

haps, no people in the world more subject to generous, humane impulses, and more likely to forget selfish interests at such moments." If, Sir, the inhabitants of a vast country are cruelly calumniated, we need not feel very sorry for them, for they will in due time be righted; but we must feel very sorry for the calumniators, and can only hope, for their own sakes, that they will soon be sorry for themselves.—I am, Sir, &c.,

J. G. CAZENOVE, D.D.

#### THE RUSSIAN SICK AND WOUNDED.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—It was with great satisfaction that I read the letter from the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke in the *Spectator* of September 15th, for until then I had been ignorant of the existence of a Russian Sick and Wounded Fund. There are many who, like me, are writhing under a sense of our national disgrace, and anxious to clear themselves from apparent complicity with those who have sacrificed honour and humanity at the shrine of what they are pleased to call *British interests*, who may be equally unaware of the fact. I believe that many among the working-classes would gladly contribute their mite, if the opportunity were afforded them; and I know there are many among our Crimean veterans who can tell of kindly assistance received from Russian soldiers, when our brave men were reduced to the greatest privations through official mismanagement. Surely under similar, though far more dreadful circumstances, they will sympathise with them now. May I respectfully suggest the organising of penny subscriptions, to afford the masses an opportunity of expressing their feelings as Englishmen and Englishwomen?—I am, Sir, &c.,

E. G. A.

#### TORTURED WHALES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—The death of the wretched mammal which was brought to the Aquarium at Westminster has supplied a text for much gushing composition. I have read pages of eloquence, with metaphors and illustrations drawn from everybody who ever wrote anything about whales, including King David and Sir Allen Young, but it seems to me that in the record of the early death of the poor creature which has just blighted the hopes of the managers of the Aquarium, and the encomiums on the noble burst of energy and enterprise which has instantly ordered six more live whales, two incidental, but inseparable portions of the subject have been entirely left out of consideration. I therefore desire to draw your attention to the (happily past) sufferings of the creature which has cheated the managers and the sight-seers, and to the meditated cruelty about to be enacted by the commissioners of the energetic and enterprising persons who already improve the public mind by keeping alligators—whose natural place of abode is the yielding mud of a great river-bank, under a burning sun—in a small tank, ill-supplied with foul water, under a dark roof, and flagged with stone, on which the poor prisoners can barely turn, and which denies them the chief indulgence of their natural lives, the half-buried condition dear alike to the saurian and the Nile buffalo.

The whale which died, so fortunately for itself, on last Saturday had undoubtedly suffered horrid agonies, apart from the tortures of its capture, during its voyage, and its transfer to the prison which would have turned the proverbial "whale in a butter-boat" into a disgusting reality. Suffocation is admittedly a painful experience, congestion of the lungs is prolonged suffocation just short of death while it lasts, and eventuating in death when it is not relieved. The wretched whale in question was subjected to congestion of the lungs in its worst form during its voyage. Many persons, no doubt, admired the ingenuity which conveyed the creature across the Atlantic in a box lined with sea-weed, sustaining its miserable existence by pouring a bucketful of salt water upon it every five minutes, while they never thought of the sufferings of the whale or the cruelty of its importers. It would be too much to ask of the multitude that they should, in this especial instance, adopt Mr. Charles Reade's proposed test of right and wrong, pleasure and pain, by putting themselves in the place of the whale on its way from its native ocean to the Westminster Aquarium, and practically submitting to a little temporary suffocation, just to see what it is like. It is possible, however, that some of those who have been misled into praising the energy and enterprise of the gentlemen who imported the happily deceased successor to Pongo, and intended rival to Zazel, might be induced to exercise their magnanimity on the condition of a creature whose breathing

apparatus, more complicated than their own, requires two elements for its healthful and painless exercise when condemned to infinitesimal supplies of both during a long voyage, under circumstances of aggravated imprisonment.

An educational pretext for so barbarous and stupid an exhibition as a whale in an aquarium of the dimensions of the Westminster place of entertainment cannot be urged with any show of reason,—the models in the Kensington Museum teach all the public will ever care to learn about these great inmates of the great oceans. Against such an exhibition, a mere spectacle for the gratification of a thoughtless curiosity, and for the attraction of shillings, I hope you will protest; and will permit me through your columns to call on all who hate cruelty, as a damnable sin in itself, a demoralising agent, sure and speedy in its action, and wide-spreading in its influence, to protest also.—I am, Sir, &c.,

A CONSTANT READER AND DISCIPLE.

