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CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

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THE MUSICAL SEASON.

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'The English are not a musical people.' The dictum long stood unquestioned, and, in general estimation, unquestionable. All the world had agreed upon it. There could be no two opinions: we had no national airs; no national taste; no

national appreciation of sweet sounds; musically, we were blocks! At length, however, the creed began to be called in question—were we so very insensible? If so, considering the amount of music actually listened to every year in London and the provinces, we were strangely given to an amusement which yielded us no pleasure; we were continually imposing on ourselves the direst and dreariest of tasks; we were tormenting ourselves with symphonies, and lacerating our patience with sonatas and rondos. What was the motive? Hypocrisy was very generally assigned. We only affected to love music. It was intellectual, spiritual, in all respects creditable to our moral nature, to be able to appreciate Mozart and Beethoven, and so we set up for connoisseurs, and martyred ourselves that Europe might think us musical. Is there more truth in this theory than the other? Hypocrisy is not generally so lasting as the musical fervour has proved itself to be. A fashion is the affair of a season; a mania goes as it came; but regularly and steadily, for many years back, has musical appreciation been progressing, and as regularly have the opportunities for hearing good music of all kinds been extending.

Take up a daily newspaper, published any time between April and August, and range your eye down the third or fourth column of the first page—what an endless array of announcements of music, vocal and instrumental! Music for the classicists; music for the crowd; symphonies and sonatas; ballads and polkas; harmonic societies; choral societies; melodists' clubs; glee clubs; madrigal clubs. Here you have the quiet announcement of a quartett-party; next to it, the advertisement of one of the Philharmonic Societies—the giants of the musical world; pianoforte teachers announce one of their series of classic performances; great instrumental soloists have each a concert for the special behoof and glorification of the *bénéficiaire*. Mr So-and-so's grand annual concert jostles Miss So-and-so's annual benefit concert. There are Monday concerts, and Wednesday concerts, and Saturday concerts; there are weekly concerts, fortnightly concerts, and monthly concerts; there are concerts for charities, and concerts for benefits; there are grand morning concerts, and grand evening concerts; there are *matinées musicales*, and *soirées musicales*; there are meetings, and unions, and circles, and associations—all of them for the performance of some sort of music. There are musical entertainments by the score: in the City; in the suburbs; at every institute and hall of science, from one end of London to the other. One professor has a ballad entertainment; a second announces a lecture, with musical illustrations; a third applies himself to national melodies. All London seems vocal and instrumental. Every dead wall is covered with naming *affiches*, announcing in long array the vast army of vocal and instrumental talent which is to assist at such and such a morning performance; and the eyes of the owner of a vast musical stomach are dazzled and delighted by programmes which will at least demand five hours in the performance.

So is London, in the course of the season, the congress of nearly all the performing musical notabilities of Europe. Time has been when they came to London for cash, not renown: now they come for both. A London reputation is beginning to rival a Parisian vogue, besides being ten times more profitable; and, accordingly, from every musical corner in Christendom, phenomena of art pour in, heralded by the utmost possible amount of puffing, and equally anxious to secure English gold and a London reputation. It is strange to observe how universally the musical tribute is paid. A tenor turns up from some Russian provincial town; a basso works himself to London from a theatre in Constantinople; rumours arrive of a peerless prima donna, with a voice which is to outstrip everything ever heard of, who has been dug out, by some travelling amateur, from her native obscurity in a Spanish or Norwegian village; an extraordinary soprano has been discovered in Alexandria; a wondrous contralto has been fished up from Riga. The instrumental phenomena are not one whit scarcer. Classical pianists pour in from Germany principally; popular pianists, who delight in fantasias rather than concertos, and who play such tricks with the keyboards, that the performances have much more of the character of legerdemain than of art, arrive by scores; violinists, violoncellists, professors of the trombone, of the ophicleide, of the bassoon, of every unwieldy and unmanageable instrument in fact, are particularly abundant; and perhaps the most popular of all are the particularly clever gentlemen who, by dint of a dozen years' or so unremitting practice, have succeeded in making one instrument sound like another. Quackery as this is, it is enormously run after by no small proportion of the public. Not that they do not appreciate the art of the device at its proper level, but that the trick is curious and novel; and most people, even the dignified classicists, have a gentle toleration for a little—just a little—*outré* amusement of the kind in question. Paganini was the founder of this school. He might have played on four strings till he was tired, without causing any particular sensation; but the single string made his fortune. Sivori is one of the cleverest artists of the present day, who resorts to tricks with his violin, and wonderfully does he

perform them. At a concert last season, he imitated the singing of a bird with the strangest and happiest skill. The 'severe' shook their heads, but smiled as they did so, and owned that the trick was clever enough, and withal agreeable to hear. But it is gentlemen who make one instrument produce the sounds of another, or, at all events, who extract from it some previously unknown effect, who carry all before them. The present phenomenon in this way is Bottesini, who, grasping a huge double-bass, the most unwieldy of instruments, tortures out of it the notes of a violin, of an oboe, and of a flute. A season or two ago, M. Vivier took all London by storm, by producing a chord upon the French horn, a feat previously considered impossible, and probably only the fruit of the most determined and energetic practice, extending over many years. At all the popular concerts, this trick-music is in immense request. Bottesini was the lion of Jullien's last series; but in his place in the orchestra of the Philharmonic, he plays his part and holds his instrument like any ordinary performer. Bagpipe music is not much appreciated on the banks of the Thames; but I can assure any enterprising Scotsman, that if he can only succeed in producing the notes of the bagpipe out of the trombone, he will make a fortune in five seasons or less.

Such is musical London, then—rushing from concert to concert, and opera to opera—from severe classicism to the most miscellaneous *omnium gatherum*—from solemn ecclesiastical harmonic assemblages to the chanting of merry glees, and the warbling of sentimental ballads. Let us, then, contemplate a little closer the different kinds of concerts—their features and their character—their performers and their auditories. Our sketch must be very hurried and very vague, but it will give an idea of some of the principal characteristics of the London musical season.

First, then, among the performances of mingled vocal and instrumental music, stand the two Sacred Harmonic Societies, which execute oratorios and similar works in Exeter Hall. The original Sacred Harmonic Society has within the last couple of years split into two bodies. It had long contained within itself the elements of division. There were the Go-ahead party and the Conservative party—the first, eager to try new ground, and aim at new effects; the second, lovers of the beaten way. At length, the split took place. The progressistas flung themselves into the arms of M. Costa, the famous conductor of the Royal Italian Opera orchestra, and the highest and most Napoleonic of musical commanders. The Tories of the society went peaceably on in the jog-trot ways of Mr Sarman, the original conductor. Each society can now bring into the field about 800 vocal performers, the immense majority of them amateurs, and their concerts take place alternately—Exeter Hall being invariably crammed upon either occasion. The Costaites, no doubt, have the *pas*. The discipline of their chief is perfect, and as rigid as it is excellent. The power which this gentleman possesses over his musical troops is very curious. The whole mass of performers seem to wait upon his will as the spirits did on Prospero. At the spreading of his arms, the music dies away to the most faintly-whispered murmurs. A crescendo or musical climax works gradually up step by step, and bar by bar, until it explodes in a perfect crash of vocal and instrumental tempest. The extraordinary choral effects produced in the performance of the *Huguenots* almost bewildered the hearers; and the wondrous lights and shades of sound given in many of the oratorios, are little behind the dramatic achievement. The aspect of Exeter Hall on an oratorio night is one of the grandest things in London. The vastness of the assemblage, the great mountain of performers, crested by the organ, and rising almost to the ceiling, are thoroughly impressive, while the first burst of the opening chorus is grand in the extreme. The oratorio is, in fact, the Opera of the 'serious' world. It is at once a place in which to listen to music and a point of social reunion. There are oratorio *habitués* as well as Opera *habitués*; and between the parts of the performance, the same buzzing hum of converse rises from the assemblage which you hear in the Opera corridors and lobbies. A glance at the audience will enlighten you as to their character. They represent the staid respectability of the middle class. The dresses of the ladies are often rich, seldom brilliant, and there is little sparkle of jewellery. You very frequently perceive family parties, under the care of a grave *pater familias* and his staid and stately partner. Quakers abound; and the number of ecclesiastically-cut coats shews how many clergymen of the church are present. The audience are in the highest degree attentive. The rules forbid applause, but a gentle murmur of admiration rises at the close of almost every *morceau*. Here and there, you have a practical amateur, or a group of such with the open score of the oratorio before them, eagerly following the music. Often these last gentlemen are members of the rival Society, and, as might be expected, pick plenty of holes in the execution of their opponents, for which charitable purpose only they have probably attended. But in M. Costa's Society, at all events, the task is difficult; the orchestra 'goes,' as the phrase is, like one instrument, and the singers are beautifully under the control of the

master-spirit who directs them.

Let us pass from Exeter Hall to Hanover Square. Here, in the Queen's Concert Room—a *salle* which once was smart, and the decorations of which were fashionable seventy years ago—we have unnumbered concerts, and chief among them the twelve annual performances of the Philharmonic Society. The 'Philharmonic,' as it is conversationally called, holds almost the rank of a national institution. The sovereign patronises it in an especial manner. It is connected with the Royal Academy of Music, and Her Majesty's private band is recruited from the ranks of its orchestra. The Philharmonic band may be indeed taken as the representative of the nation's musical executive powers; and, as such, comparisons are often instituted between it and the French, Austrian, and Prussian Philharmonics. The foreigners who hold places in the orchestra are resident, and in some sort naturalised, but the bulk of the executants are English. To be a member of the Philharmonic orchestra is, indeed, to take a sort of degree in executive music, and at once stamps the individual as a performer of distinguished merit. The music performed is entirely classic, and principally instrumental. New compositions are seldom given; and, in fact, it was the practice of adhering so exclusively to the standard works of great composers which started the new Philharmonic Society, which has just come into existence. The elder body stick stanchly to the safe courses of Bach, Gluck, Beethoven, Mozart, and Mendelssohn. The newly-created association proclaim that their mission is to look after aspirants, as well as to honour the veterans of the art; and accordingly they bring forward many compositions experimentally—a meritorious policy, but one not without its dangers. Few unprofessional people are aware of the cost of producing elaborate compositions. When *William Tell* was played some years ago at Drury Lane—to mention one single item—the price of copying the parts from the full score, at 3d. a page, came to L.350. All the old music is of course to be had printed; and to these standard scores the steady-going Philharmonic principally devotes itself. Each performance consists in general of two symphonies, or a symphony and an elaborate concerto, each occupying at least three-quarters of an hour, with two overtures, and solos, vocal and instrumental—the former generally sung by performers from either Opera, but usually from Covent Garden. M. Costa wields the baton at Hanover Square as at Exeter Hall; and under his management, the band have attained a magnificent precision and *ensemble* of effect. Its musical peculiarity over ordinary orchestras is the vast strength of stringed instruments, which gives a peculiar *verve* and light vigour to the performances. The rush of the violins in a rapid passage is overwhelming in its impetuosity and vigour, and is said, of late years especially, to beat the 'attack,' as it is technically called, of any of the continental Philharmonic Societies. The Philharmonic concerts are very fashionable. It is good taste, socially and artistically, to be present; and, consequently, the room is always crowded by an assemblage who display most of the characteristics of an Opera audience. The musical notabilities of town always muster in full force at the Philharmonic. Composers, executants, critics, amateurs, and connoisseurs, are all there, watching with the greatest care the execution of those famous works, the great effect of which can only be produced by the most wary and appreciative tenderness of rendering. In the interval between the first and second parts, the very general hum of conversation announces how great the degree of familiarity subsisting among the *habitués*. There is none of the common stiffness of waiting one sees at ordinary entertainments. Everybody seems to know everybody else, and one general atmosphere of genial intercourse prevails throughout the room.

