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CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

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THE ART SEASON.

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RETURNING with the circling year, and advancing *pari passu* with the multitude of metropolitan musical attractions, comes the more silent reign of the picture

exhibitions—those great art-gatherings from thousands of studios, to undergo the ultimate test of public judgment in the dozen well-filled galleries, which the dilettante, or lounging Londoner, considers it his recurring annual duty strictly to inspect, and regularly to gossip in. As places where everybody meets everybody, and where lazy hours can be conveniently lounged away, the exhibitions in some sort supply in the afternoon what the Opera and parties do in the evenings. Nearly all through the summer-day, they are crowded with a softly-rustling, humming, buzzing crowd, coming and going perhaps, taking little heed of the nominal attraction, but sauntering from room to room, or ensconcing themselves in colonies or clusters of chairs, and lounging vacantly in cool lobbies. At energetic sight-seers, who are labouring away, catalogue and pencil in hand, they stare languidly. They really thought everybody had seen the pictures; they know they have: they have stared at them until they became a bore. But this sort of people, who only come once, why, of course, they suppose this sort of people must be allowed to push about as they please. But it is a confounded nuisance; it is really.

The great army of art amateurs, connoisseurs, and the body who are regarded in the artistic world with far greater reverence—the noted picture buyers and dealers, have come and seen, and gone away again; after having lavishly expended their approbation or disapprobation, and possibly in a less liberal degree, their cash. After the first week or so, the galleries begin to clear of gentlemen of the class in question; even artists have got tired of coming to see their own pictures, particularly if they be not well hung; and so the exhibition is generally handed over during the greater part of its duration to the languid *far niente* elegant crowd we have seen thronging its corridors. The grand day for the moneyed amateurs, who come to increase their collections, is, however, that of the private view. This generally occurs on a Saturday, and the public is admitted on the following Monday. Within an hour of the opening on the former day, the rooms are crowded with a multitude of notabilities. You see that you are in a special class of society, or rather, in two special classes—literary and artistic on the one hand; wealthy and socially elevated on the other. The fact is evident in the general mutual acquaintanceship which prevails, principally within each respective circle, but by no means exclusively so. First, you are sure to observe a cluster of those peers and members of parliament who busy themselves most in social, literary, and artistic questions. Bishops, too, are regular private-view men; capital judges, moreover, and liberal buyers; and we seldom miss catching a glimpse of some dozen faces, whose proprietors are men standing at the very top of our historic, philosophic, and critical literature, and who move smilingly about, amid the keen but concealed inspection of the crowd, who pass their names in whispers from group to group.

But the class of regular picture-buyers is quite *sui generis*. You may pitch upon your man in a moment. Ten to one, he is old, and has all the shrivelled, high-dried appearance of the most far-gone and confirmed bachelorism. Everything about him looks old and old-fashioned. His hair is thin and gray, and he shuffles along on a couple of poor old shanks, which will never look any stouter unless it be under the influence of a fit of the gout. He wears a white neckcloth, arranged with the celebrated wisp-tie—shoes a great deal too big for him—and to his keen, twinkling eyes he applies a pair of heavy horn or silver-set glasses. These old gentlemen appear to know each other as if by magic. They cluster in groups like corks in a basin of water, and then go hobbling eagerly along, peering closely into the more promising works, jerking their heads from side to side, so as to get the painting in as many lights as possible; and full of talk—good critical talk—about the productions in course of inspection. True, there may be something in their observations speaking too much of the technical, and too little of the more ideal faculty. They are greater upon flesh-tints and pearly grays, middle distances and chiaroscuro, than upon conception, expression, or elevation or magnificence of sentiment. Nevertheless, they know thoroughly what appertains to a good picture. They give a work its place in a moment, and assign it to its author by internal evidence, with an unflinching accuracy, which speaks of long training and constant familiarity with all the main studios of London. Perhaps you observe one of our friends apparently fascinated before a particular canvas: he dances about, so as to get it in every angle of light. Then he shuffles off, and brings two other skilful old foggies, holding each by an arm; and the three go through the former ceremony as to the lights, and then lay their heads together; and then our original personage glides softly up to the table where the secretary's clerk sits with pen and ink before him, and whispers. The clerk smiles affably—turns up a register: there are two or three confidential words interchanged; and then he rises and sticks into the frame of the lucky picture a morsel of card, labelled 'Sold;' and leaves the purchaser gloating over his acquisition.

