not be able to settle the accounts against you.

ELIZABETH.

LETTER FROM VERMONT.

BURLINGTON, VT., May —, 1845.

Dear H.,—As I have a few leisure moments this beautiful May morning, I will tell about my visit to Plattsburg. But first let me tell about something nearer home. How I wish you were here with me this minute, to drink in the grandeur of Champlain scenery! From the window at which I am scribbling, you can see up the lake, down the lake, and across the lake. Brother's house is very pleasantly situated on College Street, one mile from the University, which is at the head of the street, and twenty rods from the shore of Champlain. The street is so straight that you can see its extreme points with their respective terminations from any part of it. Yesterday I went to church, and listened to an indifferent sermon. The singing was good. One female sang exquisitely. I have never heard a better singer, *excepting* my own dear sis, Mrs. L. My statistical knowledge of Burlington is very limited. I should judge there were about as many inhabitants as there are in Haverhill, Mass. (four thousand), though the village occupies much more ground, being less compact. I believe there are about half as many shepherds of Israel here as there were apostles of the primitive faith. This is a small number in a place where there are thirty lawyers to dog the flock, and half a score of physicians to butcher. That there *are* thirty-two limbs of the law seems most too much to believe, but I have been told so. Burlington is a very eligible place in a commercial point of view, and the docks present a scene of activity and enterprise, as there are steamboats, sloops, or some kind of water craft coming and going the most of the time.

But methinks it is time to dismiss these digressive preliminaries, and hasten to tell you about my visit to Plattsburg. I went there with a young friend, a girl about eleven years of age. Mr. L. would have been my companion, but he had just returned from Montreal so fatigued that I could not insist upon his going, therefore contented myself with the company of his daughter, which proved to be very good. The morning was unusually fine, and we went aboard of the Winooski (a steamboat which makes daily trips between Burlington and Plattsburg) about seven o'clock A.M., with hearts as light as the down of a thistle. (Some ladies squirm most dreadfully at the idea of going anywhere without a gentleman's arm to hook up to. For one I am no stickler for the etiquette of society; and as for feeling any repugnance on the account of danger, why it is absurd. I could willingly go from Tallahassee to Quebec "all alone," if occasion called. We may become custom-hardened to almost everything but eating clamshell soup. It is a serious fact that I seldom have a gentleman to go and come with, or, if I do, it is a sister's husband or a spouse-to-be of some friend. Now who will dissent from the point I have tried to elucidate in view of this self-evident position? Lest my long parenthesis should too much retard the progress of my story, I'll make my mark here.)

The sun had risen in unclouded splendor, and was now pouring down a flood of golden light on the woody and wild scenery which environed us. No breeze crept over the "guardian mountains" of Champlain strong enough to rock the "patriot's cradle and the soldier's grave"; but all was calm as the hush of contentment, or the Sea of Galilee after the great Captain had spoken, "Peace, be still," to the turbulent waves. You may readily imagine what my sensations were, as this was the first time I had ever been in a steamboat, and this, too, on Lake Champlain, the scene of glorious warfare, and also hallowed by the memory of Lucretia and Margaret Davidson. Well might the younger write, when away from home:—

"Thy verdant banks, thy lucid stream,
Lit by the sun's resplendent beam,
Reflect each bending tree so light
Upon thy bounding bosom bright;
Could I but see thee once again,
My own, my beautiful Champlain."

The beautiful islands that peep up from amidst the shining waters reposed upon the tremulous breast of the lake, like diamonds on the bosom of a queen, while the forest-crowned mountains on the Vermont side cast their shadows in the mirror below, in picturesque beauty and distinctness. It was too early in the season for the shores to be adorned with dense shrubbery and flowers of every perfume and hue, yet there was a newness of beauty, a harmony of coloring, which made amends for these, and perhaps imparted more elasticity of spirit than could be enjoyed in a trip in July or August.

We made one landing-place, and this was at Port Kent, a small village of minor importance and of small attractions. The distance from Burlington to Plattsburg is twenty-five miles, and Port Kent half-way between. Arrived at Plattsburg before ten, where we found much going on in the shape of loading and unloading. However, amidst all this precious bustle, we were soon furnished with a carriage, which carried us to the Mansion House, I believe, while the beautiful Winooski wheeled eastward, and puffed, pawed, and snorted away in the direction of Grand Isle.

The first thing that took my attention when we commenced our search for the lions of the place was the ancient look which scowled upon us wherever we turned our eyes. There are some massy granite buildings, but they indicate more wealth than good taste. Flower gardens and ornamental trees are few and far between. Nevertheless Plattsburg is a place well worth visiting, if for nothing but the valuable associations interwoven with its history. The place where Sir George Provost led up his formidable forces against the American works, and was so valiantly repulsed by an inconsiderable body of militia under the command of General Macomb, cannot fail to excite our interest. Possessing, as it does, superior advantages for commerce, with a fine country stretching back of it, why does its appearance represent so little public spirit and thrift? It is pleasantly situated on each side of the Saranac, which pours its waters into Cumberland Bay, where the fleet of MacDonough was moored when the British squadron was seen approaching them in battle array. All readers are familiar with this naval engagement, or ought to be. MacDonough's victory on Lake Champlain, Sept. 11, 1814.