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Let us change the scene to a classic concert of quite another kind. In a quiet West-end street, we are in a room of singular construction. It is in the form of a right-angled triangle; and at the right angle, upon a small dais, is placed the pianoforte and the desks, and so forth, for the performers. The latter are thus visible from all points; but about one-half the audience in each angle of the room is quite hidden from the other. Everybody is in evening dress; the ladies very gay, and the party very quiet—a still, drawing-room sort of air presides over the whole. Many of the ladies are young—quite girls; and a good many of the gentlemen are solemn old foggies, who appear strongly inclined to go to sleep, and, in fact, sometimes do. Meantime, the music goes on. A long, long sonata or concerto—piano and violin, or piano, violin, and violoncello—is listened to in profound silence, with a low murmur of applause at the end of each movement. Then perhaps comes a little vocalism—sternly classic though—an aria from Gluck, or a solemn and pathetic song from Mendelssohn: the performer being either a well-known concert-singer, or a young lady—very nervous and a little uncertain—who, it is whispered, is 'an Academy girl,' a pupil, that is, of the institution in question. Sometimes, but not often—for it is *de rigueur* that entertainments of this species shall be severely classic—we have a phenomenon of execution upon some out-of-the-way instrument, who performs certain miracles with springs or tubes, and in some degree wakens

up the company, who, however, not unfrequently relapse into all their solemn primness, under a concerto manuscript, or a trio manuscript, the composition of the *bénéficiaire*. Between the parts, people go quietly into a room beneath, where there are generally some mild prints to be turned over, some mild coffee to drink, some mild conversation about mild things in general; and then the party remount the stairs, and mildly listen to more mild music. This is the common routine of a classical pianoforte soirée. The *bénéficiaire* is a fashionable teacher, and, in a small way, a composer. He gives, every season, a series, perhaps two or three series, of classic evenings. The pupils and their families form the majority of the audience, interspersed with a few pianoforte amateurs, and those *fanatici per la musica* who are to be found wherever a violin is tuned, or a piano is opened.

Another species of classic concert is to be found in the quartett-meetings. These take place in some small concert-room, such as that I have described, or at the houses of the executants; and the audience comprehends a far larger proportion of gentlemen than the last-mentioned entertainments. The performers are four—pretty sure to be gentlemen of the highest professional abilities. The instruments are first and second violin, viola, and violoncello; and three or four quartetts by the great masters, or, very probably, as many compositions, marking the different stages of Beethoven's imagination, are played with the most consummate skill and the tenderest regard for light and shade. People not deep in the sympathies and tastes of the musical world, have no idea how these compositions are loved and studied by the real disciples of Mozart, Beethoven, and Haydn; how particular passages are watched for; and how old gentlemen nod their heads, or shake them at each other, according as they agree or disagree in the manner of the interpretation. Half the audience probably know every bar of the music by heart, and no inconsiderable number could perhaps perform it very decently themselves. It is indeed at these quartett and quintett meetings, that you see genuine specimens of musical knowledge and musical enthusiasm. They take place by half-dozens during the season; and you always find the same class of audience, often the same individuals, regularly ranged before the executants.

But place now for the real grand, miscellaneous, popular, and populous morning concert! Now for elephantine dimensions and leviathan bills of fare. It is nominally, perhaps, or really, perhaps, the annual benefit concert of some well-known performer, or it is the speculation of a great musical publishing house, in the name of one of their composing or performing *protégés*. The latter is, indeed, a very common practice. But whether the music-publishing and opera-box-letting firm be the real concert-giver, or merely the agent, to it is left the whole of the nice operation of 'getting up' the entertainment. It has then exhausted all the dodges of puffery in pumping up an unusual degree of excitement. The affair is to be a 'festival' or a 'jubilee;' 'all the musical talent' of London is to be concentrated; the continent has been dragged for extraordinary executive attractions; every musical hit of the season is to be repeated; every effect is to be got up with new *éclat*: never was there to be such a *super extra, ne plus ultra* musical triumph. The day approaches. Rainbow-hued *affiches* have done their best; placard-bearers, by scores, have paraded, and are parading, the streets; advertisements have blazoned the scheme day after day, and week after week; the gratis-tickets have been duly 'planted;' puffs, oblique and implied, have hinted at the coming attraction in every Sunday paper; and programmes are fluttering in every get-at-able shop-front. The day comes. A long line of fashionable carriages, strangely intermingled with shabby cabs, file up to the doors, and the gay morning dresses, flaunting with colours, disappear between the two colossal placards which grace the entrance. The room is filled. *Habitués*, and knowing musical men on town, recognise each other, and congregate in groups, laughingly comparing notes upon the probabilities of what artists announced will make an appearance, and upon what apologies will be offered in lieu of those who don't. A couple of these last are probably already in circulation. Madame Sopranini is confined to bed with an inflammatory attack; and Signor Bassinini has got bronchitis. Nevertheless, the concert begins; and oh! the length thereof. The principal vocalists seem to have mostly mistaken the time at which they would be wanted; and the chopping and changing of the programme are bewildering. Bravuras take the place of concertos; a duet being missing, an aria closes the ranks; a solo on the trombone not being forthcoming, a vocal trio (unaccompanied) is hurriedly substituted. Still, there is plenty of the originally announced music; all the favourite airs, duets, and trios from the fashionable operas; all the ballads in vogue—the music published by the house which has set the whole thing on foot, of course; all the phenomena of executive brilliance are there, or are momentarily expected to appear. We begin after an overture with, say, an air from the *Puritani*, by a lovely tenor; another, from the *Somnambula*, by a charming soprano; a fantasia by a legerdemain pianist, with long hair, and who comes down on the

key-board as though it was his enemy; the famous song from *Figaro*—encored; the madrigal, 'Down in a Flowery Vale'—the latter always a sure card; a duet from *Semiramide*, by two young ladies—rather shaky; solo on the clarionet, by a gentleman who makes the instrument sound like a fiddle—great applause; 'In manly Worth,' by an oratorio tenor; the overture to *Masaniello*, by the band; concerto (posthumous, Beethoven), by a stern classical man—audience yawn; pot pourri, by a romantic practitioner—audience waken up; ballad, 'When Hearts are torn by manly Vows,' by an English tenor—great delight, and encouragement of native talent; glee, 'Glorious Apollo,' or, 'The Red-cross Knight'—very well received; recitative and aria, from *Lucia di Lammermoor*—very lachrymose; violin solo, by Signor Rosinini, who throws the audience into a paroxysm of delight by imitating a saw and a grindstone; 'The Bay of Biscay,' by the 'veteran' Braham, being positively his last appearance (the 'veteran' is announced for four concerts in the ensuing week!); ballad, again, by the native tenor, 'When Vows are torn by slumbering Hearts'—more great applause; the page's song from the *Huguenots*, for the contralto; 'When the Heart of a Man,' *Beggars' Opera*; quartett for four pianofortes, great bustle arranging them, and then only three performers forthcoming—an apology—attack of bronchitis—but Mr Braham will kindly (thunders of applause) sing 'The Death of Nelson;' quartett for double-bass, trombone, drum, and triangles—curious effect; the audience hardly know whether they like it or not; the bravura song of the 'Queen of Night,' from *Zauberflöte*; overture to *William Tell*; ballad, 'When Slumber's Heart is torn by Vows;' duet, 'I know a Bank,' by the Semiramide young ladies; fantasia pianoforte, from the *Fille du Régiment*; 'Rode's air, with variations,' from the text; and the storm movement of the *Sinfonia Pastorale*, by Beethoven!

Such may be taken as a fair specimen-slice of a *Concert Monstre*; and in listening to this wild agglomeration of chaotic music, the day passes, very likely from two o'clock until six. In a future paper, I may touch upon the peculiarities of the artists performing.

A. B. R.

THE TALLOW-TREE OF CHINA.

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It is one happy recommendation of the Natural system of botany, that many of its orders form groups of plants distinguished not only by the characteristics of general physiognomy, and the more accurate differences of structure, but in an especial manner by the medicinal and economical properties which they possess, and which are indeed frequently peculiar to the order. Such is the case with the natural order *Euphorbiaceæ*, or spurge family, to which the tallow-tree of China belongs. The order includes 2500 species, all of which are more or less acrid and poisonous, these properties being especially developed in the milky juices which abound in the plants, and which are contained, not in its ordinary tissues, but in certain special vessels. Many important substances are derived from this order, notwithstanding its acrid and poisonous character. Castor-oil is obtained from the seeds of *Ricinus communis*; croton-oil, and several other oleaginous products of importance in medicine and the arts, are obtained from plants belonging to the order. The root of *Janipha Manihot*, or Manioc-plant, contains a poisonous substance, supposed to be hydrocyanic acid, along with which there is a considerable proportion of starch. The poisonous matter is removed by roasting and washing, and the starch thus obtained is formed into the cassava-bread of tropical countries, and is also occasionally imported into Europe as Brazilian arrow-root.

Many of the important economical productions of China are little known in this country; we are, however, daily gaining additions to our knowledge of them; and within the last few years, much valuable information has been obtained respecting the productive resources of the Eastern Empire. The grass-cloth of China only became known in Europe a few years ago, but it now ranks as one of the important fabrics of British manufacture. Daily discoveries seem to shew that there are Chinese products of equal importance, as yet unknown to us. On the present occasion, we call the attention of our readers to a substance which has been long known, as well as the plant which produces it, but neither of which has hitherto been prominently brought into general notice in Britain. For our information respecting the uses of the tallow-tree, we express our chief obligations to a paper by Dr D. J. Macgowan, published in the Journal of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society of India.

The tallow-tree of China is the *Stillingia sebifera* of botanists; a plant originally indigenous to China, where it occurs in wet situations, but which is now somewhat common in various parts of India and America, chiefly as an ornamental tree. In Roxburgh's time, it was very common about Calcutta, where, in the course of a few years, it became one of the most common trees; and it has become almost naturalised in the maritime parts of South Carolina. In China alone, however, is it as yet appreciated as an economical plant, and there alone are its products properly elaborated. It is chiefly prized for the fatty matter which it yields, and from which it derives its appropriate name; but it affords other products of value: 'its leaves are employed as a black dye; its wood being hard and durable, may be easily used for printing-blocks and various other articles; and, finally, the refuse of the nut is employed as fuel and manure.... It grows alike on low alluvial plains and on granite hills, on the rich mould at the margin of canals, and on the sandy sea-beach. The sandy estuary of Hangchan yields little else; some of the trees at this place are known to be several hundred years old, and though prostrated, still send forth branches and bear fruit.... They are seldom planted where anything else can be conveniently cultivated—but in detached places, in corners about houses, roads, canals, and fields.'