And where do these pictures go? Frequently to some quiet, solemn old house in the West End, or to some grange or manor far down in the country. The picture-gallery is the nursery of that house—its pride and its boast. Year after year has the silent family of canvas been increasing and multiplying. Their proprietor is, as it were, their father. He has most likely no living ties, and all his thoughts and all his ambitions are clustered round that silent gallery, where the light comes streaming down from high and half-closed windows. The collection gradually acquires a name. Descriptions of it are found in guide-books and works upon art. Strangers come to see it with tickets, and a solemn housekeeper shews them up the silent stairs, and through the lonesome mansion to its *sanctum sanctorum*. At length, perhaps, the old man takes his last look at his pictures, and then shuts his eyes for ever. It may be, that within six weeks the laboriously collected paintings are in a Pall-Mall auction-room, with all the world bidding and buzzing round the pulpit; or it may also chance that a paragraph goes the round of the papers, intimating that his celebrated and unrivalled collection of modern works of art has been bequeathed by the late Mr So-and-so to the nation—always on the condition, that it provides some fitting place for their preservation. The government receives bequests of this kind oftener than it complies with the stipulation.

In the beginning of March, the first of the galleries opens its portals to the world. This is the British Institution, established at the west end of Pall-Mall, and now in existence for the better part of a half century. The idea of the establishment was to form a sort of nursing institution for the Royal Academy. Here artists of standing and reputation were to exhibit their sketches and less important works; and here more juvenile aspirants were to try their wings before being subjected to the more severe ordeal of Trafalgar Square. The idea was good, and flourished apace; so much so, that you not unfrequently find in the British Institution no small proportion of works of a calibre hardly below the average of the Great Exhibition; while the A. R. A.'s, and even the aristocratic R. A.'s^[1] themselves, do not by any means disdain to grace the humble walls of the three rooms in Pall-Mall. This year, the only picture of Sir Edwin Landseer's exhibited—a wild Highland corry, with a startled herd of red deer—is to be found in the British Institution. But the merit of the works is wonderfully unequal. They are of all classes and all sizes, in water-colour and in oils. Clever sketches by clever unknowns, rest beside sprawling frescos by youths whose ambition is vaster than their genius; and finished and accomplished works of art are set off by the foils of unnumbered pieces of unformed and not very promising mediocrity. Among them are the productions of many of the more humble painters of *genre* subjects—the class who delight in portraying homely cottage interiors, or troops of playing children, or bits of minutely-finished still life—or careful academical studies of groups with all the conventions duly observed: this class of pictures musters strong, and connoisseurs, without so much remarking their imperfections, carefully note their promise.

A month after the opening of the British Institution, three galleries become patent on the same morning: the Old Water Colour, in Pall-Mall East, the New Water Colour, in Pall-Mall West, and a still more recently founded society, called, somewhat pompously, the National Institution of Fine Arts. These are mainly composed of dissenters from the other associations—gentlemen who conceive that they have been ill-treated by Hanging Committees, and a large class of juvenile but promising artists, who resort to the less crowded institutions in the hope of there meeting with better places for their works than in the older and more established bodies. The two water-colour galleries are both highly favoured exhibitions, and present works of an importance quite equal to those of the Academy itself. Water-colour painting is indeed a national branch of art in England. Neither French, Germans, nor Italians, can presume for a moment to cope with us in the matter of *aquarelles*. They have no notion of the power of the medium, of the strong and rich effects it is capable of producing, and the transparency of the tints which a great water-colour artist can lay on. Nearly twenty years ago, there was but one water-colour society; but increasing numbers, and the usual artistic feuds, produced a partly natural, partly hostile, separation. The ladies and gentlemen who withdrew were mainly figure painters; those who stayed were mainly landscape artists; and thus it happens, that while in the new society you are principally attracted by historic and *genre* groups and, scenes, in the old you are fascinated by landscape and city pictures of the very highest order of art. The painters, too, you observe, are very industrious. The fact is, they can work more quickly in water than in oil. Copley Fielding will perhaps exhibit a score of landscapes, blazing with summer sunshine; David Cox, half as many—stern and rugged in tone and style; George Tripp will have painted his fresh river and meadow scenes by the dozen; and the two brothers Callum will each have poured in old Gothic streets and squares, and ships in calm and storm, which catch your eye scores of times upon the walls. As in the other society, many of

the finest 'bits' contributed by the water-colourists are not much above miniature size. The screens on which these gems are hung attract fully as much as the walls with their more ambitious freight; and Jenkin's rustic lasses, and Topham's Irish groups, and Alfred Fripp's dark-eyed Italian monks and Campagna peasants, are as much gazed at as Richardson's sunny landscapes or Bentley's breezy seas.