We walked by the house formerly owned and occupied by Dr. Oliver Davidson, and noted for being the birth-place and home of Lucretia and Margaret Davidson. Alas! for that beautiful fabric of fancy I had reared up from the description given by Margaret, of her "darling home," "the old mansion so dear," "the dear old home," etc. And is this all that remains of the "neat cottage which peeped forth from the surrounding foliage the image of rural quiet and contentment"? Where is the "old-fashioned piazza which extended along the front, shaded with vines and honeysuckles, and the wild rose and sweetbriar that twined over the neat enclosure"? I had thought to contemplate a venerable-looking cottage, romantically nestled down amidst rich old shrubbery that was trained by hands now mouldering with the dust of the valley; but instead of this I saw an unsightly house, perched upon the high bank of the Saranac, which looked as though the winds of seventy winters had whistled through its perforated walls. The window glass was broken in many places, and recourse was had to old hats, pants, and jackets for substitution. One window at the end of the house was gone,—sash, frame, pane, and putty. There, at that window, thought I, perhaps Lucretia composed some of her sweetest poems, though it did not look as though it could ever have been a favorite re-

treat of the muse immortal. Oh, if the departed are permitted to take cognizance of earthly scenes, how must the spirits of Lucretia and Margaret weep "such tears as angels weep," when hovering over the once beautiful, but now forlorn, mansion. In a poem which Margaret wrote in 1838, she gives us some intimation of decay in these lines:—

"Oh, my loved home, how gladly would I rove
Amid thy soft retreats, and from decay
Protect thy mouldering mansion, tend thy flowers,
Prune the wild boughs, and there, in solitude,
Listless remain, unknowing and unknown."

In the same poem she says,—

"Before the threshold
Tower the lofty trees."

There are still four poplars before the house, "rocking to the murmur breeze," but they look old and forsaken.

From this place I proceeded to the village burying-ground. I was told by a resident that none of the family were buried there; but Margaret, in one of her poems addressed to her native village, wrote,—

"There a sister reposes unconscious in death";

and from this I inferred that Lucretia's grave must be there. It is situated in a retired spot, a little out of the village. As we approached it, we saw a funeral procession, the largest I ever beheld, winding down the hill, with solemn tread and slow, to deposit the remains of a beloved friend in the grave. We followed the men, women, and children of sable weeds to the newly made grave, and saw the coffin let down, there to remain

"When granite moulders, and when records fail."

Some very appropriate remarks were made by the minister, and then all turned and went away.

I had no trouble about finding the resting-place of Lucretia, but went directly to it as if by instinct. The grave is enclosed by a wooden paling, and has a cone monument of unobtrusive dimensions. On the west side you read, "Lucretia M. Davidson was born Sep. 27, 1808, and died Aug. 27, 1825, aged 16 years and 11 months." Upon the south side is,—

"Beauty and innocence lie here, whose breath
Was snatched by early not untimely death."

and

"We laid her in the cold damp earth
When autumn cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely
Should have a lot so brief."

“Yet not unmeet it was that one,
Like this young friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful,
Should perish with the flowers.”

Below are these words, few and unassuming, yet how pathetic, “This monument was raised as a testimony of affection, by her mourning father.” At the foot of the grave stands a rose-bush and a sweetbriar, which have attained considerable maturity and height, yet were budding out fresh and fair. Within the enclosure are many “wee flowers of the heather,” looking up with their innocent blue eyes from amidst the grass; and scattered about are their pale-faced sisters, the strawberry blossoms. I plucked some of them, which I will enclose to you in this letter. It was a quiet, meet, and sacred spot. “Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place on which thou standest is holy ground.” I felt it to be so. A sacredness seemed to be infused into the air I breathed, and I almost feared that I should profane so consecrated a spot.

A few paces from this stand two pine-trees, sentinel like, sighing a mournful requiem over the ashes of those who fell in Plattsburg on the memorable day, Sept. 11, 1814. I believe I counted near twenty graves. Here are friend and foe sleeping as peaceably, side by side, as members of one household. No thirst for military distinction will ever animate their breasts, and urge them on to deeds of valor, or feelings of revenge quicken those who are gathered to the harvest of death. Long will their swords and muskets hang up in the halls of their children, sad memorials of their tragical exit.

While I was standing by the graves, a passage in Byron’s “Age of Bronze” forcibly struck my mind. Do you remember it?

“But where are they—the rivals?—a few feet
Of sullen earth divide each winding sheet.
How peaceful and how powerful is the grave
Which hushes all,—a calm unstormy wave
Which oversweeps the world! The theme is old,
Of ‘dust to dust,’ but half its tale untold.
Time tempers not its terrors; still the worm
Winds its cold folds, the tomb preserves its form,
Varied above, but still alike below,
The urn may shine, the ashes will not glow.”