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The sebaceous matter, or vegetable tallow, is contained in the seed-vessels of the *Stillingia*. The processes adopted for abstracting it are of importance, and meet with due consideration in Dr Macgowan's valuable paper. The following clear account is given of the whole process, as practised in China:—'In midwinter, when the nuts are ripe, they are cut off with their twigs by a sharp crescentric knife, attached to the extremity of a long pole, which is held in the hand, and pushed upwards against the twigs, removing at the same time such as are fruitless. The capsules are gently pounded in a mortar, to loosen the seeds from their shells, from which they are separated by sifting. To facilitate the separation of the white sebaceous matter enveloping the seeds, they are steamed in tubs, having convex open wicker bottoms, placed over caldrons of boiling water. When thoroughly heated, they are reduced to a mash in the mortar, and thence transferred to bamboo sieves, kept at a uniform temperature over hot ashes. A single operation does not suffice to deprive them of all their tallow; the steaming and sifting are therefore repeated. The article thus procured becomes a solid mass on falling through the sieve; and to purify it, it is melted and formed into cakes for the press. These receive their form from bamboo hoops, a foot in diameter, and three inches deep, which are laid on the ground over a little straw. On being filled with the hot liquid, the ends of the straw beneath are drawn up and spread over the top; and when of sufficient consistence, are placed with their rings in the press. This apparatus, which is of the rudest description, is constructed of two large beams, placed horizontally so as to form a trough capable of containing about fifty of the rings with their sebaceous cakes; at one end it is closed, and at the other adapted for receiving wedges, which are successively driven into it by ponderous sledge-hammers, wielded by athletic men. The tallow oozes in a melted state into a receptacle below, where it cools. It is again melted, and poured into tubs, smeared with mud, to prevent its adhering. It is now marketable, in masses of about eighty pounds each—hard, brittle, white, opaque, tasteless, and without the odour of animal tallow; under high pressure, it scarcely stains bibulous paper, and it melts at 104 degrees Fahrenheit. It may be regarded as nearly pure stearine.... The seeds yield about 8 per cent. of tallow, which sells for about five cents per pound.'

There is a separate process for pressing the oil, which is carried on at the same time. The kernels yield about 30 per cent. of oil, which answers well for lamps. It is also employed for various purposes in the arts, and has a place in the Chinese pharmacopœia, because of its quality of changing gray hair to black, and other imaginary virtues.

The husks are used to feed the furnaces; the residuary tallow-cakes are also employed for fuel—a small quantity remaining ignited a whole day. The oil-cake forms a valuable manure, and is of course carefully used for this purpose in China, where so very great regard is paid to the collecting of manures. This kind is particularly used for enriching tobacco-fields, its powerful qualities recommending it for such a scourging crop.

With regard to the uses of the vegetable tallow, Dr Macgowan observes: 'Artificial illumination in China is generally procured by vegetable oils, but candles are also employed.... In religious ceremonies, no other material is used. As no one ventures out after dark without a lantern, and as the gods cannot be acceptably worshipped without candles, the quantity consumed is very great. With an unimportant exception, the candles are always made of what I beg to designate as vegetable stearine. When the candles, which are made by dipping, are of the required diameter, they receive a final dip into a

mixture of the same material and insect-wax, by which their consistency is preserved in the hottest weather. They are generally coloured red, which is done by throwing a minute quantity of alkanet-root (*Anchusa tinctoria*), brought from Shan-tung, into the mixture. Verdigris is sometimes employed to dye them green.' We are not aware that the vegetable tallow has as yet been imported into Britain to any extent.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] 'Uses of the *Stillingia Sebifera*, or Tallow-Tree, &c., by D. J. Macgowan, M. D., &c.' The substance of the same communication was laid before the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, 12th February, 1852, having been communicated by Dr Coldstream.

THE TOLLMAN'S STORY.

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Some local travellers of about twenty-five years' practice, may still remember the keeper of a toll-bar on one of the western approaches to Glasgow, known in his neighbourhood as English John. The prefix was given, I believe, in honour of his dialect, which was remarkably pure and polished for one of his station in those days; and the solution of that problem was, that he had been from childhood, till the gray was thickening on his hair, in the service of an English family, who had come into possession, and constantly resided on, a handsome estate in his native parish in Dumbartonshire.

Through their interest, he had been appointed to the office of power and trust in which I made his acquaintance. John was one of my earliest friends, though the remnant of his name was never heard nor inquired after by me. The great town has now grown much nearer his toll-house, which then stood alone on the country road, with no building in sight but the school, at which I, and some two score of the surrounding juveniles, were supposed to be trained in wisdom's ways, by the elder brother of our parish minister. A painstaking, kindly teacher he was; but the toll-house was a haunt more pleasant to our young fancies than his seminary. John was the general friend and confidant of all the boys; he settled our disputes, made the best tops and balls for us, taught us a variety of new tricks in play, and sometimes bestowed upon us good advices, which were much sooner forgotten. John never married. He had a conviction, which was occasionally avowed, that all women were troublesome; and whether this evidence be considered *pro* or *con*, he was a man of rough sense and rustic piety, of a most fearless, and, what the Germans call, a self-standing nature—for solitude or society came all alike to John. You would as soon expect a pine-tree to be out of sorts, as his hard, honest face, and muscular frame. John was never sick, or disturbed in any way; he performed his own domestic duties with a neatness and regularity known to few housekeepers, and was a faithful and most uncompromising guardian of the toll-bar. I well remember how our young imaginations were impressed with the fact, that no man could pass, without, as it were, paying tribute to him; and George IV., though he appeared on the coppers with which we bought apples, cast by no means so mighty a shadow on our minds as English John. Before this glory waned, I was removed from his neighbourhood, being sent to cheer the heart and secure the legacy of a certain uncle who was a writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, and believed to be in profitable practice and confirmed bachelorhood. The worthy man has long ago married his landlady's daughter, and been blessed with a family sufficient to fill a church-pew. My own adventures—how I grew from garment to garment, how I became a law-student, and at length a writer myself—have little to do with the present narrative, and are therefore spared the reader in detail; but the first startling intelligence I received from home was, that English John had resigned his important office at the toll-house, and gone, nobody knew whither!

Years had passed; my professional studies were finished, and I had occasion to visit a Fife laird near the East Neuk. The gentleman was notable for his taste in kitchen-gardening; and having a particularly fine bed of Jerusalem artichokes which I must see, he conducted me to the scene of his triumphs, when, hard at work with the rake and hoe, whom should I find as the much esteemed gardener, but my old friend English John! His hair had grown quite gray, and his look strangely grave, since last I saw him: time had altered me still more; nevertheless, John knew me at once—he had always a keen eye—but I perceived it was his wish not to be recognised at all in presence of the laird. That worthy was one of those active spirits who extend their superintendence to every department. He commanded in the pantry as well as

on the farm; and while expatiating over the artichokes, a private message from his lady summoned him back to the house, as I sincerely believe, on some matter connected with the dinner; and he left me, with an understood permission to admire the artichokes, and the garden in general, as long as I pleased. Scarcely was he fairly out of sight, till I was at the gardener's side. 'John, my old fellow,' cried I, grasping his hand, 'I'm glad to see you once again. How has the world behaved to you these many years?'

'Pretty well, Master Willie,' said John, heartily returning my shake; 'and I'm glad to see you too; but your memory must be uncommon good, for many a one of the boys has passed me by on street and highway. How have they all turned out?' And he commenced a series of inquiries after schoolmates and old neighbours, to which my answers were as usual in such cases—some were dead, some were married, and some gone far away.

'But, John,' said I at last, determined to make out the mystery which had so long puzzled me and the entire parish—'in exchange for all my news, tell me why you left the toll-house? It was surely a better place than this?'

'You know what the old proverb says, Master Willie: "Change is lightsome,"' said John, beginning to dig, as if he would fain stave off the explanation.

'Ha, John, that wont do!' said I; 'your mind was never so unsteady. Tell me the truth, for old times' sake; and if there is anything in the story that should not be made public, you know I was always a capital secret-keeper. Maybe it was a love-matter, John: are you married yet?'

'No, Master Willie,' cried my old friend, with a look of the most sincere self-gratulation I ever saw. 'But it's a queer story, and one I shouldn't care for telling; only, you were always a discreet boy, and it rather presses on my mind at times. The master won't be back for awhile; he'll have the roast to try, and the pudding to taste—not to talk of seeing the table laid out, for there are to be some half-dozen besides yourself to-day at dinner. That's his way, you see. And I'll tell you what took me from the toll-house—but mind, never mention it, as you would keep peace in the west country.'

This is John's story, as nearly in his own words as I can call them to mind:—

The family in whose service I was brought up lived on their estate in Dumbartonshire, which came through the mistress of the mansion, who had been heiress of entail, and a lady in her own right; we called her Lady Catherine, and a prouder woman never owned either estate or title. Her father had been a branch of the Highland family to whom the property originally belonged. Her mother was sprung from the old French nobility, an emigrant of the first Revolution, and she had been brought up in England, and married in due time to an Honourable Mr --- there. When she first came to the estate, her husband had been some years dead, and Lady Catherine brought with her a son, who was to be heir—at that time a boy like myself—and two handsome grown-up daughters. The castle was a great fabric, partly old and partly new. It stood in the midst of a noble park, with tall trees and red deer in it. Its last possessor had been a stingy old bachelor; but after Lady Catherine's coming, the housekeeping was put on a grand scale. There was a retinue of English servants, and continual company. I remember it well, for just then my poor mother died. She had been a widow, living in a low cottage hard by the park-wall, with me and a gray cat for company, and her spinning-wheel for our support. I was but a child when she died; and having neither uncle nor aunt in the parish, they took me, I think, by her ladyship's order, into the castle, to run small errands, and help in the garden; from which post, in process of time, I rose to that of footman. Lady Catherine was in great odour with the country gentry for her high-breeding, her fashionable connections, and her almost boundless hospitality. She was popular with the tenantry too, for there was not a better managed estate in the west, and the factor had general orders against distress and ejectment.

They said her ladyship had been reckoned a beauty in London drawing-rooms, and our parish thought her wonderfully grand for the gay dresses and rich jewellery she wore. Doubtless, these were but the cast-offs of the season, for regularly every spring she and the family went up to London, where they kept a fine house, and what is called the best society. How much the gay dresses had to do with the beauty is not for me to say, but Lady Catherine was a large, stately woman, with a dark complexion, and very brilliant red, which the servants whispered was laid on in old court fashion. Her manner to her equals was graceful, and to her inferiors, gracious; but there was a look of pride in her dark gray eyes, and a stern resolution about the compressed lips, which struck my childish mind with strange fear, and kept older hearts in awe. Her

daughters, Florence and Agnes, were pictures of their mother—proud, gay ladies, but thought the flower of the county. Their portions were good, and they would have been co-heiresses but for their brother Arthur. He was the youngest, but so different from his mother and sisters, that you wouldn't have thought him of the same family. His fair face and clear blue eyes, his curly brown hair and merry look, had no likeness to them, though he was not a whit behind them in air or stature. At eighteen, there was not a finer lad in the shire; and he had a frank, kindly nature, which made the tenantry rejoice in the prospect of his being their future landlord.

Near the castle there stood a farmhouse, occupied by an old man whose great-grandfather had cultivated the same fields. He was not rich, but much respected by his neighbours for an honest, upright life. His wife was as old as himself. They had been always easy-living people, and had no child but one only daughter. Menie was a delicately pretty girl, a little spoiled, perhaps, in her station, for both father and mother made a queen of her at home. She was never allowed to do any rough work, was always dressed, and her neighbours said, kept in the parlour. Menie had a great many admirers, but her parents thought her too good for everybody, and had a wonderful belief of their own, that she was somehow to get a great match, and be made a lady. There was a strange truth in that notion, as things turned out, for we servants at the castle began to remark how often the young master was seen going and coming about the farmhouse. Maybe the old farmer and his wife encouraged him, for they had a story concerning their own descent from some great chief of the western Highlands, and a family of wild proud cousins, who lived up among the hills; but of this I know nothing more, only that the farmer's daughter was the prettiest girl in the parish. Master Arthur was beginning his nineteenth year, and there was a storm up stairs, such as had never been heard before in the castle, when Lady Catherine found out what was going on, as I think through our minister, who considered it his duty to let her know what every one talked of, but nobody else would dare to mention in her presence. Whether the tempest was more than Master Arthur could stand, or whether Lady Catherine, in her fury—for she had no joke of a tongue and temper—said something of Menie which drove the boy to finish the business in his own way, was long a disputed point in the servants' hall; but next morning he was missed in the castle, and in the course of my duties the same forenoon, I brought a letter from the village post-office, the reading of which sent the young ladies off in hysterics, and made Lady Catherine retire to her room—for it announced that her heir of entail and the farmer's daughter were gone to get married in Glasgow.