Five minutes' walk takes us to the new society. No lack of landscape here; but it is inferior to that in the rival institution, and its attractions are eclipsed by ambitious pictures of historic or fictitious interest; the scene almost always laid in the picturesque streets or rooms of a mediæval city, and the groups marvels of display in the matter of the painting of armour, arms, and the gorgeous velvets, minivers, and brocades of feudal *grande tenue*. See Mr Edward Corbould. He is sure to be as picturesque and chivalrous as possible. There is the very ring of the rough old times in his caracoling processions of ladies and knights, or his fierce scenes of hand-to-hand fight, with battered armour, and flashing weapons, and wounded men drooping from their steeds. Or he paints softer scenes—passages of silken dalliance and love; ladies' bowers and courtly revels in alcoved gardens. Mr Haghe is equally mediæval, but more sternly and gloomily so. He delights in sombre, old Flemish rooms, with dim lights streaming through narrow Gothic windows, upon huge chimney-pieces and panellings, incrusting with antique figures, carved in the black heart of oak—knights, and squires, and priests of old. Then he peoples these shadowy chambers with crowds of stern burghers, or grave ecclesiastics, or soldiers 'armed complete in mail;' and so forms striking pieces of gloomy picturesqueness. Figure-paintings of a lighter calibre also abound. There is Mr John Absolon, who is in great request for painting figures in panoramic pictures; Mr Lee, whose graceful rural maidens are not to be surpassed: Mr Warren, whose heart is ever in the East; and Mr Mole, who loves the shielings of the Highland hills. Landscape, though on the whole subordinate to *genre* pictures, is very respectably represented; and the lady-artists usually make a good show on the screens, particularly in the way of graceful single figures, and the prettinesses of flower and fruit painting.

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We can merely mention the Society of British Artists and the National Institution of Fine Art. Both are mainly composed of the natural overgrowth of artists who prefer a speedy and favourable opportunity for the display of their works in minor galleries, to waiting for years and years ere they can work themselves up to good positions on the walls of the Academy. Many of these gentlemen, however, exhibit both in the smaller and the greater collection; but here and there an artist will be found obstinately confining his contributions to one pet establishment—possibly entertaining a notion that he has been deeply wronged by the Hanging Committee of another.

Both of the exhibitions under notice are very various in merit; but each generally contains some able works, and the specialties of one or two painters distinguished by notable peculiarities. Thus the president of the British Artists, Mr Hurlstone, has for several seasons confined himself to Spanish subjects; Mr West paints Norwegian landscape; Mr Pyne sends to this gallery only his very splendid lake-pictures; and Mr Woolmer's curious sketches, which seem compounded of the styles of Turner and Watteau, blaze almost exclusively upon the walls. The best men of the National Institution contribute also to the Royal Academy—as, for example, Mr Glass, with his capital groups of hunters or troopers, so full of life and movement; and Mr Parker, with his smugglers and coast-boatmen. In this exhibition—and, indeed, in all the London exhibitions—a family, or rather a race or clan of artists, connected at once by blood and style, and rejoicing in the name of Williams, abound and flourish exceedingly. These Williamses are dreadful puzzlers to the students of the catalogue; they positively swarm upon every page, and the bewildered reader is speedily lost in a perfect chaos of undistinguishable initials. Sometimes, indeed, the Williamses come forth under other appellations—they appear as Percies and Gilberts; but the distinguishing mark is strong, and a moment's inspection convinces the amateur that the landscape before him, attributed to Mr So-and-so, is the work of 'another of these everlasting Williamses.'

But the first Saturday of May arrives, and with it many a rumour, true and false, of the state of matters within the Royal Academy—of the academicians who exhibit, and of what are to be 'the' pictures. From early morning, St Martin's bells have been ringing, and a festival flag flies from the steeple; no great pomp, to be sure, but it marks the occasion. About noon, the Queen's party arrives, and Her Majesty is conducted about the rooms by the leading members of the Academy. Between one and two, she departs; and immediately after, the crowd of ticket-holders for the private view cluster before the closed gratings. Punctually as the last stroke of the hour strikes,

