

UNKIND WORDS.

If I had known in the morning
How wearily all the day,
The words unkind would trouble my mind
That I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Ner given you needless pain;
But we vex our own with look and tone
We might never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it well might be that never for me
The pain of the heart should cease!
How many go forth at morning
Who never come home at night!
And hearts have broken for harsh words spoken
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest;
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best,
Ah! lips with the curve impatient,
Ah! brows with the shade of scorn,
'Twere a cruel fate, were the night too late
To undo the work of morn.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A BUDGET OF INTERESTING FACTS.—The sixteenth annual report of the Registrar-General of births, deaths, and marriages in Scotland contains the following interesting facts noticed by the registrars:—"During the year, a giant Irishman died at Hawick, who was 7ft. 5in. in height, measured 58 inches round the chest, and weighed 22 stone. From the imperfect manner in which the old registers were kept, it is often impossible to procure satisfactory evidence of the ages of those who die at extreme old ages. It is, however, one of the peculiarities of the Scottish race, that they use every effort to ascertain the exact age of the deceased, so that, as a general rule, the age of death may be relied on as being correct. During the year 1870 there were 9 males and 17 females whose ages were entered on the register as being above 100 years of age at death. Of the 9 males, 2 had completed 100 years, 1 was 101 years, 2 were 102 years, 1 was 103 years, 1 was 104 years, 1 was 108 years, and one survived to his 110th year. Of the 17 females who died above 100 years, 9 had completed their 100th year, 2 were 101 years of age, 7 was 102 years, 2 were 103 years, 1 was 104 years, 1 was 107 years, 1 was 108 years, 1 was 110 years, and 1 was reported to be her 116th year of life.—'Lancet'.

GOVERNMENT CONSUMPTION OF PENS.—In the financial year just ending, 11,890 gross of steel pens, at a cost of £1588, and 479,620 quill pens, at a cost of £733, were supplied to the Government departments. In the year 1868-9 the total number of steel pens used was 14,942 gross, costing £1900, and quills 843,733, costing £1816. It will be seen that a saving of thirty per cent. has been effected, and that, as many of our readers know by experience, the quills have been reduced in quality as well as quantity.—'Civilian.'

THE GERMAN MILITARY LAW.—In the military conference between the German Emperor, Count Moltke, Von Kameke, Albedyll, and Voigts-Rhetz, it is reported to have been decided (says the 'Cologne Gazette' of Thursday, March 26), formally to maintain the demand for 401,000 men, but in addition to admit of a *minimum* figure of 384,000, so calculated that the average reckoning for each day for the year would give such an effective force, so that at certain times more, and at other times fewer, soldiers than this average figure, according to the requirements of the service, might stand under arms.

A SECRET OF THE SEA.—The Portsmouth (New Hampshire) 'Chronicle' states that on the 5th of April one of the navy-yard watchmen found on the beach of an island in that harbor a tightly-corked bottle completely overgrown with barnacles and seaweed. When broken it was found to contain a slip of paper apparently taken from a ship's logbook. All the writing upon it that could be made out was as follows:—"December, 14, 1861.—Ship, Jane, Arctic Ocean.—I write this knowing that I shall never see land again, hoping that some one will pick it up. Yesterday the captain died, which . . . I would write more if I could, but I am starving to death." The ink is very pale and the paper somewhat discolored. The writing, though indistinct, was easily read by the aid of a magnifying glass.

RUN OVER.—In 1873, for the first time, the Registrar-General's returns show the year's tramway accidents in London, and it will surprise many to learn that seventeen persons were killed by tramway cars in the streets of the metropolis; the omnibuses killed only twelve persons. There were twenty-eight deaths caused by cabs, ten by carriages, seventy-five by vans or waggons, four by drays, fifty-six by carts, two by other vehicles and thirteen by horses not drawing. The total number of persons thus killed in the streets of London increases; the number was 192 in 1869, 198 in 1870, 208 in 1871, 213 in 1872 and 217 in 1873.

ONE Marie Verdun, a young girl residing in Paris, is said to be affected with an infirmity known as *nyctalope*, that is to say, she loses the faculty of sight during the day and recovers it in darkness. Although her eyes do not present any special morbid character, she is forced to keep her eyelids closed during the day, and covers her head with a thick veil. On the other hand, when the shutters of a room are hermetically fastened she reads and writes perfectly in the deepest darkness.

DEATH OF A SINGULAR MAN.—James Lucas, who for twenty-five years has led a singular and solitary life in his place in Redcoats Green, between Stevenage and Hitchin, died recently. Since the death of his mother, deceased, who was a gentleman of fortune, excluded

himself from the world. He never wore anything beyond a blanket enveloped in which he used to appear at his windows, and he totally ignored soap and water. He would allow nothing in the house to be touched, and consequently the pictures and furniture presented a dilapidated and decaying appearance. Rats were in the house and the premises generally were in a ruinous state. He detested the rich, but gave money and spirits to his poorer visitors.