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The young ladies recovered in about two hours, and her ladyship came out, but only to prepare for a journey to Paris; and quick work she made of it. Within twenty-four hours from the receipt of that letter, she and her daughters were off in the family carriage; the best part of the servants despatched to live at their town-house on board-wages; all the good rooms locked up, and nobody but the gardener, a kitchen-girl, and myself left with the old housekeeper at the castle. The next news we heard was, that the old farmer and his wife had set out to bring home their daughter and son-in-law, saying—poor people, in their pride or folly—that Menie and her husband could live with them till Providence cleared their way to the estate, which nobody could keep from them. I believe it was that speech, coming to her ears by some busy tongue or other, that made Lady Catherine so bitter afterwards; but Master Arthur and his bride came home to the farmhouse, where the parlour and the best bedroom were set apart for their use; and the poor old father and mother were proud to serve and entertain them. They were a young pair; for, as I have said, he was in his nineteenth, and she in her seventeenth year—a handsome pair, too, and more alike than one would have supposed from the difference of their birth. Menie had a genteel, quiet carriage, and really looked like a lady in the church-pew beside our young master, whom we seldom saw but at a distance—for his spirit was too high to come near the castle—and though it wasn't just told us, we all knew that going to the farmhouse would be reckoned the full value of our places.

It was the fall of the year when Lady Catherine left us—all that winter she spent in Paris; and when the spring again came round, we heard of her opening house with even more than usual gaiety in London. That was a great season with her ladyship. In its course, she got her daughters both married to her mind. The one wedded a baronet, and the other a right honourable; but scarcely had the newspapers fully announced his sisters' wedding-breakfasts, and how the happy pairs set out, when Master Arthur was seized with sudden sickness. He had been fishing in a mountain-lake, and got drenched to the skin by the rain of a thunder-storm, overexerted himself in walking home, and caught a pleurisy. The whole parish felt for the poor young man, who had been so hardly used by his mother, and many were the inquiries made for him

at the farmhouse. There was wild wo there, for every day he got worse; and within the week, Menie was left a widow. Lady Catherine had gone back to Paris at the close of the season; one of her married daughters was in Italy, and the other in Switzerland; but two cousins of their father were to be found in England; and Master Arthur was laid in the family vault, under our old parish church, before the intelligence reached them. Lady Catherine came back in deep mourning, and alone, but not a whit subdued in spirit: she had been heard to say, that her son was better dead than disgraced; and her estate was at least safe from being shared by peasants. Of her daughter-in-law, she never took the slightest notice. People said, the poor young widow's heart was broken, for she had thought more of Arthur than of his rank and property, and kept well out of the proud, hard woman's way. Her ladyship did not seem to like living at the castle; she stayed only to regulate matters with the factor at Martinmas, and went back again to London. Before she went, a report began to rise, that poor Menie had drooped and pined into a real sickness. They said it was a rapid decline, and a dog would have pitied the father and mother's grief. How strangely they strove to keep that only child, asking the prayers of the congregation, and sending for the best doctors; but all was in vain, for Menie died some days before Christmas. The girl had a simple wish to rest beside Arthur. It was the last words she spoke; and her relations believed that, being his wife, she had a right to a place in the vault without asking anybody's leave. So they laid her quietly beside her husband, no one about the castle caring to interfere, except the factor, who thought it incumbent on him to let her ladyship know.

By way of answer to his letter, down came Lady Catherine herself, one dark, wintry morning; and, without so much as changing her travelling dress, she sent for four labourers, took them with her to the church, and saying her family burying-place was never intended for a peasant's daughter, made them take out Menie's coffin, and leave it at her parents' door. They said that the old pair never got over that sight; and the mother, in her bitterness of heart, declared that Providence had many a way to punish pride, and the woman who had disturbed her dead child, would never be suffered to keep her own grave in peace.

The story made a marvellous stir in our parish, and grand as Lady Catherine was, she did not escape blame from all quarters. There was a great gathering of Highland relatives and Lowland friends to a second funeral, when they laid poor Menie among her humble kindred in the church-yard. It was but a little way from the park gate, and I stood there to see the crowd scatter off in that frosty forenoon. Many a sad and angry look was cast in the direction of the castle; but my attention was particularly drawn to an old man and two boys, who stood gazing on the place. He was close on the threescore-and-ten—they were little more than children; but all three had the same gaunt, yet powerful frames; dark-red hair, which in the old man was but slightly sprinkled with gray; almost swarthy complexions; and a fierce, hard look in the deep-set eyes. By after inquiries, I learned that these were the father of the Highland cousin family, and his two youngest sons. There were three elder brothers, but they were married, and settled on rough sheep-farms; and the old man intended to maintain the ancient honours of his house, by putting his younger boys into some of the learned professions.

The married sisters, now heiresses of entail, never visited the castle again in my time. Lady Catherine came regularly at the terms from London, where she lived constantly; but her stay was no longer than the rent-roll required, and her maid said she rested but badly at night. So years passed on, and I rose in the service. On one of her visits, Lady Catherine thought I would do for a footman, which she happened to want, and sent me to be trained at the house in London. What great and gay doings I saw there needn't be told just now. Lady Catherine kept the best and most fashionable company, and she was never at home an evening that the house was not full. There was money to be made, and plenty of all things; but I did not like it; and having saved a trifle, one of her ladyship's sons-in-law—he was the best of the two—got me the place at the toll-bar.

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You remember me there, Master Willie, and what great times we had on Saturday afternoons. You may recollect, too, how many foot-passengers used to come and go. It was my amusement to watch them when I had nothing better to do; but of all who passed my window, there were none took my attention so completely as two young men, who always walked arm-in-arm, and seemed to be brothers. I thought I had seen their strongly-marked Highland faces before, and by degrees learned that they were none other than the old man's two sons, who had been at poor Menie's last funeral, but were now grown up, and studying for the medical profession at the college in Glasgow. Their father evidently kept them on short allowance, judging from

their coarse tartan clothes, and continual munching of oaten cakes: but I was told they were hard students, and particularly clever in the anatomy class. One dark, dreary morning, about the Christmas-time, I noted that Lady Catherine and her family had been in my dreams all night—their grand house, and gay goings-on in London, mingling strangely with the old story of Master Arthur and the farmer's daughter. When the newspaper, which I shared with the schoolmaster, came, judge of my astonishment to read that her ladyship had died suddenly in a fit of apoplexy, which came upon her at the whist-table, and her remains had been conveyed to the family vault in Dumbartonshire. There was a lesson on the uncertainty of life! and it is my trust that I found in it a use of warning; but the continual news and strangers at the toll-bar, the exact gathering in of the dues, which was not always an easy task, and your own merry schoolmates, Master Willie, had in a manner shuffled it out of my mind before the second evening.

It had been a dark, foggy day, and I went early to sleep, there being few travellers; but in the dead of night, between twelve and one, I was roused by a thundering summons at the toll-bar. The night was calm and starless, a mass of heavy clouds covered the sky, broken at times by gusts of moaning wind from the west, and broad bursts of moonlight. I threw on my coat, lit my lantern, and hurried out. There stood a large gig with three persons. They must have been tightly packed in it, and I never saw a more impatient horse. There was some delay in getting out the silver, and I had time to see that the two men who sat, one on each side, were the Highland brothers. There was a woman between them, in a dingy cloak and bonnet, with a thick black veil. She neither moved nor spoke, though the toll somehow puzzled the students. I was determined to have it any way, and one of them saying something to his companion in Gaelic, reached a half-crown to me. I knew I had no change, and told him so. 'I'll call in the morning,' said he; but the horse gave a bound, and the silver flew out of his fingers. Both the brothers looked down after it. I had a strange curiosity about their companion, and that instant a gust of wind blew back the veil, and the moonlight shone clear and full upon the face: it was the dead visage of Lady Catherine! I saw but one glance of it; the next moment the heavy veil had fallen. 'Get the silver yourself, and keep it all,' cried the two men, as I opened for them without a word: and from that day to this, no one has ever heard the story from me. I put the half-crown in the poor's-box next Sabbath. But, Master Willie, after that night I never cared for keeping the toll-bar. The sound of wheels coming after dark had always a strange effect on me, and I could never see a gig pass without shivering. So I gave up my situation, and took to the old trade of gardening again. The pleasant plants and flowers bring no dark stories to one's mind. But yonder's the laird: dinner will be ready by this time.

And John was right; for it was ready, with a jovial party to despatch it. But I never saw my old friend after. He emigrated to Canada with his managing master in the following spring; and, having at least kept the real names with enjoined secrecy, it seems at this distance of time no breach of trust to repeat the toll-keeper's story.

CARDINAL MEZZOFANTI.

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Among the lions of Rome during the last twenty years, not the least attractive, especially for literary visitors, was the celebrated Cardinal Mezzofanti. Easy of access to foreigners of every condition, simple, unpretending, cheerful, courteous even to familiarity, he never failed to make a most favourable impression upon his visitors; and marvellous as were the tales in circulation concerning him, the opportunity of witnessing more closely the exercise of his almost preternatural powers of language, served but to deepen the wonder with which he was regarded. The extent, the variety, and the solidity of his attainments, and, still more, his complete and ready command, for the purposes of conversation, of all the motley stores which he had laid up, were so far beyond all example, whether in ancient or modern times, as not only to place him in the very first rank of the celebrities of our generation, but to mark him out as one of the most extraordinary personages recorded in history.

Giuseppe (Joseph) Mezzofanti was born at Bologna in 1774, of an extremely humble family. His father was a poor carpenter; and the eminence to which, by his own unassisted exertions, Mezzofanti, without once leaving his native city, attained in the exercise of the faculty of language—which is ordinarily cultivated only by the arduous and expensive process of visiting and travelling

in the different countries in which each separate language is spoken—is not the least remarkable of the many examples of successful 'pursuit of knowledge under difficulties,' which literary history supplies. He was educated in one of the poor schools of his native city, which was under the care of the fathers of the celebrated Congregation of the Oratory; and the evidence of more than ordinary talent which he exhibited, early attracted the notice of one of the members of the order, to whose kind instruction and patronage Mezzofanti was indebted for almost all the advantages which he afterwards enjoyed. This good man—whose name was Respighi, and to whose judicious patronage of struggling genius science is also indebted for the eminent success of the distinguished naturalist Ranzani, the son of a Bolognese barber, and a fellow-pupil of Mezzofanti—procured for his young protégé the instruction of the best masters he could discover among his friends. He himself, it is believed, taught him Latin; Greek fell to the share of Father Emmanuel da Ponte, a Spanish ex-Jesuit—the order had at this time been suppressed; and the boy received his first initiation into the great Eastern family of languages from an old Dominican, Father Ceruti, who, at the instance of his friend Respighi, undertook to teach him Hebrew. Beyond this point, Mezzofanti's knowledge of languages was almost exclusively the result of his own unassisted study.

From a very early age, he was destined for the church, and he received holy orders about the year 1797. During the period of his probationary studies, however, he obtained, through the kindness of his friend F. Respighi, the place of tutor in the family of the Marescalchi, one of the most distinguished among the nobility of Bologna; and the opportunities for his peculiar studies afforded by the curious and valuable library to which he thus enjoyed free access, may probably have exercised a decisive influence upon his whole career.