Between the pine-trees and equidistant from each is the grave of George Dounie, who was a post-captain in the Royal British Navy, and fell on board one of his Britannic Majesty’s ships in attacking the American flotilla at Cumberland Bay, Sept. 11, 1814. His monument is a plain marble slab, raised horizontally on a granite base. Near his tomb are two monuments for American officers, which are similar. I have forgotten their names. It was a thick cluster of gravestones, but

some of them were of the most humble size. I should think this was a scene of more pilgrimage than the grave of Lucretia Davidson, by the looks of the grass and the battered corners of the monuments. I regret that I had no pencil with me on the spot so as to take down the names of those whose memory should be perpetuated. There was one inscribed Jackson and another Hale. The others I have forgotten.

As my letter is getting to be long, I will leave the rest to tell some other time. Till then I subscribe myself,

Yours with much esteem, M. R. G.

P.S.—Monday evening. We have just returned from a drive to Burlington Falls, or Winooski Village, as it is called. It is a little romantic-looking place, cuddled down within a cirlet of hills; and what do you suppose I saw there? A *cotton mill*, so I *guess* there are factory girls in these regions. Wonder if they have any "Lowell Offering." We passed by a graveyard, where, I was told, Ethan Allen is buried. I wanted to go in and see the grave of the hero of Ticonderoga, but could not stop. M.

"CHANGE IS WRITTEN UPON ALL THINGS."

In our lightest or happiest moments we cannot forget that everything of earth is changing or "passing away." This ruthless law is imprinted upon all the varying forms of nature; and we see it indelibly impressed, also, on all the works of man. We look on the earth, clothed in the green verdure and beauty of summer. The waving forest, the rich fruit-trees, and the fanciful garden, all glisten before us; but, while we are gazing, the change comes, the brilliancy fades, the but now beauteous scene lies hid and withering beneath the snow-clad robes of winter.

If we look abroad or muse upon the works of man, how forcibly are we reminded of their changing and fleeting nature! Although the labor of thousands of human beings have been expended upon the works of art, yet decay has stamped her signet upon them, and they are fast passing away.

Vicissitude, which comes upon all things else, comes also upon society. Do we rely upon the ties of friendship and love? Alas, how frail is the support! We see our friends and acquaintances busily pursuing the career of life, some of them in the strength and vigor of youth, full of hope and activity; but they are gone! No ties could retain, nor love save them; for the Power that changed is omnipotent. There are changes from which no money can purchase our exemption, which no wisdom can avert. Death! the consummation of all earthly mutability,—what a change is this! "The wheel at the cistern is broken," and the once animated being becomes cold and insensible. The heart

no longer glows with affection, the voice is hushed, and the countenance, that but lately beamed with expression, is naught but a marble image; but the spirit which gave to the frail form its life is not dead, but has only changed the place of its abode.

Thus are we taught not to place our affections too fondly upon things that perish, but to cherish those feelings which will fit us for that world where no change comes except in constant improvement, and where the bright ages of eternity will cast no shadow, but roll on in unceasing happiness.

J. S. W.

LIVE LIKE THE FLOWERS.

Cheerfully wave they o'er valley and mountain,
Cheer the lone desert, and smile by the fountain;
Pale discontent in no young blossom lowers,—
Live like the flowers.

Meekly their buds in the heavy rain bending;
Softly their hues with the mellow light blending;
Gratefully welcoming sunlight and showers,—
Live like the flowers.

Freely their sweets on the wild breezes flinging,
While in their depths are new odors upspringing,
Twofold their wealth, ev'n as Love's holy dowers,—
Live like the flowers.

Gladly they heed who their brightness hath given;
Blooming on earth, look they up to heaven;
Humbly look up from their loveliest bowers,—
Live like the flowers.

Peacefully droop they when Autumn is sighing,
Spreading mild fragrance around them when dying;
Sleep they in hope of Spring's freshening hours,—
Die like the flowers.

L. L.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

Miss Farley,—Having just returned from New York, I hasten to fulfil my promise, and give you my first impressions of that far-famed city. I left Cambridge in company with Miss B., on the 16th instant, but in no very good humor, I assure you, being sadly afflicted with the toothache. However, determined to put the best foot forward, as the old saying is, we commenced our journey, fully resolved to make the best of everything, and be happy, if possible. And we were happy. Though nothing occurred worthy of notice, we had a very pleasant

journey. There were but few passengers on board the boat, and those so still and orderly I almost fancied myself at home in my own little sanctum. Many thanks are due to Mr. Macy, the gentleman who superintended the affairs of the boat during the absence of the captain (who, I understood, had gone to be married). He was so kind and polite to the ladies, and so gentlemanly in his deportment to all, that he commanded my respect from the first moment I saw him. And for the benefit of those who may chance to travel in that direction, I would cheerfully recommend that they patronize the Neptune, as they will find good accommodations and save their coppers into the bargain.