A PARLIAMENTARY paper, forming the first instalment of the list of owners of land and heritages in Great Britain, together with the rental and the extent of the holdings, has just been issued. It relates to Scotland, in which it appears there are 132,230 land-owners, with possessions of the gross annual value of £18,698,804. Seventy-five proprietors have estates of upwards of 40,000 acres. There are considerably more than 74 estates of that area, but several landlords possess more than one such. The total area in the hands of these 75 proprietors is at least 9,100,000 acres, or not far off the whole acreage of Scotland. Amongst the principal land-owners are the following:—Duke of Sutherland, acreage 1,176,574, valuation £57,147; Earl of Breadalbane and Trustees, acreage 458,358, valuation £58,292; Duke of Buccleuch, acreage 432,347, valuation £184,142; Earl of Seafield, acreage 305,981, valuation £71,884; Duke of Richmond, acreage 269,268, valuation £60,387; Earl of Fife, acreage 252,815, valuation £72,312; Duke of Athole, acreage 194,975, valuation £40,758; Duke of Argyll, acreage 175,114, valuation £50,842; Dukes of Sutherland, acreage 149,879, valuation £11,792; Earl of Dalhousie, acreage 131,021, valuation £59,051; Duke of Montrose, acreage 103,760, valuation £23,099; Marquis of Bute, acreage 93,270, valuation £47,772; Duke of Portland, acreage 105,456, valuation £41,527; Duke of Hamilton, acreage 147,941, valuation £114,063. In Aberdeenshire there are five estates of over 40,000 acres; Argyllshire, 12; Ayrshire, 2; Banff, 3; Caithness, 3; Dumfriesshire, 2; Elgin, 2; Forfar, 3; Inverness, 20; Kincardine, 1; Kirkcudbright, 3; Lanark, 2; Nairn, 1; Orkney, 1; Peebles, 1; Perth, 5; Ross, 10; Roxburgh, 2; Selkirk, 1; Stirling, 1; Sutherland, 2; Wigton, 1. In Berwick, Clackmannan, Cromarty, Edinburgh, Fife, Haddington, Kinross, Linlithgow, Renfrew, and Zetland there are no estates over 40,000 acres in extent. The Queen's Balmoral estate is set down at 25,350 acres, of the gross annual value of £2392 16s. The Prince of Wales has an estate at Ballater, containing 6810 acres of the annual value of £816 12s, and the Secretary of State for War two holdings—one of an acre in extent, value £160, and the other of two acres, £500.

A SINGULAR case of a man being instantaneously stricken dumb is recorded by Dr J. H. Webb, of Powlett-street, East Melbourne. That gentleman writes to the 'Medical and Surgical Review,' as follows:—"A young man, aged twenty-four, a clerk in one of our principle firms, entered an hotel late one evening, after an unusually hard day's work and seating himself in one of the rooms, with a glass of brandy and water before him, commenced a conversation with the landlady, who made some ironical remark to him; in the act of rising from his seat to reply, his foot slipped, and he fell, striking his head against the bar of a child's chair, with force sufficient to break the rail; and on regaining his feet, he attempted to laugh, but discovered to his dismay, that he could not emit the usual sounds of ha! ha! He next essayed to speak, but found that the power of articulation had entirely left him; whereupon he took up a slate and wrote the words 'I am dumb.' When called in next day after another practitioner (Dr. Isla, of Emerald Hill) had seen him, I found my patient a healthy person with every faculty perfect, excepting that of speech and without numbness in either hand, or paralysis of any description, facial or otherwise. I came to the conclusion that this peculiar affliction was the result of a sudden palsy of the 'recurrent laryngeal,' analogous to what we sometimes see occurs in temporary and immediate paralysis of the branches of the fifth. In this diagnosis I was supported next day by the opinion of a third practitioner, who was called in consultation, and verified by the happy termination of the case, and gradual but entire restoration of speech after a lapse of nearly a fortnight."

"SLIGHTLY SINGED"—A writer in the 'Melbourne Weekly Times,' thus comments on a certain class of trade advertisements, which are by no means peculiar to Victorian shopkeepers:—"Off to New Zealand!" was a standing cry during several years, and after that "Dreadful Sacrifices through the Panic!" Where that panic took place it might not be easy to tell; but it is to be hoped that fewer persons were killed by it than was anticipated by the clever inventor. Even up to the present day the outbreak of a fire is looked upon as a real godsend by all traders in the neighbourhood. Not one of them but has damaged goods to sell for three months afterwards; and of course, at a ruinous loss. This is sometimes carried a little too far. It is said that not very long ago a fire broke out next door to a draper in one of our up-country cities; and, though it was never found out that the conflagration made its way into his place of business, he sold "Blankets Slightly Singed by Fire" during fully six months afterwards. Towards the end of the period referred to, a lady asked to see some of the singed goods, and a youth (who will never be a good Victorian man of business) said, "We have none in the shop at present ma'm; but they are singeing some in the back-yard."

A CONTEMPORARY remarks.—The poetry of life is rapidly disappearing in the progress of civilisation, and the most hallowed spots on the earth are being stripped of their sanctity. The home paper state that a telegraph office, for the despatch of messages in Turkish and foreign languages, has now been opened at Bethlehem, in Palestine. We suppose that it is only right that the inhabitants of Bethlehem should enjoy the benefits of telegraphy; but somehow or another we would rather they had been left to the old fashioned Eastern modes of communication.

THE following figures, compiled by a competent authority, show the income and expenditure of the 'Melbourne Argus':—"Daily circulation, 7,676 copies; income derived therefrom daily, £58 17s; daily income derived from advertisements, £237 4s. The entire mechanical and literary staff numbers 89; the annual income of the office is £92,367; and the working expenses, £34,800—net yearly income, £57,567.