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His attainments gradually attracted the notice of his fellow-citizens. In the year 1797, he was appointed professor of Arabic in the university; a few years later, he was named assistant-librarian of the city library; and in 1803, he succeeded to the important chair of Oriental Languages. This post, which was most congenial to his tastes, he held, with one interruption, for a long series of years. In 1812, he was advanced to a higher place in the staff of the library; and in 1815, on the death of the chief librarian, Pozetti, he was appointed to fill his place. When it is considered how peculiarly engrossing the study of languages is known to be, and especially how attractive for an enthusiastic scholar like Mezzofanti, it might be supposed that for him the office of librarian could have been little more than a nominal one. But the library of Bologna to the present day bears abundant evidence that it was far otherwise. The admirable order in which the Greek and Oriental manuscripts are arranged, the excellent *catalogue raisonné* of these manuscripts, and the valuable additions to the notices of them by Assemani and Talmar which it contains, are all the fruit of Mezzofanti's labour as librarian.

During his occupancy of this office, too, he continued to hold his professorship of Oriental languages, and, for a considerable part of the time, that of Greek literature in addition. Nor was he exempt from those domestic cares and anxieties which are often the most painful drawback upon literary activity. The death of a brother, which threw upon him the care of an unprovided family of eleven children, was the severest trial sustained in Mezzofanti's otherwise comparatively quiet career; and by driving him to the ordinary expedient of distressed scholars—that of giving private lectures—it tended more than all his public occupations to trench upon his time, and to abridge his opportunities of application to his favourite study.

Perhaps, indeed, of all who have ever attained to the same eminence in any department which Mezzofanti reached in that of languages, there hardly ever was one who had so little of the mere student in his character. In the midst of these varied and distracting occupations, he was at all times most assiduous in his attendance upon the sick in the public hospitals, of which he acted as the chaplain. There was another also of his priestly duties, for the zealous discharge of which he was scarcely less distinguished, and which became subsidiary, in a very remarkable way, to his progress in the knowledge of languages. In the absence, up to the present time, of any regular memoir of him, it is impossible to fix with precision the history of his progress in the acquisition of the several languages. But it is well known, that at a very early period he was master of all the leading European languages, and of those Oriental tongues which are comprised in the Semitic family. Very early, therefore, in Mezzofanti's career, he was marked out among the entire body of the Bolognese clergy as in an especial manner the 'foreigners' confessor' (*confessario dei forestieri*). In him, visitors from every quarter of the globe had a sure and ready resource; and in several cases, it was to the very

necessity thus created he was indebted for the acquisition, or at least the rudimentary knowledge, of a new language. More than once, it occurred that a foreigner, introduced to the *confessario dei forestieri*, for the purpose of being confessed, found it necessary to go through the preliminary process of *instructing his intended confessor*. For Mezzofanti's marvellous and almost instinctive power of grasping and systematising the leading characteristics even of the most original language, the names of a few prominent ideas in the new idiom sufficed to open a first means of communication. His prodigious memory retained with iron tenacity every word or phrase once acquired; his power of methodising, by the very exercise, became more ready and more perfect with each new advance in the study; and, above all, a faculty which seemed peculiar to himself, and which can hardly be described as other than instinctive, of seizing and comprehending by a single effort the general outlines of the grammatical structure of a language from a few faint indications—as a comparative anatomist will build up an entire skeleton from a single bone—enabled him to overleap all the difficulties which beset the path of ordinary linguists, and to attain, almost by intuition, at least so much of the required language as enabled him to interchange thought with sufficient freedom and distinctness for the purposes of this religious observance, which is so important in the eyes of Catholics. And he used to tell, that it was in this way he acquired more than one of his varied store of languages. For it will hardly be believed, that this prodigy of the gift of tongues had never, till his forty-eighth year, travelled beyond the precincts of his native province; and that, up to the period of his death, his most distant excursion from Rome, in which city he had fixed his residence in 1832, did not exceed a hundred miles—namely, to Naples, for the purpose of visiting the Chinese College which is there established.

It is true that at the period of which we speak, Bologna lay upon the high-road to Rome, and that travellers more frequently rested for a space upon their journey, than in these days of steam-boat and railway communication. But, even then, the opportunities of intercourse with foreign-speaking visitors in Bologna were few and inconsiderable compared with the prodigious advances which, under all his disadvantages, Mezzofanti contrived to make. The ordinary European languages presented but little difficulty; the frequent passings and repassings of the allied forces during the later years of the war, afforded him a full opportunity of acquiring Russian; and the occasional establishment of Austrian troops in Bologna, brought him into contact with the motley tongues of that vast empire—the Magyar, the Czechish, the Servian, the Walachian, and the Romani; but beyond this, even his spirit of enterprise had no vent in his native city; and all his further conquests were exclusively the result due to his own private and unassisted study.

His fame, nevertheless, began to extend to foreign countries. Among many distinguished foreigners to whose acquaintance his extraordinary faculties as a linguist became a passport, was the celebrated Russian general, Suwarrow; and with him Mezzofanti long maintained the most friendly relations. From the Grand-Duke of Tuscany he received a pressing invitation to fix himself at Florence; and Napoleon himself, with that engrossing spirit which desired to make Paris the centre of all that is great in science, in art, and in literature, offered him a most honourable and lucrative appointment, on condition of his removing to the French capital. But Mezzofanti declined both the invitations, and continued to reside in his native city, till the year 1832. At the close of those political disturbances, of which Bologna was the centre, in the early part of the pontificate of Gregory XVI., it was resolved to send a deputation to Rome on the part of the citizens. Of this deputation, Mezzofanti, as the chief celebrity of the city, was naturally a leader; and the pope, who had long known him, and who, before his elevation to the pontificate, had frequently corresponded with him on philological subjects, urged him so earnestly to remain at Rome, that with all his love of Bologna he was induced to consent. He was immediately appointed, in 1832, a canon of St Peter's; and on the translation of the celebrated Angelo (now Cardinal) Mai to the office of secretary of the Propaganda, he was named to succeed him in the honourable post of librarian of the Vatican.

In this office Mezzofanti continued till the year 1840, when, in conjunction with the distinguished scholar just named, he was raised to the cardinalate. During the interval since his fixing his residence at Rome, he had enjoyed the confidence and friendship of Gregory XVI.; and although his narrow resources were utterly unequal to the very considerable expense which the state of a cardinal entails, Gregory, in acknowledgment of his distinguished merit, himself settled the necessary income upon the humble Bolognese; and even, with characteristic delicacy, supplied from his own means the equipage and other appurtenances which a new cardinal is obliged to provide on entering upon his office.

From this period, Mezzofanti continued to reside at Rome. Far, however, from relaxing in the pursuit of his favourite study after his elevation, he only used the opportunities thus afforded for the purpose of cultivating it with more effect. When the writer of these pages first had the honour of being presented to him, he was in the full flush of the excitement of a new study—that of the language of the California Indians, two of whom had recently come as pupils to the College of the Propaganda; and up to his very last year, the same zeal continued unabated. His death occurred March 16, 1849, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, and was most probably hastened by the excitement and distress caused by the political troubles of the period.

Such is a brief outline of the quiet and uneventful career of this extraordinary man. It remains that we give a short account of the nature and extent of his prodigious attainments as a linguist. It is observed by the author of an interesting paper read a few weeks since at a meeting of the Philological Society, that, taking the account of the linguistic accomplishments of King Mithridates even in the most exaggerated form in which it is given by the ancients, who represent him as speaking the languages of twenty-two nations, it fades into insignificance in contrast with the known and ascertained attainments of Mezzofanti. A Russian traveller, who published in 1846 a collection of *Letters from Rome*, writes of Mezzofanti:—'Twice I have visited this remarkable man, a phenomenon as yet unparalleled in the learned world. He spoke eight languages fluently in my presence. He expressed himself in Russian very purely and correctly. Even now, in advanced life, he continues to study fresh dialects. He learned Chinese not long ago. I asked him to give me a list of all the languages and dialects in which he was able to express himself, and he sent me the name of GOD written with his own hand in *fifty-six* languages, of which thirty were European, not including their dialects; seventeen Asiatic, also without counting their dialects; five African, and four American!' We should add, however, from the cardinal's own avowal to ourselves, that of the fifty-six languages here alluded to, there were some which he did not profess to speak, and with which his acquaintance was more limited than with the rest; an avowal the honesty of which will be best appreciated when it is considered, on the one hand, how difficult it would have been to test his knowledge of the vast majority among these languages; and, on the other, how marvellously perfect was his admitted familiarity with those which he did profess really to know.

The author of the memoir submitted to the Philological Society, has collected a number of notices of Mezzofanti by travellers in Italy, who had seen him at different periods of his career. Mr Stewart Rose, in 1817, tells of him that a Smyrniote servant, who was with him, declared that he might pass for a Greek or a Turk throughout the dominions of the Grand Seignior. A few years later, while he was still residing at Bologna, he was visited by the celebrated Hungarian astronomer, Baron Zach, editor of the well-known *Correspondences Astronomiques*, on occasion of the annular eclipse which was then visible in Italy. 'This extraordinary man,' writes the baron, February 1820, 'speaks thirty-two languages, living and dead—in the manner I am going to describe. He accosted me in Hungarian, with a compliment so well-turned, and in such excellent Magyar, that I was quite taken by surprise. He afterwards spoke to me in German, at first in good Saxon, and then in the Austrian and Swabian dialects, with a correctness of accent that amazed me to the last degree, and made me burst into a fit of laughter at the thought of the contrast between the language and the appearance of this astonishing professor. He spoke English to Captain Smyth, Russian and Polish to Prince Volkonski, with the same volubility as if he had been speaking his native tongue.' As a last trial, the baron suddenly accosted him in *Walachian*, when, 'without hesitation, and without appearing to remark what an out-of-the-way dialect had been taken, away went the polyglot with equal volubility;' and Zach adds, that he even knew the Zingler or gipsy language, which had long proved a puzzle to himself. Molbech, a Danish traveller, who had an interview with him in 1820, adds to his account of this miraculous polyglotist, that 'he is not merely a linguist, but is well acquainted with literary history and bibliography, and also with the library under his charge. He is a man of the finest and most polished manners, and at the same time, of the most engaging good-nature and politeness.'

It would be easy to multiply anecdotes, shewing the enthusiasm with which Mezzofanti entered on the study of language after language. He sought out new tongues with an insatiable passion, and may be said to have never been happy but when engaged in the mastering of words and grammars. No degree of bad health interrupted his pursuit. Till the day of his death, he was engaged in his darling task: life closed on him while so occupied. He died just as he had acquired a thorough proficiency in Californian—a singular instance of the power of mind exercised on a favourite subject, and shewing what may be

accomplished when men set their heart on it. The career of this remarkable linguist, however, cannot be considered exemplary. We would recommend no person to plunge headlong into an absorbing passion for any accomplishment. Mezzofanti was a curiosity—a marvel—the wonder of the world of letters; and it is chiefly as such that a notice of him here will be considered interesting.

CURIOSITIES OF POSTHUMOUS CHARITY.