#### OXFORD FELLOWSHIPS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—The Oxford University Commissioners have struck their first blow, a blow which more resembles a random essay of strength than a deliberate exercise of their function. By a notice in Saturday's papers, they have withdrawn from competition two out of the three vacant Fellowships at All Souls College. No one can question their right in the abstract to suspend any number of vacant Fellowships, but in this particular case, I, for one, do question their ideas of justice. For it must be remembered that not only was it informally made known some time ago that three Fellowships would be awarded in November, but on July 10 last the fact was officially stated, notified, and proclaimed in the University "Gazette." Had there been no such advertisement, there would be no ground for censuring the action of the Commissioners; but my contention is, that to cancel the notice now is to enforce a breach of contract and to commit open injustice. I am speaking not from imagination, but from personal knowledge, in saying that men have been induced by that public notice to sacrifice their whole summer in a hope which now the Commissioners at the eleventh hour declare illusory. Legally, doubtless, no vested right has been touched; but practically, it is impossible to deny that two candidates will be disappointed and defrauded of a reward definitely and publicly promised, in a contract signed and sealed by the College and witnessed by the University. With all anxiety for full reform, I take it that the Commissioners have made an ill-omened beginning.

There is a further reason why the hardship is all the greater. For some years past, terrified by threats of external interference, the Colleges have, like Turks dealing with Bulgarians, been suspending Fellowships here and annihilating them there, till only a small remnant was left—and that chiefly of the sacerdotal class—to attract sympathetic invaders. Thus in the year October, 1876, to October, 1877, there were, I believe, only 14 Fellowships awarded. Of these no less than 8 were clerical, and one was confined to persons educated at Winchester; one was given for history, 2 for science, and the miserable remainder 2 for classics. Moreover, as far as I can ascertain, in the three years from January, 1875, to December, 1877, there have been only six open classical lay fellowships offered for competition. In this number I do not count one advertised by a certain humorous college as an "Open Classical Fellowship, to be awarded for mathematics and Greek Testament, confined to clergymen's sons born on the top of Snowdon, in Wales; the holder will be required to take priest's orders and go to sea in her Majesty's Fleet, or to the cure of souls in her Majesty's Foreign Plantations." Or if, to avoid what is doubtless a merely verbal quarrel, one includes this also, and so the number is raised to seven, there still remains a very real and solid grievance for the last few generations of graduates. Older men will testify that in their time there was no such scarcity, and there has been a very strong and general feeling at Oxford that the dearth of open Fellowships in these latter times constituted a hardship, if not an injustice. Still, it was felt that the injustice, for the most part, was involuntary, indirect, and accidental. It has remained for the Commissioners to make it voluntary, direct, and deliberate.—I am, Sir, &c.,

Winchester, October 1.

A. J. BUTLER.

#### SLATE-WRITING EXTRAORDINARY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—I trust you may consider the following experiment worthy of record in your paper, because it differs from cases of abnormal slate-writing of which evidence was adduced at the trial of Slade,

and because it affords a demonstration of the reality of the phenomenon and the absence of imposture from which there seems no escape. I confine myself to this one experiment, and narrate the essential facts only.

The sitting was at a private house in Richmond, on the 21st of last month. Two ladies and three gentlemen were present, besides myself and the medium, Dr. Monck. A shaded candle was in the room, giving light sufficient to see every object on the table round which we sat. Four small and common slates were on the table. Of these I chose two, and after carefully cleaning and placing a small fragment of pencil between them, I tied them together with a strong cord, passed around them both lengthways and crosswise, so as effectually to prevent the slates from moving on each other. I then laid them flat on the table, without losing sight of them for an instant. Dr. Monck placed the fingers of both hands on them, while I and a lady sitting opposite me placed our hands on the corners of the slates. From this position our hands were never moved, till I untied them to ascertain the result. After waiting a minute or two, Dr. Monck asked me to name any short word I wished to be written on the slate. I named the word "God." He then asked me to say how I wished it written. I replied, "lengthways of the slate;" then if I wished it written with a large or a small "g," and I chose a capital "G." In a very short time, writing was heard on the slate. The medium's hands were convulsively withdrawn, and I then myself untied the cord (which was a strong silk watch-guard, lent by one of the visitors), and on opening the slates, found on the lower one the word I had asked for, written in the manner I had requested, the writing being somewhat faint and laboured, but perfectly legible. The slate with the writing on it is now in my possession.

The essential features of this experiment are,—that I myself cleaned and tied up the slates, that I kept my hand on them all the time, that they never went out of my sight for a moment, and that I named the word to be written and the manner of writing it after they were thus secured and held by me. I ask, how are these facts to be explained, and what interpretation is to be placed upon them? I am, Sir, &c.,

ALFRED R. WALLACE.  
I was present on this occasion, and certify that Mr. Wallace's account of what happened is correct. EDWARD T. BENNETT.

P. O. E T R Y.

GATHERED ROSES.

ONLY a bee made prisoner,  
Caught in a gathered rose!  
Was he not ware, a flower so fair  
For the first gatherer grows?  
Only a heart made prisoner,  
Going out free no more!  
Was he not ware, a face so fair  
Must have been gathered before?

OCTOBER.