the portals are flung open, and a cataract of eager amateurs rush up the staircases, and make their way straight to the inner room, or room of honour, all in quest of *the* picture, to which the *pas* has been given, by its being hung upon the line in the centre of the eastern wall of the apartment. The salons fill as by magic; in half an hour, you can hardly move through a crowd of dignitaries of all kinds—hereditary, social, literary, scientific, and artistic. Perhaps, indeed, there is no muster in London which collects a greater number of personages famous in every point of view. The ladies of the aristocracy swarm as at a drawing-room. The atmosphere is all one rustle of laces and silks; and it is anything but easy to make one's way among the be vies of clustered beauties who flock round their chaperone, all one flutter of ribbons, feathers, and flowers. And to the Academy, at all events, come all manner of political notabilities: you find a secretary of state by your elbow, and catch the muttered criticism of a prime-minister. Ordinary peers and members of parliament are thicker than blackberries. Bishops prevail as usual; and apropos of ecclesiastical costumes, peculiar looped-up beavers and single-breasted greatcoats, the odds are, that you will be attracted by the portly figure and not very refined face of the Romish dignitary whose pretensions, a couple of years ago, set the country in a blaze. The muster of literary men is large and brilliant. Mr Hallam is most likely there as Professor of Ancient History to the Academy; and Mr Macaulay as Professor of Ancient Literature. Sir George Staunton puts in an appearance as Secretary for Foreign Correspondence; and blooming Sir Robert Harry Inglis, with the largest of roses at his button-hole, looks the most genial and good-humoured of 'antiquaries.' The Academicians—lucky Forty!—muster early. Happy fellows! they have no qualms of doubt, or sick-agonies of expectation as they mount the broad flight of steps. They have been giving hints to the Hanging Committee, or they have been on the Hanging Committee themselves. Well they know that *their* works have been at least provided for—all on the line, or near it; all in the best lights; and all titivated and polished up and varnished on the walls, and adapted, as it were, to the situation. You may know an R. A. on the private view-day by the broad, expanding jollity of his visage, if he be a man of that stamp, or by a certain quiet, self-satisfied smile of self-complacence, if he be a man of another.

But he looks and bears himself as a host. He cicerones delighted parties of lady-friends with his face all one smile of courtesy, or he does the honours with dignity and a lofty sense of—we do not speak disrespectfully—of being on his own dunghill, in respect to the more important exigeant connoisseurs, whom he thinks it right to patronise. He always praises his brethren's works, and discovers in them hidden virtues. For the Associates, he has minor smiles and milder words. The ordinary mob of exhibitors he looks down upon with a calm and complacent gaze, as though from the summit of a Mont Blanc of superiority. At any bold defier of the conventions and traditions of the Academy drawing-school, he shakes his head. The pre-Raphaelite heresy was a sore affliction to him. He looked upon Millais and Hunt as a Low-church bishop would regard Newman and Pusey. He prophesied that they would come to no good. He called them 'silly boys;' and he looks uneasily at the crowds who throng before this year's picture of the Huguenot Couple—not recovering his self-complacency until his eye catches his own favourite work, when he feels himself gradually mollified, and smiles anew upon the world.

Not so the nameless artist, whose work of many toiling days, and many sleepless nights, has been sent in unprotected to take its chance. He knows nothing of its fate until he can get a catalogue. It may be on the line in the east room; it may be above the octagon-room door; it may not be hung at all. Only the great artistic guns are invited to the private view, the rest must wait till Monday. Possibly a stray catalogue puts him so far out of his pain on Sunday. If not, he passes a feverish and unhappy time till the afternoon of Monday; and then, first among the crowd, rushes frantically up stairs. We had an opportunity the other day of seeing the result of a case of the kind. The picture—a work of great fancy and high feeling, but deficient in manipulative skill—the artist, a poet in the true sense of the word, had spent months in dreaming and in joying over. He found it in the dingiest corner of the octagon-room. His lip quivered and his chest heaved. He pulled his hat further down on his face, and walked quickly and quietly out.

We would gladly, indeed, see the octagon-room abolished. A picture is degraded, and an artist is insulted, by a painting being hung in this darksome and 'condemned cell.' The canvas gets a 'jail-bird' stamp, and its character is gone. In France, at the Palais-Royal, the young artists have a far better chance. After a stated time, the pictures, which, as the best have primarily had the best places, change stations with their inferiors; so that everybody in turn enjoys the advantages of the brightest lights and the most favourable points of view.