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The curious observer, in his rambles about town, is occasionally struck with some singular demonstrations for which he is at a loss to account. Sometimes they assume a benevolent form, and sometimes they have a holiday-making aspect, yet with a touch of the lugubrious. In London, or in some one of the thriving towns lying within a score of miles of it, he strolls into a church, where he sees a number of loaves of bread piled up at the back of the communion-table, or ranged, as they are in a baker's shop, upon shelves against the wall. It is a pleasant sight, but apt to be somewhat puzzling. Perhaps he saunters into a country church-yard, and there finds amongst the rank grass and moss-grown and neglected memorials of the silent multitude, one trim and well-tended monument, uninvaded by cryptogamia, free from all stain of the weather, and the surrounding grassy sward neatly mown and fenced in, it may be, with budding willow branches or a circle of clipped box. Or he finds his way through a suburban village, blocked up some fine morning by a crowd of poor women and girls, clustered round the door of a retired tradesman or the curate of the place, from which three or four at a time emerge with gratified looks, and go about their business, while others enter in their turn. Such demonstrations as these, and we might mention many others, have their origin in certain charitable dispositions and bequests, many of which are of considerable antiquity. There is one in operation to this day, near Winchester, which dates from the time of William of Wykeham; by virtue of which every traveller passing that way, if he choose to make the demand, is regaled with a pint of beer and a meal of bread and cheese. There is another similar antique charity in operation in Wiltshire, near Devizes, where, on one occasion, the dispenser of the benevolence, in the exercise of his privilege to feed the hungry, threw a loaf of bread into the carriage of George III. as the royal *cortège* passed the spot. The name of these post-mortem charities is legion. They abound in every city, burgh, town, and hamlet in England, to an extent absolutely startling to a person who looks into the subject for the first time. The number of them belonging to the city of London alone—that is, originating among her citizens, and mostly dispensed under the direction of the several worshipful companies—can hardly be fewer than 1500, if so few. The parochial charities only of London city yield an income of nearly L.40,000 a year. The history of all these charities would fill many bulky volumes. We propose merely to take a passing glance at a few, which are interesting from their singularity, or from the light which they reflect upon the benevolent aspect of a certain section of society in times long past; and which, perhaps, may be found in some degree instructive and suggestive, as illustrating the operation of post-mortem benevolence.

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At St — Church, not a hundred miles from St Martin's Le Grand, there prevails an amusing instance of the perversion of the funds of a charity to purposes which could not possibly have been intended by the founder. Many centuries ago, a Roman Catholic gentleman, dying, bequeathed to that church a small estate, the proceeds of which he directed should be devoted to the purpose of supplying the officiating priests with refreshment on the Sabbath-day. The Roman Catholic service has long since given place to a Protestant one, and the band of officiating priests has dwindled down to one clergyman—while the value of the estate has increased perhaps fiftyfold. At the present moment, the sum which the estate originally produced is paid over to the church-wardens, who are at times a little puzzled as to what to do with it. They get rid of a good portion in this way: at every service which is held in the church, they place a bottle of the best sherry which can be procured for money upon the vestry-table; from this the 'officiating priest' strengthens his inner man with a glass or two before commencing his ministrations, and then the church-wardens sit down and finish the remainder comfortably by themselves, while the reverend gentleman is in the reading-desk or the pulpit. The cost of the wine, however, does not amount to half the sum in their hands, and the remainder goes to form a fund from which the church is painted, repaired, decorated, and kept in apple-pie order—the whole fabric undergoing a thorough revision and polish both outside and in as often as a pretext can be found. What becomes of the bulk of the property—the large surplus arising from the increased value of the devised estate—this deponent sayeth not: the reader may be in a condition to guess by the time he has read to the end of

this paper.

In the year 1565, a Mr Edward Taylor willed to the Leathersellers' Company a message, tenement, and melting-house, in the parish of St Olave, and other messages in the same parish, upon condition that they should, quarterly and for ever, distribute among the poorest and neediest people in the Poultry Compter one kilderkin of beer and twelve pennyworths of bread, and the same to the poor of Wood Street Compter, Newgate, and the Fleet, the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea prisons. Under this bequest, the Company are at present in possession of considerable property, vastly increased in value since the date of the will; in respect of which property, 1s. worth of penny-loaves, and 2s. in money, in lieu of beer, are sent by them every quarter to the poor prisoners in each of the prisons mentioned in the original testament!

Robert Rogers devised in 1601 the sum of L.400 to the Leathersellers' Company, 'to be employed in lands, the best pennyworth they could get;' and that the house should have 40s. of it a year for ever. The remainder was to be bestowed upon poor scholars, students of divinity—two of Oxford, and two of Cambridge, for four years; and after them to two others of each university; and after them, to others; and so on for ever. He also, by the same will, devised L.200 to be lent to four young men, merchant adventurers, at L.6, 13s. 4d., for the L.200, interest. The whole of the interest was to be spent in bread—to be distributed among poor prisoners—and coal for poor persons, with the exception of some small fees and gratuities to the parish clerk and beadle, for their trouble in carrying out his intentions.

Lewisham, once a town in Kent, but now nothing more than a suburb of London, enjoys the benefactions of the Rev. Abraham Colfe, who, in 1656, bequeathed property for the maintenance of numerous charities. Some of them are singularly characteristic. Having provided for the erection of three strong alms-houses, he directed that certain alms-bodies should be periodically chosen, who were to be 'godly poor inhabitants of Lewisham, and being single persons, and threescore years old, past their hard bodily labour, and able to say the Lord's Prayer, the Belief, and the Ten Commandments,' &c. &c. All these alms-bodies were to have '3d. each allowed them every day for their comfortable sustenance—that is, 21d. a week—to be paid them every month during their *single* life, and as long as they should behave themselves honestly and godly, and duly frequent the parish church.' They were to be summarily removed if guilty of profane or wicked conduct. The alms-bodies were not to exceed five in number at any one time. He directed a buttery to be built for their convenience, and also a little brick room, with a window in it, for the five alms-bodies to assemble in daily for prayer, and that the schoolmaster of the reading-school should pray with them there. He further directed the enclosure of gardens, of sixteen feet broad at the least, for their recreation. Mr Colfe also left money for lectures at Lewisham Church, as well as a sum for the purchase of Bibles, until they should amount to the number of thirty or forty, which were to be chained to the pews, or otherwise preserved; and he left 12d. a quarter to the clerk for writing down the names of those that should use them; also 2s. 8d. to him for taking care of the clock and dial; also, 10s. for a sermon on the 5th of November, and 12d. in bread for the poor who should come and hear it, and 6d. to the parish clerk; also 20s., to be distributed a penny at a time, to the children and servants who could best say their catechism, and 6d. to the minister for catechising them; also, a yearly sum of money for distributing on every Lord's-day after the morning service, seven penny wheaten loaves, to seven of the most honest, peaceable, and godly poor householders of Lewisham, who could say the Lord's Prayer, the Belief, and the Ten Commandments; also, 5s. a year to poor maid-servants, who at the time of their marriage had continued seven years with their master or mistress in Lewisham; with numerous other bequests. He further left moneys for the preservation of his father's, grandfather's, his wife's, and his own monument—his own being an oaken plank oiled, and a stone 'a foot square every way, and three feet long.' The stone and plank were removed many years ago, and an inscribed tablet has been set into the outer wall of the church.

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The practice of leaving money for the sustentation of tomb-stones and monuments, appears to have prevailed for many generations; and may be very naturally accounted for, by the repugnance which most men would feel, to the idea of having their bones knocked about by the sexton's spade, and then wheeled off to the bone-house, if there happens to be a bone-house, or shot into the neighbouring river, or on a farmer's dung-heap, if there is no such convenience as a bone-house at hand. It was this feeling that induced the celebrated sculptor, Chantrey, to make sure of a quiet resting-place for his remains.^[2] In so doing, he was, though perhaps unconsciously, but following the example of many who have gone before him. We have more than once

encountered a sober party upon their annual visit to some country church-yard tomb, of which, by virtue of some bequest—which provides them with a good dinner upon the occasion—they are the appointed guardians. The worshipful members of the London companies sometimes choose to rest from their labours in a rural grave; and when they do, survivors are always to be found not unwilling to enjoy once a year a pensive holiday, coupled with the creature comforts, which the quiet comrade whose behest they execute has taken care to provide for them. It would be perhaps difficult to find a single church in all the little towns and hamlets within a dozen miles of London, which does not contain one tenant at least who has thus secured permanent possession of his last resting-place. So strong is this feeling in some individuals, that they shrink from confiding even in the stone-vaults in the interior of a city church. Thus, Sir William Rawlins, not so very long ago, bequeathed a certain sum of money for the preservation of his tomb and monument in Bishopsgate Church. The bequest provides for the remuneration of the visitors, who are specified parish functionaries, and entertains them with a good dinner on the day of the annual visitation, which they are bound to make—to inspect the monument and tomb, and to guarantee their good condition. In many instances, the sum originally devised for the sustentation of a grave or monument is not sufficient, in the present day, to remunerate residents in London for looking after it, and the money has been transferred to the parish in which the testator lies, and has become the perquisite of the sexton.

In the year 1635, one John Fletcher bequeathed to the Fishmongers' Company the sum of L.120, to supply 10s. every month to the poor of St Peter's Hospital, to provide them with a dinner on Sunday.

In the year 1653, Mr James Glassbrook bequeathed, after his wife's death, the sum of L.500 in the following words: 'and L.500 more to such uses as follow—to the poor of the parish of St Bololph Without, in which I dwell, L.5 in bread yearly; L.5 to the poor of St Giles's yearly in bread; to the poor of St Sepulchre's yearly in bread, L.5, to be given every Sabbath-day in the churches.' The amount of bread at the present time given away in London under this disposition, supplemented by some smaller bequests, is sixty-eight half-quartern loaves a week. The same poor persons, when they once get on the list, continue to receive the bread during their whole lives, unless they cease to reside in the parish, or are struck off the list of pensioners for misconduct.

One Daniel Midwinter, in 1750, left L.1000 to the Stationers' Company, to pay L.14 a year to the parish of St Faith's; and a like sum to Hornsey parish, to be applied in apprenticing two boys or girls of the several parishes, and to fit them out in clothes. At the present time, the money is paid over to the parties receiving the apprentices, with a recommendation to lay it out in clothes for the children.

By the will of John Stock, the parish of Christchurch received, among other legacies, the sum of L.100, the interest of which was directed to be applied in the following manner: one guinea to be paid to the vicar for a sermon to be preached by him on Good-Friday; 10s. to the curate for reading the prayers on that day; *and the remainder to be equally distributed among such poor women as chose to remain and receive the sacrament after the service!*

A Mr James Wood, amongst other curious provisions, devised to the church-wardens of the parish of St Nicholas Cole Abbey, the sum of 15s. annually, to be given away in twopences to such poor people as they should meet in the streets when going and returning from church on a specified day.

The inhabitants of Watling Street, and other districts in the vicinity of St Antholin's Church, are familiar with the sound of what is known in the neighbourhood as the 'Fish-bell.' This is a bell which rings out every Friday night from St Antholin's tower, to summon the inhabitants to evening prayers: very few people attend to the summons, which comes at an inconvenient time for that busy locality. There stands almost against the walls of the church a pump, which is always in good repair, and yields an excellent supply of water, greatly to the convenience of the neighbourhood. Both the pump and the prayers are the legacy of an old fish-woman of the last century. It is said, that for forty years of her life she was in the habit of purchasing fish in the small hours of the morning at Billingsgate Market; these she washed and prepared for her customers at a small spring near St Antholin's Church, and afterwards cried them about the town upon her head. Having prospered in her calling, she bequeathed a sufficient sum to perpetuate a weekly service in the church, and a good and efficient pump erected over the spring of which she had herself enjoyed a life-long privilege.

In St George's in the East, there is a charity, well-known as Raine's Charity, which was founded by Henry Raine, Esq., in the earlier part of the last century. The charity consists of two endowed schools, sufficiently well provided for the maintenance and instruction of fifty boys and as many girls, and the payment and support of a master and mistress. It is one part of the system of management, that six pupils of either sex leave the schools every year, to make room for as many new ones. By a somewhat whimsical provision in the will of the founder, a species of annual lottery comes off at the discharge of the six girls. If they have behaved well, have been attentive and obedient, and punctual and exact in the observance of their religious duties, they are entitled to draw lots for the sum of L.100, which will be paid to the fortunate holder of the prize as a marriage-portion upon her wedding-day. It is further provided, that the wedding is to take place on the 1st day of May; and that, in addition to the portion, L.5 is to be expended upon a marriage-dinner and a merry-making.