But to return. We were somewhat disappointed in not having the kindly influences of the moon to cheer us on our way; for, as Mrs. Child says, music and moonlight on the water almost make me crazy. But I suppose it was not right that we should have all the good things at once, or we should undoubtedly have been favored with this very essential requisite to a pleasant ride on the water. However, being somewhat indisposed, and finding that the clouds looked ominous of rain, I left the deck at an early hour, determined, if possible, to resume my station betimes in the morning, and view a sunrise on the water. Nor was I disappointed. Friend Morpheus took me into his care and keeping, until he thought me sufficiently refreshed to take care of my own self, when he took wings and flew away. I accordingly arose, dressed myself, and repaired to the deck. The sun had not risen; but I saw his chariot in the east, and I knew he was near. Nor did I wait long.

For he soon came forth,
Clad in garments of red,
And tinged the blue waves
Of his watery bed.

And what added much to the interest of the scene was the remembrance that it was Sabbath morning. Nor was its solemn stillness disturbed till we reached the pier, when a number of *officious gentlemen* jumped on board, and politely poked their heads into the face of every passenger, with "Have a cab," "Have a coach," "Better take a cab, ma'am." For the benefit of nervous persons, allow me to suggest the propriety of beginning to say no, no, no, the moment you reach the pier, and keeping it up without intermission till a man of the reins to your liking presents himself, when you can easily say yes, and away you will go, helter-skelter, over the rocky pavements and through the long streets of Gotham, which serve as dining-halls for the four-footed gentry about town.

But I am digressing, and will proceed forthwith to give you my first impressions of New York, which I must say were favorable; for, although I think there is much room for improvement, still I would prefer this city to Boston. Its streets are much wider, and the facilities for travelling far better than in Boston. Fare is so cheap that you can

go three miles for sixpence, York money, and that, too, at any time in the day, while in Boston you must pay twice that amount. But another reason why I like New York is that the people are so free and social, so that, go where you will, you are sure to find a hearty welcome. I think they are anything but selfish. Indeed, I would not ask or expect to be more kindly treated, even by my own friends, than I was while I stayed there, especially by Mr. W. and his family, who kindly welcomed us to their house during our stay in the city. But the greatest thing that I dislike here is that they keep their streets so dirty, arranging them more for the accommodation of the New York porkers than for any other circle of aristocrats. I think the city must be blind to its own interest, or it would not allow such a state of things.

And now I must give you a brief sketch of the few places we saw while there, time not permitting us to visit as much as we would like to have done. I think the first place we went to was the Tombs, where humanity was degraded quite as low as I, for one, could wish to see it. The narrow damp cells looked so gloomy and cheerless that I thought it would be sufficient punishment to know I must sleep there when dead, without being confined within its dreary walls while yet a tenant of earth. The prisoners, for the most part, looked degraded and unhappy. Most of their foreheads were very low, and even what little they had was so covered with hair that it seemed as though they were more akin to the brute creation than to noble, thinking man. But there was one exception, that of Babe, the pirate, whose open, intelligent countenance arrested my attention. He looked so much neater than the rest that I thought he did not belong there, but supposed that he had taken a seat in one of the cells just to see how it would seem as the door was open; but I soon found out my mistake. There is a sadness in his countenance which would at once elicit your sympathy, even though you should deem him guilty; but I understand he has many friends—many who think him innocent.

From the Tombs we proceeded to the arsenal, where we were kindly shown through the different rooms; but I must confess that it very much detracted from my own pleasure to see so many instruments of death and destruction. There were, if I was rightly informed, thirty thousand stands of arms, all ready for our country's service; and one gentleman remarked that he would like an opportunity to use them. Think you there are many who would respond to that wish? Last of all, though not least, we were shown into the trophy-room, where were deposited many relics of military prowess, among which I noticed a piece of the ruins of Ticonderoga, on which I found the following inscription, similar to that in Goodrich's History of the United States. It reads thus: "This fort was taken by Col. Ethan Allen from the British, on the third of May, 1775, in the name of the GREAT JEHOVAH, and the Continental Congress." In another place we saw this inscription: "Surrender of General Burgoyne, Oct. 17, 1777, with 5,790 men and 35 pieces of artillery." We saw many field-pieces taken

from the British in that battle, all of which were marked with the English crown. We also saw several Indian snow-shoes. But time would fail me to tell you all, so I will not attempt it.