No need, of course, of attempting even the most summary sketch of the styles and ordinary subjects of the great painters who bear aloft the banner of the British school of art—of Landseer's glimpses of the Highlands; or Stanfield's skyey, breezy landscapes; of the quiet pieces of English rural scenery—meadows, and woodland glades, and river bits, fresh and rich, and green and natural—of our Lees, our Creswicks, our Coopers, our Witheringtons, our Redgraves, our Ausdills; of the classic elegance and elevated sentiment of groups by our Dyces and our Eastlakes; of the abundance of clever *genre* subjects—scenes from history or romance—poured in by our Wards, our Friths, our Pooles, our Elmores, our Eggs; or of—last, not least—the strange but clever vagaries of that new school, the pre-Raphaelites, who are startling both Academy and public by the quaintness of their art-theories, and the vehement intensity of their style of execution. All the summer long, the world is free to go and gaze upon them. All the summer long, the salons are crowded from morning till night—in the earlier hours, by artists and conscientious amateurs, the humbler sort of folks, who have daily work to do; in the later, by our old friends, the staring, *insouciant*, lounging, fashionable mob, whose carriages and Broughams go creeping lazily round and round Trafalgar Square. And at parties and balls, and all such reunions, the exhibition forms a main topic of discourse. Bashful gentlemen know it for a blessing. Often and often does it serve as a most creditable lever to break the ice with. The newspapers long resound with critical columns apropos of Trafalgar Square. You see 'sixth notice' attached to a formidable mass of print, and read on, or pass on, as you please. But you distinctly observe, at any rate, the social and conversational, as well as the artistic importance of the Royal Academy; and you confess, that a London season would be shorn of its brightest feature if you shut the gates of the National Gallery.

A. B. R.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Associates Royal Academy, and Royal Academicians.

BILL WILLIAMS:

A STORY OF CALIFORNIA.

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It was in the first flush of the Californian fever, when moderate people talked of making one's fortune in a fortnight, and the more sanguine believed that golden pokers would soon become rather common, that the *Betsy Jones* from London to New Zealand, with myself on board as a passenger, dropped anchor in the bay of San Francisco, and master and man turned out for the diggings. It is my impression that not a soul remained on board but the surgeon, who was sick, and the negro cook, who wouldn't leave him; and the first man I met on the deck of the *Go-Ahead* steamer, which took us up to Sacramento, was our enterprising captain, clad in a canvas jacket and trousers, with the gold-washing apparatus, two shirts, and a tin kettle, slung at his back. The crew followed his example, and all the passengers. The latter were some thirty men, from every corner of Britain, and of various birth and breeding. There were industrious farm-servants and spendthrift sons of gentlemen among them. Some had sailed with money, to purchase land in the southern colony, some were provided only with their hopes and sinews; but California was an irresistible temptation to them all, and by general desire, they had come to try their luck at the washing. We had mere boys and men of grizzling hair in our company. Two were married, but they wisely left their wives in San Francisco, where, having brought with them some spare blankets and crockery, the ladies improvised a boarding-house, and I believe realised more than their wandering lords. Nevertheless, we, one and all, went up the broad river with loftier expectations than the prudent among us cared to make public.

There was one who made no secret of his hopes. The man's name was Bill Williams. I had had a loose acquaintance with Bill from school-time, for we had been brought up in the same good town of Manchester, where his father was a respectable tradesman, and his three brothers were still in business. Many a town and many a trade had Bill tried to little purpose. Never doing what his relatives could call well, he had gone through a series of failures, which tired out both kinsmen and creditors, and at length shipped for New Zealand, leaving a wife and seven children to the care of the said three brothers, till he should see how the climate agreed with him, and find a home for them. Bill did not belong to the extended fraternity of scapegraces. He was

neither wild nor worthless, in the ordinary sense of those terms, but there was a faith in him, the origin of which baffled his most penetrating friends, that he was to get money somehow without working for it by any of the common methods. Unlike many a professor of better principles, Bill had carried that faith into practice. Under its influence, he had engaged in every scheme for making fortunes with incredible rapidity which coffee-house acquaintances or advertising sheets brought to his knowledge. There was not a banking bubble by which he had not lost, nor a mining company of vast promise and brief existence in which he had not held shares. Uncompromisingly averse to the jog-trot work of ordinary mortals. Bill was neither indolent nor timid in his own peculiar fashion of seeking riches. He would have gone up in a balloon to any height, or down in a diving-bell to depths yet unsounded, had the promise been large enough; and there was something so suitable to his inclinations in the Californian reports, that he was the prime mover of our visit to San Francisco, and the entire desertion of the ship. Strange to say, every man on board believed in Bill; from the captain to the cabin-boy, they had all listened to his tales. Where he had learned such a number, fortune knows, concerning found treasures, and wealth suddenly obtained by unexpected and rather impracticable ways. That was the whole circle of Bill's literature, and going over it appeared his chief joy; but the gem of the collection was a prophecy which a gipsy woman, whom his mother met once in a country excursion, had uttered concerning himself—that he should find riches he never wrought for, and leave a great fortune behind him. In the faith of that prediction Bill had lived; and it was a curious illustration of the sympathetic force inherent in a firm belief, that both passengers and seamen, even those who affected to laugh at the rest of what they called his wonderful yarns, entertained a secret conviction in favour of that tale, and felt secure of gold-gathering in Bill's company.

