THE RABBIT STARTED VIOLENTLY, DROPPED THE WHITE KID GLOVES AND THE FAN, AND SKURRED AWAY INTO THE DARKNESS AS FAST AS HE COULD GO.
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

FROM AN ARTIST'S STAND-POINT

BY PETER NEWELL.

THE dominant note in the character of Alice is childish purity and sweetness, and this characteristic Sir John Tenniel has caught and fixed in a way none may rival. His appreciation of the many grotesque personages peopling this wonderland is broad and sympathetic, and his work will live as long as Alice. It may appear presumptuous therefore on my part to attempt to portray what Alice means to me. But the kindness with which the public has received my other work, together with the encouragement of certain friends (to whom the inception of this undertaking is due), has inspired the hope in me that this more serious effort will not be altogether unwelcome.

To me, Alice has a very distinct personality, so that my conception of her is
almost as convincing as would have been a personal acquaintance with her in real life. Alice in Wonderland, and yet not wonderstruck!

A sweet, childish spirit at home in the midst of mystery! An exile of that far-away Stork Country—the prenatal wonderland—with its atmosphere still clinging to her and coloring her fancy. And yet a little girl is she, with lessons to learn and duties to perform—a demure, quaint little girl, with a strict regard for the proprieties of life, and a delicate sense of consideration for the feelings of others, even when her companions happen to be Mice, Dodos, Gryphons, and various other strange and awe-inspiring things. And underlying all this is that simple, sincere faith which seems to be the peculiar property of childhood, and which upon all occasions induces in her a respectful attitude, however absurd may be the situation. Such is my impression of Alice as she lies asleep on the green bank of a vagrant brook on a pleasant summer afternoon; and if dreams are but projections of our waking thoughts, like this must she be when her gray eyes are open in wakefulness. Gray eyes, did I say? Yes, surely she must have gray eyes, and large, through which her soul looks out flutteringly, like a white butterfly just issued from its cocoon into the air and sunshine.

And yet there is a self-reliance about her as pronounced as the confidence of the palpitating insect when it spreads its untried wings to soar above the roses or the flowers of the field. Her face, wreathed in a wealth of brown hair, is delicately modelled, with the roundness and dimples of babyhood still modifying its contour and shaping the outlines of her petite figure. And as other summers come and go I think I can see her develop into a woman, with delicately chiselled features and a form of modest grace, and the concern of life gradually creeping into her eyes. And the same tenderness of the little Alice of long ago will abide in her heart, happily adjusting her to home and the ever-widening circle about her. And in the quiet evening hours she will again wander through the mystic world of a more mature fancy, until in the twilight of life she will enter into that Wonderland the glorious vistas of which lead the traveller on and on in a never-ending pilgrimage.

Quite as delightful, though in a different way, are the companions of Alice in her remarkable adventures. The per-
sonification of the dumb animals and the inanimate things is so skilfully done as to appear quite natural and appropriate. One would not be greatly surprised to hear a Rabbit or a Gryphon speak, if their words produced an impression similar to that created by their inarticulate or immobile expression.

And so, in the mind of the reader, there is no classification of her friends into their various orders, but all are real characters on a common plane of human action and interest. What an excellent idea we obtain of that extinct specimen of the pigeon tribe, the Dodo, after witnessing its extraordinary exhibition of liberality in awarding prizes (from the pocket of another) to all the participants in the Caucus Race, and Alice in particular! And how well does the contra-
dictory, crusty manner of the Caterpillar seem to be adapted to that singular worm as it sits, wreathed in a cloud of smoke from its hookah, on the top of a toadstool, where Alice chances to encounter it! And what a droll scene is that where the Fish Footman ceremoniously delivers the Queen's invitation to the Duchess to play croquet to the equally pompous Frog Footman! How well suited to each other do the Hatter and the March Hare appear to be as they sip their tea and wrangle over the half-recumbent form of their comfortable friend, the drowsy Door Mouse!

The Cheshire Cat, the Queen, the Gryphon, the Mock Turtle—all are bits of realism from the world of fancy, to use terms apparently contradictory, but which seem to me to be peculiarly appropriate to a description of these creatures, so admirable in every respect. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a book which appeals alike to young and old. It is an object-lesson that tends to make us realize the truth of the adage, “Men are but boys grown tall.”

And what more healthy influence can be at work in the world than that which inclines busy, careworn men to identify themselves with an eternal youth? Genial, kind-hearted, loving Lewis Carroll! What better tribute can be paid to his excellence than to say that it was his mission in life not only to popularize purity in child literature, but to incite an emulation in other writers, productive of results the extent of the beneficent effects of which it is impossible to estimate.

[Editor's Note.—For the illustrations of this article we are indebted to the new holiday edition of "Alice in Wonderland," illustrated by Mr. Newell.]
THE FISH FOOTMAN TO THE FROG FOOTMAN: "FOR THE DUCHESS; AN INVITATION FROM THE QUEEN TO PLAY CROQUET"