Our next trip was to Brooklyn; and here we anticipated great pleasure in the prospect of seeing Miss C.; but we were greatly disappointed, as she had gone to Troy to spend two or three weeks. However, we found her residence, and I thought that some consolation for it is certainly a very pretty place. We ascended the heights, directly in front of the house, where we had a delightful view of the harbor, and from which Governor's Island is seen to good advantage, as also many other pretty places. And here I must not forget to tell you how often we have thought of you this summer, and wished for your company, especially while visiting in this vicinity. May we not hope that you will favor us with it, should we come again? But I fear I shall tire your patience, and I will briefly allude to the other places we visited while here, among which were the different parks and parade ground. They are all very pretty, especially Union Park, to which I think I must give the preference. The Battery is also a very interesting place, as you there have a fine view of the harbor and its dense forests of shipping; but it is not so tastefully laid out as other public grounds in the city. I think the fountains are very pretty, and wish we might have some in Lowell.

We have seen the steamer Great Britain several times, but have not been on board. I understand that some two or three thousand visit it every day. It is, I believe, over three hundred feet long, has six masts, and is painted black from stem to stern, which gives it quite a gloomy appearance. Its figure-head, however, is very pretty, representing the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown. But the last place we visited, and the prettiest of all, was Hoboken. It is truly an enchanting place. No wonder they call it Elysium: it seemed to me like a fairyland, so beautiful and still, I would like to live there alway. I was somewhat disappointed in Sybil's cave: it is not nearly as large as I expected, but it has an excellent well of water in the centre, of which you may partake by paying a penny a glass. So much for the monopoly of this place. The scenery on the Hudson is very beautiful, and much did I regret my inability to sketch landscape as I stood upon its banks. But now the impression is on my own heart only. Would that I could daguerreotype it for you.

Thus much for New York. And now I would like to say a word about the *natives* before I close. I find they manifest great respect for the Yankees, and can tell one the moment they see him. One morning Miss B. and myself took a walk down town, and, while there, went into a shop kept by a German, I should judge from his dialect. Well, having made a few purchases, we turned to go out, when he accosted us with, "Are you from Connecticut?" "No," replied Miss B., "but we are Yankees." "So I thought," returned the shopkeeper, "and I like Yankees. They know how to take care of the coppers." We

thought he knew how to do the same, the way he tried to pocket the half cent. They also speak very highly of the operatives. One gentleman said he gloried in the factory girls. I suppose he meant their spunk, don't you?

I forgot to tell you how near I came losing Miss B. She made quite a bargain with a certain— Oh, but I must not tell any more. If I do, she will pull my ears. I will save the rest till I see you. I would like to say many other things, but it will not do. I fear I have already trespassed on your patience.

We had a delightful journey home, and, what was better than all the rest, we had a thunder-storm on the water. Oh, it was sublime! But I cannot describe it. I very much regret that we did not learn the names of the different places that we passed, as I should like to speak of them here; but the passengers did not know any more about it than I did. As for me I forgot, for the time being, what my good mother used to say, that little children should be seen and not heard. So I asked a great many questions; but I suppose they took it from whence it came—at least I hope so.

Yours affectionately, E. W. J.

AN ALLEGORY.

One beautiful morning I arose early to take a walk through the fields which Nature had clothed with her green carpet. As I passed by the trees of the forest, I heard the warbling of the birds, which filled my heart with delight. Their sweet songs seemed to invite me to take a seat at the foot of the tree where they had built their nest. I complied with their request. While in this state I heard thunder above, and I felt the rain descending upon my face. And all the while I was considerably heated. By this extreme heat I was awakened, and to my great surprise I learned that the thunder which I before heard was nothing but the buzzing of a bee around my head, and that which I thought before was rain proved to be a perspiration caused by the hot rays of the sun, which shone directly upon me. D.

SOLITUDE.

What's solitude? Has earth a spot
Of mount or desert, glen or grot,
Unknown by man, by Heaven forgot,
Where one may flee,
And there, alone, unloved, unsought,
Forever be?

'Tis solitude amid the throng,
 In courts or halls, 'mid mirth and song,
 Where fairy figures glide along,
 And perfumes roll,
 To find in all that crowd not one
 Congenial soul.

'Tis solitude to dwell alone,
 When friends prove false, and one by one
 Those whom we loved in youth have gone
 Down to the tomb,
 And flowers we reared and loved so long
 Have ceased to bloom.

To sit alone at close of day,
 And watch the sun's last parting ray,
 And hear the night bird's plaintive lay
 From some lone wood,
 And think of loved ones far away,
 Is solitude.

MARA.

 EDITORIAL.

THE "FACTORY GIRLS" AND THEIR MAGAZINE. But one number of the Offering intervenes between this and the last; and, as there are always so many last words to say, we have concluded to "take Time by the forelock," and commence in this number something like a summary of what has been done, and add *the commencement of the conclusion*, if that is not a paradox.

We have at this moment upon our table one of the first numbers of the Offering,—a large, thin, awkward-looking object, with a yellow cover and double-columned pages. Upon the first page of the cover we read the following:—

"THE LOWELL OFFERING. *A repository of original articles on various subjects, written by Factory Operatives.* 'Full many a gem,' etc. No. 1. Price 6½ cents. THIS NUMBER WHOLLY WRITTEN BY FEMALES EMPLOYED IN THE MILLS."