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Bequests for the portioning of poor girls and virtuous servant-maids are, indeed, not at all uncommon. In the village of Bawburgh, in Norfolk, there is one founded in the last century by a Quaker gentleman, who left a sum of money, the interest of which is shared among the servant-girls in the place who get married. The amount is not payable until twelve months after the wedding. The village being small, it will sometimes happen that a good sum accumulates before an applicant comes forward who can substantiate a claim upon it. The object of such bequests as these is sufficiently plain: the donors had evidently in view the counteracting of the wretched tendency of the old poor-law, which, by giving the mother of an illegitimate child a claim upon the parish funds, actually placed a premium upon female frailty.

In London, there are charitable dispositions and bequests for the nursery of every virtue that could be named, but more especially of industry, providence, and thrift. A man may be brought into the world by voluntary contributions; he may be maintained and educated at a foundling asylum, if his parents, as thousands do, choose to throw him upon the public compassion; he may ride into a good business upon the back of a borrowed capital, for which he pays but a nominal interest; and if he fail to realise a competence by his own endeavours, he may perchance revel in some corporation sinecure, or, at the worst, luxuriate in an alms-house, and be finally deposited in the church-yard—and all at other people's expense. On the other hand, if he be made of the right metal, he may carve his way to fortune and to civic fame, and may die full of years and honours—in which case, he is pretty sure to add one more to the list of charitable donors whose legacies go to swell the expectancies of the city poor. It would be difficult for any eccentric testator in the present day to hit upon a new method of disposing of the wealth which he can no longer keep. Every device for the exercise of posthumous generosity seems to have been exhausted long ago.

The trust-estates, the source of so many of the city of London charities, are mostly, if not all, under the control of the corporate companies. How they are managed, is a secret altogether unknown to the public, and of which, indeed, the livery and freemen of some of the companies have but a very limited knowledge. The revenue derived from the trust-estates, according to their own shewing, is not much less than L.90,000 a year; but they have large revenues, of which they do not choose to shew any account at all. These are supposed to arise mainly from the increase in value of property originally devised to charitable uses—which increase it is their custom to appropriate as they please. 'Thus, for example,' says a writer on this subject, 'if a testator left to any one of these companies a piece of land then worth L.10 per annum, directing that L.10 should be annually appropriated to the support of a school, and the land subsequently increases in value to L.500, then the master and wardens of the company claim the right of appropriating to their own uses the surplus of L.490. In no equitable view of the case can this be deemed to be private property.' It seems probable that these things will be looked into before long. From a motion lately made in the House of Commons, we learn that a thorough investigation is contemplated into the management and application of all charities throughout the kingdom, the inquiry to be conducted at the cost of the several charities, the largest of which are not to pay more than L.50, and the smaller ones twopence in the pound, upon the amount of their capital. Perhaps this inquiry may lead to the recovery of some of the charities which are stated to be lost, and of which nothing but the titles, under the denomination of So-and-so's gift, remain upon the corporation records.

The secret management of the trust-estates contrasts curiously with the pompous exhibition which some of the worshipful companies make of their deeds of benevolence. Some of the smaller and older churches of London are

stuck over in the interior with enormous black boards, as big as the church door almost, upon which are emblazoned, in gilt letters, the donations to the poor, to the school, to the repair of the fabric, &c. from the worshipful company of This and That, from the days of King James—the inscriptions of whose time are illegible through the smoke and damp of centuries—down to the days of Queen Victoria, and the donations of last Christmas, fresh and glittering from the hands of the gilder. Thus, the interesting old church of St Bartholomew the Great is lined with the eleemosynary exploits of the worshipful Ironmongers' Company, whose multitudinous banners of black and gold are in abominable discordance with the severe and simple architecture of the ancient edifice. 'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth,' is a monition apparently not much in repute among the corporate companies.

The reader may gather from the perusal of the above desultory examples, selected from a mass of similar ones, some idea of the enormous amount of the funds, intended for benevolent purposes, which Christian men have bequeathed to the world; and they may perhaps serve to enlighten the curious observer on the subject of some of the unobtrusive phenomena which occasionally excite his admiration and arouse his conjecture. They are the silent charities of men in the silent land. How much good they do, and how much harm, and on which side the balance is likely to lie—these are questions which for the present we have neither time nor space to discuss.

FOOTNOTES:

[2] See *Chambers's Pocket Miscellany*, vol. iv.

LABOUR STANDS ON GOLDEN FEET.

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The condition of the working-classes in this country is a subject of intense interest to all thinking men; but it is profitable as well as amusing to transfer our attention sometimes to the same portions of society in other countries. In Germany, for instance, the people are as busy as we are with their 'hand-workers,' and the questions of freedom of industry and general instruction are as warmly discussed as at home. We have now before us a little volume by the philosopher and historian, Zschokke, which, in the form of a fictitious narrative, treats very fully of the status of the mechanic in Fatherland; and we are tempted to cull a few extracts which may afford the reader materials for perhaps an interesting comparison.^[3]

The real hero of the story is Hand-labour, and his progress is described throughout three generations of men. He is the Thought of the book, illustrated by adventure and vicissitude; living when the human agents die in succession; and leaving a distinct and continuous track in the reader's mind, when the names and persons fade or conglomerate in his memory. And yet some of these names and persons are not feebly individualised. The father, the son, and the grandson stand well out upon the canvas; and while the family likeness is strictly preserved from generation to generation, the men are seen independent and alone, each in his own special development. The patriarch was a travelling tinker, who wheeled his wares about the country in a barrow; and then, rising in the world, attained the dignity of a hawker, with a cart of goods, drawn by a little gray ass. His son Jonas trotted on foot beside him in all his journeys, dining like his father on bread and water, and sleeping in barns or stables. But when the boy was old enough, he was turned off to pick up his own subsistence like the redbreasts, the sparrows, and the woodpeckers. 'Listen, my lad,' quoth Daddy Thaddaeus; 'this is the spring. Look for sloes and elderberries, rose-leaves and others for ointment; marjoram, spurge, and thyme, wherever thou mayst and canst. These we will sell to the apothecaries. In summer, gather basketfuls of strawberries, bilberries, and raspberries; carry them to the houses: they will yield money. In winter, let us gather and dry locks of wool, for the saddlers and tapestry-makers, and withes for the basket and mat manufacturers. From the table of the bountiful God, a thousand crumbs are falling for us: these we will pick up. They will give thee cheese to thy bread, and a piece of meat to thy potatoes. Only get to work! I will give thee a little barrow, and a belt for thy shoulders.'

This was his first essay in business on his own account, and he worked hard and thrived well. His separation from his father taught him how to stand on his own legs—an important piece of knowledge in a world that is as full of leave-takings as of meetings; and when they did come together, and the boy counted out his kreutzers, and the father patted him approvingly on the cheek, that boy would have changed places with no prince that ever sat on a

throne. Jonas was at length apprenticed to a girdler, or worker in metals; and the old tinker in due time died, leaving his son the parting advice, to 'work, save, and pray,' and a box containing a thousand guilders.

Jonas's apprenticeship passed on pretty much according to universal rule; that is, he did the drudgery of the house as well as learned the trade, and received kicks and cuffs from the journeymen. But in five years his servitude was out, and he was a journeyman himself. He was now, by the rules of his guild, obliged to travel for improvement; he spent five or six years in going to and fro upon the earth, and then came back to Altenheim an accomplished girdler. To become a master, it was necessary to prepare his 'master-piece,' as a specimen of what he could do; and the task allotted to him was to engrave on copper, without rule or compass, the prince's family-crest, and then to gild the work richly. This accomplished, he was received into the guild of masters with much pomp, strange ceremonies, and old-fashioned feasting—all at the charge of the poor beginner. 'Without reckoning the heavy expenses of his mastership, or of clothing, linen, and furniture, in the hired lodgings and workshops, no small sum was requisite for the purchase of different kinds of tools—a lathe, an anvil, crucibles, dies, graving-implements, steel pins, hammers, chisels, tongs, scissors, &c.; and also for the purchase of brass and pinchbeck ware, copper, silver, lead, quicksilver, varnish, brimstone, borax, and other things indispensable for labour. He had also taken, without premium, an apprentice, the child of very poor people, to help him. He would have been very glad to put the rest of his money out to interest again; but he had to provide the means of subsistence for at least one year in advance, for he had to begin with neither wares nor customers.'

Jonas now appears in the character of a lover, and his wooing is one of the most beautiful pictures in the book. His choice has fallen upon a servant-girl, whom he had known in boyhood.

'One morning, Master Jordan sent his apprentice with a message: "Miss Fenchel was to come to him directly: he had found a good place for her." Martha hastened thither gladly.

"Hast thou found a place for me, dear Jonas?" asked she, giving him her hand gracefully. "Thank God! I began to fear becoming troublesome to our kind friends. Come, tell me where?"

'He looked anxiously into her joyous blue eyes; then, in confusion, down to the ground; then again upwards to the roof of the room, and round the four sides, as though he were seeking something lost.

"Come, tell me, then?" repeated she. "Why art thou silent?"

'He collected himself, and began, hesitating: "It is—but Martha—thou must not be angry with me."

'In surprise, she smiled. "Angry with thee, Jonas! If I would be, and should be, could I be?"

"Listen, Martha; I will shew thee—I must tell thee—I know a man anxious to have thy heart and hand—who—even who"—

"O Jonas, reproach me rather, but do not make mockery of me, a poor maiden!" exclaimed she, shocked or hurt, while her face lost all its colour, and she turned from him.

"Martha, look at me. He is assuredly no bad man. I will bring him to thee; I will give him to thee myself."

"No, Jonas! no! From thee, least of all, can I receive a lover."

"From me, least of all!" asked he with visible emotion. "From me, least of all! And if—I don't know—if I would give thee myself—Look at me, Martha! Tell me."

'Here silence ensued. She stood before him with downcast eyes and glowing cheeks, and played with her apron-string. Then, as if still doubting, she looked up again, her eyes swimming with tears, and said, with trembling lips: "What must I say, then?"

'Jonas took courage, and whispered, half aloud: "Dost thou love me with all thy heart?"

'Half aloud, Martha whispered back: "Thy heart knows it."

"Canst thou be satisfied with dry bread and salt?"

"Rather salt from thee than tears from me!"

"Martha, I will work for thee; wilt thou save for me?"

"I will be sparing in everything, except my own pains!"

"Well then, darling, here is my hand! Take it. Wilt thou be mine?"

"Was I not thine eight years ago and more? Even as a child? Yet no! It ought not to be, Jonas."

'Alarmed, he looked in her face, and asked: "Not be? and why?"

"Think well over it, Jonas! Do thyself no injustice. I am a poor creature, without portion or property. Any other burgher's daughter in the town would be glad to give thee her hand and heart, and a good dowry beside. Thou mightst live much better."

"Say nothing about that," cried Jonas, stretching out both his hands imploringly. "Be still: I shall feel that I am but beginning to live, if thou wilt promise to live with me."

"Live, then!" said she, in blushing embarrassment, and gave him her hand.

'He took her hand, and at the same time clasped his bride to his bosom, that heaved with unwonted emotion. She wept on his breast in silent joy.'

We would fain, if we had room, add to this the marriage sermon, preached by the bridegroom, and well preached too; for Jonas had knowledge, although, as he said himself, he never found half so much in books as is lying everywhere about the road.

Martha was just the wife for the honest, sensible hand-worker; and as it frequently happens with such characters, his affairs prospered from the date of his marriage. He took a larger house in a better situation for trade; and having presented the useless 'master-piece'—which nobody would buy—to the prince, he was rewarded by the dignity of 'Master-girdler to the Court.' But still 'uprightly and hardily the court-girdler lived with his wife, just as before; active in the workshop and warehouse, at markets and at fairs. Year after year fled, though, before the last guilder could be paid off, of the debt on the house. Days of joy and of sorrow succeeded each other in turn. They were all received with gratitude to God—these as well as those.'