[pg 5] I am not certain that my own mind was entirely clear of a similar impression, but the two among us who contemned loudest and believed most devoutly, were the captain and his mate. They were brothers, and of Jewish parentage; the rest of the family still hang about an old-clothes and dyeing establishment in the neighbourhood of Houndsditch. I made that discovery by an accidental glance at a torn and mislaid letter before we left the Thames, and thought proper to reserve it for private meditation. The relationship of the two was kept a profound secret, for reasons best known to themselves; but to the eye at least it was revealed by their striking resemblance, both being small, spare, dingy-complexioned men, with keen, cunning eyes, and faces that looked as hard and sharp as steel. Ever since they first heard of the prophecy, they had half ridiculed, half flattered, and kept remarkably familiar with Bill. That familiarity rather increased as we went up the Sacramento. A goodly number we made on the deck of the *Go-Ahead*, our only place of accommodation; and at length we reached the new town, the golden city, which takes its name from the river, christened in old times of Spanish voyaging by some discoverer for his Catholic majesty, and which was to be the metropolis of the diggings. When I first saw it, it consisted of some hundred huts and tents, a large frame-house, in which an advertising board informed us there was an ordinary, a gaming-table, and all manner of spirits; and a timber wharf, somewhat temporarily put together, at which we landed. Yet the city was rising, as cities rise only in the western hemisphere: broad streets and squares were marked out; building was going forward on all sides; while bullock-wagons, canoes, and steamers, brought materials by land and water. The enterprise and vagrancy of all nations were there, as we had seen them at San Francisco; and those not engaged in building the town, were going off in caravans to the gold-gathering.

We fraternised with a company of Americans, who said they knew 'a bluff that flogged creation for the real metal,' and sold us two spare tents and a wagon, at a price marvellous to ask or pay. Our journey was not far. It led along the course of the Sacramento, and towards evening we came in sight of the diggings. A strange sight it was for one accustomed to London streets and shops. The Sacramento runs through a great inclined plane, sloping from the hill-country to the sea. Here and there, it is covered with low coppice or underwood; but the greater part is bare and sandy, or sprinkled over with thin, dry waving grass. As far as the eye could reach upon the plain, and up the river-banks, the smoke of fires was rising from hut, tent, and upturned wagon, which served for temporary dwellings. Groups of men were hard at work in small trenches, and numbers more stood with pan and cradle, washing out the gold in the shallow creeks of the river. 'Our location,' as the Americans called it, was an earthy promontory jutting far out into the water. Close by its landward base we pitched our tents, turned up our wagon—the bullocks that brought it belonged to the Americans, who promised to sell us a share when they were killed—and commenced operations. Digging out tenacious clay, and washing its sandy particles for minute grains of gold,

sleeping under canvas at night, and living on half-cooked and not very choice provisions, have little in them of interest worth relating. The first thing that struck me, was the silence that prevailed among the workers. In a district so populous, scarcely a sound was heard from tent, trench, or river. Caravan after caravan, as it arrived, pitched its tents, and fell to work in the same quiet fashion. A cynical character might have attributed this to the absence of all feminine faces, for in my time there was not a woman at the diggings. Incredible as it may seem to the fair ones themselves, they were not missed; but nobody missed anything except gold. Relations parted; old comrades left each other with scarcely a leave—taking in search of better gatherings; our American friends began to get tired of the bluff that flogged creation; for although we were getting gold, it was but little, and the more impatient spirits of our company departed with them to find another.

I wondered that Bill did not join their company. He was long ago weary of gold-washing; the work was too regular, and the returns far too slow for him. He used to declare that shopkeeping was better; and it is probable that most of us had similar convictions regarding the vocations we had left in Britain; but except occasionally cooking for the rest, smoking the tobacco he had providently brought with him, and suggesting wild projects of digging down the bluff, and dredging the river for lamps of gold, which, he said, all the grains we found came off, Bill at last did nothing at all. With hard labour and harder fare, we had collected some of us more and some less of the precious dust; but nobody's fortune was yet made, and the rainy season set in.