Edges of stormy dawn and murky night,  
Trespassing harshly on his mellow hours,  
October plucks the present while it flowers,  
And revels as a splendid Sybarite:  
What tho' his noontide wear the yellow light  
Of sunset, hinting of the doom that lowers,  
He recks not; now astride the west wind scours  
Blue-steppes of air; now, languid with delight,  
Reclines in violet haze; flings silver rime  
To the gossamer, bead-coral to the thorns,  
And showers on tree and fern his ruddy gold.  
But as pards couch until the herd's horns  
Slant wilewards, Winter lets him pass his prime,  
And then springs, and hales him to the caves of Cold.

HENRY G. HEWLETT.

B. O. O. K S.

CHURCH AND BRODRIBB'S TACITUS.  
WHEN Lamennais was engaged on his translation of Dante, a literary friend wrote to dissuade him from his arduous under-

taking. "You will never," he said, "escape with life from the clutches of that monster; he will flay you and devour you, and your bones will be left to whiten in his dreadful den." We must congratulate Messrs. Church and Brodrigg on having extricated themselves not merely with life, but with flying colours, from the dreadful den of a writer who is almost as terrible a *déte noire* to translators as the redoubtable Dante himself. It would be damning these gentlemen with very faint praise indeed to say that they have given us a better translation of the works of Tacitus than has hitherto been written in our language. They have done much more than this. They have given us a really good translation of this difficult historian, and one which for the classical student's requirements is all but perfect. Their work is marked by sound scholarship and good-sense; it is thoroughly and honestly done; valuable notes and excursions accompany it, and we repeat that for educational purposes, for the class of readers who need it most and are likely to use it most, this translation is all but perfect. To make it a perfect translation for general readers there is one thing lacking, and that is *style*. The translators themselves seem to be aware of this, for they say, modestly enough, in their advertisement:—"To furnish the English reader with anything like an adequate representation of the style and genius of the original must ever be in the highest degree difficult. It requires, besides a special aptitude for the work, such an expenditure of time and labour as only the amplest leisure could supply. If the work of translation could have a share in the proposed 'endowment of research,' it might be possible to reach an ideal to which those who have to live by their work can but distantly aspire." This is true enough, and we doubt if any one man, or any two men, with amplest leisure and all appliances and means to boot, could supply us with that ideal translation of Tacitus which an enthusiastic scholar might picture to his imagination—a scholar, we mean, who loves the language and literature of England as deeply and strongly as he loves the language and literature of "insolent Greece and haughty Rome." Such a scholar will undoubtedly miss much in this translation which he would like to find there, and find much which he would fain see away; but for all that, the translators have for the present made Tacitus their own. Nay, more, the foundation which they have laid is so solid and genuine that, for ourselves, we should be content for future translators to build on this foundation, and not seek to lay a fresh one. Then, indeed, in the course of years—or centuries, perhaps—we might finally come to possess a really great translation of Rome's greatest historian. Meanwhile, Church and Brodrigg's translation should be regarded as the "authorised version," and improvements grafted upon it in subsequent editions might, or might not, in proportion to their worth and number, bear the name of the editor or reviser. Of course, during their lifetime these gentlemen alone must be allowed to undertake the task of such a revision as we are thinking of; and in our opinion, it is the plain duty of every Latin scholar in England to send from time to time to Messrs. Church and Brodrigg, for their approval, any felicitous phrase or probable interpretation which he may light upon. In this way, far better and quicker than from "endowment of research," we may reasonably look for successful and satisfactory results. Right willingly would we contribute our mite for such a purpose, if space permitted, but we can attempt nothing beyond a few general remarks, and we are as conscious as the translators are of the practical inutility of such a proceeding. "We have," say they, "to acknowledge much kind and generous approbation of our work, and much valuable and instructive criticism." Of this, when it has dealt with details, we have often availed ourselves. When we have been told in more general terms that we ought to be more forcible, more faithful, or more free, we have been obliged to be content with acknowledging the excellence of the advice, and regretting that we were not able to follow it." To the justice of the reproach thus gently made we readily assent. Vague criticism is almost as useless as wild criticism, and is profitable neither for reproof, nor for correction, nor for instruction. By the aid, however, of an admission made by the translators themselves, and of an extract from Dr. Arnold's article on the "Use of the Classics," we hope to do something more definite than merely repeat to Messrs. Church and Brodrigg that they ought to be more faithful, more forcible, and more free. The admission we allude to is this, and is taken from the preface to the "Annals":—"The last instalment of our work has been a somewhat laborious task. We cannot suppose that we have accomplished it to the full satisfaction of either the classical student or of the English reader. Scholars will no doubt find that many subtleties of expression have been missed, and that here and there we have misapprehended our

The Classics of Tacitus. Translated into English by A. J. Church and W. J. Brodrigg. London: Macmillan and Co. 1877.