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We now come hastily to the third generation; for Jonas had a son called Veit, who was first apprenticed to his father, and then sent to travel as a journeyman. The patriarch had had no education at all; Jonas had snatched at his just as opportunities permitted; but Veit went regularly through the brief and practical curriculum fitted for a tradesman's son. He was, consequently, better informed and more refined than either his father or grandfather; and spent so much time in gaining a thorough insight into the branches connected with his own business, that honest Jonas was quite puzzled. 'Where did the boy get all these notions?' said he. 'He did not get them from me, I'm sure.' Veit had a bad opinion of the travelling custom, and for these reasons: 'How should these men, most of them badly brought up, attain to any greater perfection in their business, if they have left home and school without any preparation for it? No one can understand, if his understanding has not been developed. From one publican they go to another, and from one workshop to another; everywhere they find the old common track—the mechanical, mindless life of labour, just as in the very first place to which they were sent to learn their trade. At most, they acquire dexterity by practice. Now and then they learn a trick from a master, or get a receipt, which had been cautiously kept secret; when possessed of this, they think something of themselves. Even the character of these rambles is not seldom destroyed by intercourse with their fellows. They learn drinking and rioting, gambling and licentiousness, caballing and debating. Many are ruined before they return to their native place. Believe me, dearest father, the time of travel is to very few a true school for life; one in which, through frequent change of good and evil days, the head acquires experience, the thoughts strength and clearness, the heart courage, and reliance on God. Very few, even of those who bring a scientific education with them, can gain much of value for their calling in life; extend their views, transfer and apply to their own line of business the inventions and discoveries that have been made in other departments of art and industry.'

Jonas understood little of the refinements of his son, but he opened his eyes when Veit obtained a lucrative appointment in a large metallic manufactory,

first in London and then in Paris. In a letter informing his parents of this good-fortune, were enclosed the whole of the savings from his salary. 'Master Jordan shook his head at this passage, and cried out, deeply moved, yet as though vexed, while a tear of motherly tenderness stole down Martha's cheek: "No! no! by no means! What is the fool thinking of? He'll want the money himself—a simpleton. Let him wait till he comes to the master-piece. What pleases me most in the story, is his contentment and his humility. He is not ashamed of his old silver watch yet. It is not everybody that could act so. There must be strong legs to support such extraordinary good-luck. These the bursch has!"'

After years of absence, the young man at last walks suddenly into the paternal home, on his father's birthday, and makes them all scream and weep with joy. "'Hark ye, bursch!" exclaimed Jonas, who regarded him with fatherly delight, "thou seem'st to me almost too learned, too refined, and too elegant for Veit Jordan. What turner has cut so neat a piece of furniture out of so coarse a piece of timber?"' His stay, however, was short. M. and M^{me} Bellarme (his employer at Paris) 'had been loth, almost afraid, to let him go. The feeble state of health of the former began to be so serious, that he durst not engage in the bulk of his affairs. In the space of a year, both felt so complete confidence in Veit's knowledge of business, and in his honour, that they had taken him as a partner in trade, and in the foundry. Henceforth, M. Bellarme contributed his capital only; Veit his knowledge, care, and industry.'

The reform of the guilds, and the establishment of a technological school for the young hand-workers—both through the instrumentality of Jonas—we have no room to touch; for we must say a parting word on the reunion of the family by Veit's return permanently from abroad. Notwithstanding the prosperity of the now old couple, 'everything, ay, everything, was as he had left it years ago—as he had known it from childhood—only Christiane not. There stood yet the two well-scoured old deal-tables, wrinkled, though, from the protruding fibres of the wood; there were the straw-bottomed stools still; and at the window, Mother Martha's arm-chair, before which, as a child, he had repeated his lessons; there still hung the same little glass between the windows; and the wall-clock above the stove sent forth its tic-tac as fastly as ever. Father Jonas, in his enlarged workshop, with more journeymen and apprentices, smelted and hammered, filed and formed still, from morning to night, as before. The noble housewife flew about yet busy as a bee: she had managed the housekeeping without a servant since Christiane had been grown up. And Veit came back with the same cheerful disposition that he had ever shewn. In the simply-furnished rooms which Martha had fitted up for him, in the upper storey of the house, he forgot the splendid halls, the boudoirs, and antechambers of London, Paris, and the Bellarme estate; the Gobelin tapestry, the gold-framed pictures; the convenience of elegant furniture, and the artificial delicacies of the table on silver-plate.' Assisted by the patronage of the prince, he established a great foundry in his native town, of ball and cannon, bronze and brass; and on his marriage with the aforesaid Christiane, the sovereign made him a handsome present, in a handsome manner, 'as a small token of his gratitude to a family that had been so useful to the country.'

In addition to the hand-workers' school, there now arose, under the auspices of this family, a training-school for teachers, a labour-school for females, and other establishments. The town was embellished; the land in the neighbourhood rose in value; uncleanliness and barbarism in food, clothing and houses, disappeared. 'Only old men and women, grown rusty in the habits and the ignorance of many years, complain that the times are worse; at the sight of a higher civilisation, they complain of "the luxury and the pride of the world now-a-days;" as superstition dies out, they complain of "human incredulity, and the downfall of religion." "The day of judgment," say they, "is at hand."

'But Master Jonas, when seventy years had silvered his hair, stood almost equal to a strong man of thirty, happy, indeed, by the side of the pious Martha, in a circle of his children and children's children, honoured by his fellow-citizens, and honoured by his prince. He often told the story of his boyhood, how he used to go about hawking with Father Thaddaeus the tinker; and his face glowed with inward satisfaction, when he compared the former period with present changes, in the production of which he could never have imagined he was to have so considerable a share. Then he used to exclaim: "Have I not always said it? Clear understanding only in the head, love to one's neighbour in the heart, frugality in the stomach, and industry in the fingers—then: HAND-WORK STANDS ON GOLDEN FEET."'

LORD ROSSE'S DISCOVERIES.

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As Professor Nichol very truly remarks, 'investigation regarding such aggregations is virtually a branch of atomic and molecular inquiry,' with stars in place of atoms, mighty spheres in place of 'dust,' 'the firmament above' instead of 'the firmament beneath.' In fact, the astronomer, in sweeping with his telescopic eye the 'blue depths of ether,' is, as it were, some Lilliputian inhabitant of an atom prying into the autumnal structure of some Brobdignagian world of saw-dust; organised into spiral and other elementary forms, of life, it may be, something like our own. The infinite height appears, in short, like the infinite depth, and we knowing not precisely where we stand between the two immensities of depth and height! The shapes evolved by the wonderful telescope of Lord Rosse are, many of them, absolutely fantastical; wonder and awe are mingled with almost ridiculous feelings in contemplating the strange apparitions—strange monstrosities we had almost called them—that are pictured on the background of the illustrations. One aggregation looms forth out of the darkness like the skeleton face of some tremendous mammoth, or other monstrous denizen of ancient times, with two small fiery eyes, however, gazing out of its great hollow orbits; another consists of a central nucleus, with arms of stars radiating forth in all directions, like a star-fish, or like the scattering fire-sparks of some pyrotechnic wheel revolving; a third resembles a great wisp of straw, or twist or coil of ropes; a fourth, a cork-screw, or other spiral, seen on end; a fifth, a crab; a sixth, a dumb-bell—many of them scroll or scrolls of some thin texture seen edgewise; and so on. It is even a suggestion of the author's, that some of the spiral and armed wheels may be revolving yet in the vast ocean of space in which they are engulfed. Thus has the telescope traced the 'binding' influences of the Pleiades, loosened the bands of 'Orion'—erst the chief *nebulous* hazy wonders, once and for all revealing its separate stars: and thus, in brief, has this wondrous instrument 'unrolled the heavens as a scroll.' Yet even these astonishing results are as nothing to the fact, that those fantastic shapes which it has revealed in the depths of this *lambo* of creation, are not shapes merely of the present time—that thousands of years have passed since the light that shewed them left the starry firmaments only now revealed—that the telescope, in short, in reflecting these astonishing shapes, deliver to the eye of mind turned inward on the long-stored records of a universal and eternal memory of the past, than to a mere eye of sense looking outward on the things of passing time!—*The Builder*.

SOUTH-AFRICAN REPTILES.

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I was going quietly to bed one evening, wearied by a long day's hunting, when, close to my feet, and by my bedside, some glittering substance caught my eye. I stooped to pick it up; but, ere my hand had quite reached it, the truth flashed across me—it was a snake! Had I followed my first natural impulse, I should have sprung away, but not being able clearly to see in what position the reptile was lying, or which way his head was pointed, I controlled myself, and remained rooted breathless to the spot. Straining my eyes, but moving not an inch, I at length clearly distinguished a huge puff-adder, the most deadly snake in the colony, whose bite would have sent me to the other world in an hour or two. I watched him in silent horror: his head was from me—so much the worse; for this snake, unlike any other, always rises and strikes back. He did not move; he was asleep. Not daring to shuffle my feet, lest he should awake and spring at me, I took a jump backwards, that would have done honour to a gymnastic master, and thus darted outside the door of the room. With a thick stick, I then returned and settled his worship. Some parts of South Africa swarm with snakes; none are free from them. I have known three men killed by them in one harvest on a farm in Oliphant's Hoek. There is an immense variety of them, the deadliest being the puff-adder, a thick and comparatively short snake. Its bite will kill occasionally within an hour. One of my friends lost a favourite and valuable horse by its bite, in less than two hours after the attack. It is a sluggish reptile, and therefore more dangerous; for, instead of rushing away, like its fellows, at the sound of approaching footsteps, it half raises its head and hisses. Often have I come to a sudden pull-up on foot and on horseback, on hearing their dreaded warning! There is also the cobra-capello, nearly as dangerous, several black snakes, and the

boem-slang, or tree-snake, less deadly, one of which I once shot seven feet long. The Cape is also infested by scorpions, whose sting is little less virulent than a snake-bite; and by the spider called the tarantula, which is extremely dreaded.—*The Cape, by A. W. Cole.*

LINES.

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Ask me not with simple grace,
Pearls of thought to string for thee;
For upon thy smiling face,
Perfect gems I see—
In thine eyes of beauty trace
Lights that fadeless be.

Bid me not from Memory's land,
Cull fair flowers of rich perfume;
Love will shew with trembling hand,
Where far fairer bloom—
Clustering on thy cheek they stand,
Blushing deep—for whom?

Bid me not with Fancy's gale
Wake the music of a sigh;
From thy breath a sweeter tale,
Silver-winged, floats by;
Melodies that never fail,
Heard when thou art nigh!

Ask me not—yet, oh! for thee
Dearer thoughts my bosom fill,
Dimmed with tears I cannot see
To do thy gracious will:
Take, then, my prayer—In heaven may we
Behold thee lovelier still!

PERCIE.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF EXTREME MINUTENESS.

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Dr Wollaston obtained platinum-wire so fine, that 30,000 pieces, placed side by side in contact, would not cover more than an inch. It would take 150 pieces of this wire bound together to form a thread as thick as a filament of raw silk. Although platinum is the heaviest of the known bodies, a mile of this wire would not weigh more than a grain. Seven ounces of this wire would extend from London to New York. Fine as is the filament produced by the silkworm, that produced by the spider is still more attenuated. A thread of a spider's web, measuring four miles, will weigh very little more than a single grain. Every one is familiar with the fact, that the spider spins a thread, or cord, by which his own weight hangs suspended. It has been ascertained that this thread is composed of about 6000 filaments.—*Lardner's Handbook.*

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