The heavy rains confined us for days to the shelter of tent and wagon; but the days were nothing to the nights, which on the banks of the Sacramento are almost equinoctial throughout the year; and we had neither coal nor candle. All the fuel that could be found was rather too little for culinary purposes. Concerning the rest of our comforts, there is no use in being particular; but at intervals between the drowning showers, we were willing enough to come out and work, though the muddy soil and the swollen river made our labour still harder, and our profits less. The best service was done us by an honest Paisley weaver, who had left his helpmate and two children at San Francisco, in hopes of taking back, quite full, a strong chest, of some two hundredweight capacity, which he had brought with infinite pains to the diggings. He enlivened our wet leisure by repeating whole volumes of Burns and Scott. Bill also returned to his wonderful stories, though the captain and mate sneered at them more than ever; indeed, they were by far the most discontented of the company, and an unaccountable sort of distrust seemed growing between them and Bill. At length, fever and ague began to thin the ranks of the gold-seekers; we saw the working-parties around us diminish day by day, and graves dug in the shadows of the low coppice. Our company kept lip amazingly, perhaps because, according to the captain's counsel, we held but little communication with other workers; but the want of the buffalo-meat, which the Indian traders were accustomed to bring, was much felt among us; and one day less rainy than usual, Bill Williams, as the idlest, was sent up the river's bank, on their wonted track, to look out for their coming. The rest were busy, and did not miss him; but I thought he stayed long. The sky became unusually dark; great clouds floated over us from the west, and then broke with a sudden thunder-crash, which was renewed every five minutes with such rain and lightning as I had never seen. We ran to our tents, and, when fairly sheltered, Bill also arrived, wet to the skin, out of breath, and looking terribly frightened. He said, hastily, that he had seen nothing, and no word of the Indians; but the poor fellow began to shiver as he spoke, and before evening the fever was strong upon him.

To keep the rest safe, he was quartered alone in a small hut which the Americans had left us. It was a poor shelter, being built of turf, and roofed with boughs and grass, but as good as any we had. There was no surgeon among us, and handing him food or drink was deemed a perilous business; but all his comrades had a sort of a liking for Bill, and, besides, he was regarded as the palladium of the party. The fever was not violent, though Bill raved at times, and all his wanderings were after gold. I have heard him talk for half-hours together in a loud whisper, as if communicating a secret to some very dull ear, concerning a pool among rocks, with glistening sands, and something shining far down in a crevice. He was restless, too, and kept looking out on the track of the Indians after they had come and gone. One evening I observed him particularly so. The night fell with heavy rain; we all took early to shelter, and slept so soundly, that Bill was forgotten among us; but in the morning we found him lying wrapped in his blanket, as thoroughly wet as if he had been dipped in the river, while the hut remained quite dry. Where he had been, or under what illusion of the fever, we could not learn, for he never spoke a rational word after. The wet and exposure increased his malady tenfold. He became fiercely delirious, and struck at whoever approached him,

swearing he would let nobody kill him for his gold. The captain warned us all, that this was the most dangerous time for infection; but I saw that he and his brother had got wind of something, for their eyes were never off the hut.

Towards the second evening, Bill grew worse, his ravings became faint and low, and he lay gathered up on a corner of his mattress. I had placed a pitcher of water as near him as possible, escaping by chance a blow which the poor soul struck at me in his feverish fury; but I could not help thinking of him when we had all gone to rest. The night was so still, that I could hear the rush of the river and the cries of the night-hawks on its opposite bank; but being unable to sleep, I crept out of the tent, and looked to Bill's hut. A smothered sound of scuffling came from that direction, and stepping nearer, I saw by the rising moon, which just then shone with extraordinary brightness, two men struggling, as it seemed for life, in the narrow space between Bill's bed and the door.

'If you don't give me the full half, I'll tell them all,' said the voice of the captain's brother; but almost as he spoke, his antagonist threw him heavily back. I knew it was upon poor Williams, for a low moan reached my ear, and I sprang forward just in time to intercept the victor, who stumbled over me as he rushed out, and a heavy bag rolled from him. The next moment the other was at my side, and I stood face to face with the captain and his brother in the broad moonlight. The bag for which they had sneaked, and sinned, and scuffled, had burst by the fall, and its contents—stones, gravel, and sand, with some small sparkles of gold-dust amongst them—were scattered at my feet. Both stood stupefied, and I stepped into the hut; but Bill was dead, and growing cold, with his stiff hands stretched out, as if clutching at something, and a wild expression of pain and anger in the ghastly face, which lay turned up to the moon. Her light filled the hut, and lay upon plain, and tent, and river. It was a glorious night, such as sometimes shines in the gold-country. I woke up my comrades, and told them what I had seen, but they all said: 'Poor Bill! How could they help it?' and it was a good thing that the captain and his chum had been disappointed;' upon which every man composed himself again to sleep.