We have particularly emphasized this because we consider it worthy of particular attention. "THIS number," intimating a doubt whether a continuation of the magazine could be expected from the females, unassisted by their *brethren* in the mills, or indeed whether even one more number would be issued from them, but containing the assurance, at that time astonishing to almost every one, that *this* number is indeed *wholly* written by "females employed in the mills."

And under the circumstances it was a reasonable doubt. We shared it with him who was then the editor, and doubtless many of the other contributors shared it with us. We saw what we had done; but we had not learned confidence in ourselves, and felt no assurance that we could go on.

The public were taken by surprise. "There is mind among the spindles," was the dawning thought of many, who had never thought before of "the wheel within the wheels"; of the soul, active, ardent, expansive as their own, which was the tenant of some prisoned body in those mills. The caste of the factory girl had been lowest among female laborers. To overcome the prejudice against mill labor high wages had been given. Necessity and cupidity proved too strong for pride and prejudice. The manufactories of New England filled with the young, blooming, energetic, and intelligent of its country maidens; the inhabitants of these places saw and recognized the worth of these girls; they associated with them, they publicly noticed them, they married with them. If they returned to their secluded homes, they were perhaps, thought more of, rather than looked down upon; and yet it seems that even then there was not due credit given to the intellectual gifts and attainments of this class, and that they might aspire, as factory girls, to a place with the refined and literary. They might "drop the operative"; they might enter into some other employment, and, discarding all their former associates with that employment, force themselves into a place which would be conceded to them with more or less reluctance, according to circumstances and the peculiar character of that circle in which they would wish to gain entrance.

But abroad there was still gross injustice done to the character of the factory girl. Intellectually and morally she was degraded. She was represented as constantly and unavoidably subjected to influences which must destroy her purity and self-respect. The contamination of the vicious was at her side and before her eyes: in the eyes of her overseer she was but a brute or a slave, to be beaten or pinched or pushed about. Such were the opinions and prejudices of those who could not see for themselves. Widows and orphans heard of the high wages regularly paid, and "given in cash," by the manufacturers, and they were tempted; but they heard, also, of other things which made their veins chill, and they sat shivering at their cold hearths, and patched again their torn garments, with an abhorrence for "the prosperity of the wicked," which was worthy of all respect. Was it not meet that something should be done to enlighten the public with regard to this thing?

Brothers, at the West and South of this Union, blushed to say that their sisters were factory girls, and dared not attempt a vindication of their innocence, happiness, and intelligence. And many then—many now—who would willingly submit to the toil, confinement, and weariness of a factory life were deterred from it, and kept in some even more irksome and less lucrative employment, on account of the prejudices of their friends—either near or remote. We have known instances ourself, and we now know of the wife of a professor, not far from our own city, who does not confess that she was once a factory girl. We know of many who try to forget it, and, to make others believe that they have, will look at a factory girl as though she was to them a *lusus nature*.

There was another wrong in allowing these prejudices to exist, and that was their depressing influence upon the operatives themselves. It is a fact that we are stimulated to worthy actions when we know they are expected of us: we are discouraged when we know that we are considered incapable. Perhaps the majority of females assume that character, as they enter womanhood, which seems to be imposed by the tone of society about them. And, viewed in this light, was there not, a few years since, much that was unfavorable in the situation of the factory girl? After she had become habituated to her employment, what was there to develop her powers? If she had friends dependent upon her exertions, her affections were preserved strong and pure by their constant action. The religious emotions were developed by the class of preachers who came to minister unto them. But there were few outward influences favorable to the intellect, or tending directly to awaken the latent powers of the mind. We have sometimes looked upon the new-comers in Lowell, when we have met them in the mill or in the street,—those whose physiognomies were expressive of everything lovely in character,—and, fancying that we could see the dormant mental power which slept beneath the fires of the brilliant eye or on the arch of the polished brow, have felt that we could willingly labor, or, if need be, sacrifice ourself, that these, and such as these, should be preserved amidst the snares and pitfalls that might be in their path—from the temptations within and the temptations without; that every aspiration should be cherished, every passion subjected to reason and conscience; that they should never forget that something was demanded of their higher natures; that they should feel that they must not become wicked, neither must they become weak—not intellectually sluggish, nor indifferent.

But we will now again recur to the commencement of the Offering; and, in doing so, we shall repeat some things stated in former volumes, which old subscribers will excuse, in consideration of the large proportion of recent patrons.

The first publisher of the Offering came from a distant city. He had there heard of factory girls, and listened to their opinion of them. He came, saw, and *questioned* for himself. The result of this investigation was surprise and pleasure. "I saw," said he, "intelligence in their countenances," and he heard it in their conversation. To bring it forth in a more tangible manner, he established The Improvement Circle. It was then a meeting in a vestry, to which anybody and everybody was invited, and for which any one might write unknown, and drop their communications into a "sort o' post-office box, outside the door." This method was happily adapted to the desired result. Much was written, and much that was very good. Some articles evinced cultivated taste and careful education; others, native but uncultured talent and genius. The most interesting writers were sought out, and almost invariably found to be *factory girls*. The females wrote more readily than the males, and the factory operatives were in advance of those engaged in other employments. It was ascertained that mill labor was favorable, rather than otherwise, to reflection and composition. We do not state this as an argument *per se* in favor of factory life, nor would we induce girls to go into a factory to reflect and write, any more than we would suggest to men to go to prison for the same purpose, though "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Don Quixote" are proofs that imprisonment is not always unfavorable to the intellect.

Some of the contributions to the Circle interested its originator so much that he wished all to see them, and banish whatever of prejudice they might have against the factory girl. He thought first of some established paper, then of a little book, and, lastly, the plan was matured to a *magazine*. The number alluded to, in the commencement of this, was a specimen and an experiment. It might not be supported by the public, it might not be sustained by the writers. In truth, some who knew that they would be regarded as regular contributors shrank from the responsibility, and trembled within themselves for the result.

Four numbers were issued, and then it was looked upon as "a successful experiment."

The form was changed to one more neat and tasteful, and better adapted for preservation by binding: subscriptions were taken for the ensuing year, agents were appointed, the gentleman himself edited and published, and the factory girls of Lowell found themselves writing for a regular monthly periodical, which was exciting the wonder of their own and other countries.

And now, when we hear rejoicing over its expected discontinuance, malignant expressions of satisfaction as though it were a *failure*, how should we heed them?

The Offering has done its work. It has accomplished all that it ever proposed. It has more than realized the expectations of its first friends. It has been regularly issued for five years. It has gone from the supervision of a professional gentleman into that of "factory girls," without losing the confidence or good opinion of the public. The doubts of its good faith, which were at first openly expressed, have almost entirely ceased. The exclamation is now not so often heard, "The girls do not write it," and never in our own vicinity. The knowledge of it has been gradually extending to the remote and secluded parts of our own country, and the interest in those distant regions has been very gratifying to its friends. Its exterior has been improved, its permanent list has been upon the constant increase, and its yearly patrons have never numbered so many as they do now. Its writers have never shown so active an interest, and we might say that we leave the Offering "at high tide," but that would imply an expected decrease of prosperity with another year. We have no reason to think but that, with a large list of our old friends, we should have, with another volume, the usual increasing proportion of new subscribers, if we exerted ourselves as actively and cheerfully.

But then "Why do you stop?" is the question continually asked of us; and this is a question that we cannot fully answer to the public. We have various reasons; but it is a pleasant thought to us that it has done all that was primarily expected of it, and even more.

In a pecuniary point of view we cannot complain of it. True, we cannot speak of it as "a fortunate speculation," but *we* did not speculate, or intend to make a fortune from it. Had good fortune come, we should have welcomed it; and, with the habits and experience of business men, we might have done much better in this respect, as matters have been. But we do not complain. It has supported itself, and has supported us, and very likely better than we should have supported ourselves in any other way.

H. F.

"THE LOWELL OFFERING."

From Mrs. Harriet H. Robinson's "Loom and Spindle."

The *Lowell Offering* was a small, thin magazine of about thirty pages, with one column to the page. The price of the first number was six and a quarter cents. Its title-page was plain, with a motto from Gray, the verse beginning,—

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene."

This motto was used for two years, when another was adopted,—

"Is Saul also among the prophets?"

In January, 1845, the magazine had on its outside cover a vignette, a young girl simply dressed, with feet visible and sleeves rolled up. She had a book in one hand, and her shawl and bonnet were thrown over her arm. She was represented as standing in a very sentimental attitude, contemplating a beehive at her right hand. This vignette was adopted, as the editor said, "To represent the New England school girl, of which our factories are made up, standing near a beehive, emblem of industry and intelligence, and in the background the Yankee school-house, church, and factory." The motto was,—

"The worm on the earth
May look up to the star."

This rather abject sentiment was not suited to the independent spirit of most of the contributors, who did not feel a bit like worms; and in the February number it was changed to one from Bunyan:—

"And do you think the words of your book are certainly true?
"Yea, verily."

The magazine finally died, however, under its favorite motto,—

“Is Saul also among the prophets?”

The title-page, or outside cover, was copyrighted in 1845.

The *Lowell Offering* was welcomed with pleased surprise. It found subscribers all over the country. The *North American Review*, whose literary *dictum* was more autocratic than it is to-day, indorsed it, and expressed a fair opinion of its literary merit.

The editor, John G. Palfrey, said:—

Many of the articles are such as to satisfy the reader at once that, if he has only taken up *The Offering* as a phenomenon, and not as what may bear criticism and reward perusal, he has but to own his error, and dismiss his condescension as soon as may be.

Charles Dickens, in his “American Notes,” says:—

They have got up among themselves a periodical, called *The Lowell Offering*, whereof I brought away from Lowell four hundred good solid pages, which I have read from beginning to end. Of the merits of *The Lowell Offering*, as a literary production, I will only observe—putting out of sight the fact of the articles having been written by these girls after the arduous hours of the day—that it will compare advantageously with a great many English annuals.

Harriet Martineau prompted a fine review of it in the London *Athenæum*, and a selection from Volumes I. and II. was published under her direction, called “Mind Among the Spindles.”

This book was issued first in London, in 1844, and republished in Boston in 1845, with an introduction by the English editor, Mr. Knight. In a letter to this gentleman, Miss Martineau said, “I had the opportunity of observing the invigorating effect of “Mind among the Spindles” in a life of labor. Twice the wages and half the toil would not have made the girls I saw happy and healthy without that cultivation of mind which afforded them perpetual support, entertainment, and motive for activity. They were not highly educated; but they had pleasure in books and lectures, in correspondence with home, and had their minds so open to fresh ideas as to be drawn off from thoughts of themselves and their own concerns.”

English friends were particularly kind in their expressions of approval. One said: “*The Lowell Offering* is probably exciting more attention in England than any other American publication. It is talked of in the political as well as in the literary world. . . . It has given rise to a new idea, that there may be mind among the spindles. . . . The book is a stubborn fact.”

President Felton of Harvard University, while in Paris attending a course of lectures on English literature by Philarete Chastles, heard an entire lecture on the history and literary merits of *The Lowell Offering*.

Thiers, the French historian, carried a volume into the Chamber of Deputies, to show what working-women in a republic could do.

George Sand (Madame Dudevant) thought it a great and wonderful thing that the American mill girls should write and edit a magazine of their own.

“Whenever the history of economic conditions in this country shall be written,” says Hon. Carroll D. Wright, in his introduction to Mrs. Harriet H. Robinson’s “Loom and Spindle,” “the author will express his gratitude for all works giving the details of especial epochs and phases of industrial life. Among them he will find no more interesting experience than that attending the entrance of women to the industrial field. . . . The attractions of good wages and comfortable environment were the inducements held out by American manufacturers at Lowell to secure a class of operatives which should bring success to their experiment. The

prejudice against mill operatives, as shown by investigations in England, would otherwise have delayed the establishment of the factory in America,—that is, the factory as controlled by a central power. With the attractions offered, it was natural that the women of New England should accept situations as weavers, spinners, etc., in the great textile works; but they brought with them their educational and religious training, and, as they were grouped together, it was natural, also, that they should continue the cultivation of their minds, especially under the broadening influences of mental contact."

It was under such conditions and among such New England factory girls that *The Lowell Offering*, written entirely by "female operatives employed in the mills," had its origin in 1840. Dickens's reference to it in his "American Notes," and other conspicuous notices, gave it for a time a unique fame; and, although its life was short, ending in 1845, it was certainly a noteworthy phenomenon while it lasted. The idea of organizing the young women of the Lowell mills for literary and educational purposes was first proposed in 1837 by Miss Harriot F. Curtis, "perhaps the most progressive of all the mill girls." Her account of the first "Improvement Circle" is given in *The Lowell Offering*, January, 1845. One of the best of these circles was that composed of the young people of the First Universalist Church, of which the pastor was Rev. Abel C. Thomas; and Mr. Thomas published a selection from the articles prepared by the young ladies for the meetings of this circle, under the title of "The Lowell Offering." The first series, of four numbers, was issued from October, 1840, to March, 1841; then a new series, *The Lowell Offering* proper, began, a monthly magazine of thirty-two pages, issued regularly by its projector until October, 1842, when it passed into the hands of Miss Curtis and Miss Harriet Farley, both operatives in the mills. There was a similar publication in Lowell called *The Operatives' Magazine*, which was finally merged in *The Lowell Offering*, and this was followed for two or three years by *The New England Offering*, also edited by Miss Farley.

The best account of *The Lowell Offering* is that given by Mrs. Harriet H. Robinson in her "Loom and Spindle," where two chapters are devoted to it, including notices of the various writers, some of whom afterwards acquired literary distinction. Best known among these writers was Lucy Larcom, who devotes a charming chapter to this episode of her life, under the title of "Mill Girls' Magazines," in her "A New England Girlhood." See also the account in the first chapter of the "Life and Letters of Lucy Larcom," by Daniel D. Addison. The number of *The Lowell Offering* chosen for reproduction in the present leaflet—October, 1845—contains the second part of an autobiographical sketch by Lucy Larcom, including several of her poems. The editorial by Miss Farley in this number, on "The Factory Girls and their Magazine," has distinct historical value. The whole of the number is here reprinted, save a lugubrious sketch entitled "The Maniac Mother" and the concluding chapter of a sentimental story entitled "First Love, Alas!" In the November, 1842, number of the *Offering*, is an admirable editorial on the history of *The Lowell Offering*. In the January, 1843, number, is a review of Dickens's "American Notes," which had then just appeared, containing his well-known reference to the little magazine, which gave the mill girls great delight.

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