Next morning, the captain and mate were gone with all their traps, having joined, as we afterwards heard, a company returning to San Francisco. We laid Bill beside the gold-seekers who rested in the coppice, and our company broke up, and scattered away: some settled at San Francisco; some went to the United States; and I, having collected through so many hardships almost a pound of dust, returned to the employment I had left in London with such high contempt. From an old comrade, however, still located at the diggings, I heard by letter that a party of Americans had made a great discovery of gold among some rocks in a creek of the Sacramento, and that they had found, sticking fast in a crevice close by, a small spade marked with the name of Bill Williams, which the poor fellow had cut on the handle, as I well remembered, in one of his many idle hours. This explained to me Bill's long absence when he went to look for the Indians, his after-anxiety, and where he had been in the delirium of the fever, filling up that canvas bag which so fatally deceived the captain and his brother. The last I heard of these worthies was, that they had gone to the diggings in Australia; and I never see gold in any shape without a recollection of their disappointment, and my own experiences in California.

HYGIENIC CHANGE OF AIR.

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THE age of hygiene is rapidly approaching, when the exhibition of drugs will be the exception instead of the rule in medical treatment. For this reason, the effect of climate on disease is rising into a subject of first-rate importance, and, no longer a prejudice or a tradition, submits to the investigations of science. The chief recent writers on what we already presume to call climatology, are Sir James Clark in England, Schouw in Sweden, and Carrière in France; and now there comes Dr Burgess, armed with the united authority of these physicians, and with his own experience, to indoctrinate the public as well as the profession. His book is of moderate size and price, and we recommend it to all invalids, whether they are able to travel abroad, or are confined by circumstances to their own country; but in the meantime, as the subject is both new and interesting to general readers, we propose giving them an inkling of what it contains.^[2]

We do not mean that the subject of climate is new in itself: it is only new in its treatment. We have all, from our earliest youth, heard of the effects of

climate; we have all been brought up to believe in certain foreign places; and we have all observed that when—consumption, for instance—approaches its last stage (rarely before), it is shipped off, as a matter of course, for Italy or the south of France. And, alas! we have all heard from the wan lips of the stricken one excluded by poverty from the privilege of foreign travel: 'If I could but get to a warm climate, I should live!' Such notions, right or wrong, depended exclusively upon habit or prejudice. Experience had no effect upon them, any more than it had upon the orthodox course of medicines which entitled the death of a patient to be considered professionally legitimate. Sometimes, indeed, the venue was changed, and one place became more fashionable than another to die in. Here the group of English tombs grew gray and ancient, and there a new city of the silent sprang up with the suddenness of an American emporium. But still the cry was: 'A warm climate! Give us Italy, or we perish!'

But we need not say the cry *was*: it continues to this moment. Such impressions are long of being dispelled; it takes a great many years for the voice of doubt even to reach completely the public ear; and we think it a privilege to be able to take such advantage of our wide circulation as will give repining invalids to understand, that the advantages of a foreign climate are closely limited by one portion of the profession, and considered by another portion as highly problematical, if not entirely visionary. This applies, however, mainly to consumption; for the advantages of the climatic change are seldom denied in dyspepsy, rheumatism, scrofula, and the tribe of nervous diseases. Even in these, however, the locality chosen is rarely a proper one. There are countries which, if they could only obtain the stamp of fashion, would be invaluable to the invalid. 'The climate of Norway, for example,' says Dr Burgess, 'is admirably suited, during several months of the year, between the middle of May and the middle of September, for certain forms of dyspepsy, lesions of the nervous system affecting the mind, or that form of general innervation which results from an overwrought brain, and diseases of repletion. But Norway is little frequented, because it is not fashionable, although it would be difficult to point out a more appropriate occasional residence for the numerous class of invalids just mentioned, than Christiania, with its picturesque environs, sublime scenery, and clear and rarefied atmosphere.'

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The non-professional predilection in favour of a warm climate for consumption, may be referred, we suspect, to the analogy that exists between the earlier stages of that disease and those of a common cold. In fact, in most cases in this country, consumption is for a long time styled a cold; then it becomes a bad cold; then a worse; till it is impossible to withhold from it the more formidable name. A cold, however, it should be considered, occurs as frequently in summer as in winter; and in neither is it owing to the temperature, whether high or low, but to the *atmospheric changes*. The warmer the weather is, the greater will be the morbid effect of a cold draught of air. That a warm climate *in itself* is neither prevention nor cure in consumption, may be inferred from the prevalence of the complaint in all latitudes. In India and in Africa it is as rife as in any part of Europe. By the Army Reports from Malta, we find that upwards of 30 per cent. of the whole number of deaths throughout the year is caused by phthisis. In Madeira, according to Dr Heineken, Dr Gourlay, and Dr Mason, no disease is more common among the natives than pulmonary consumption. At Nice, it is stated by Dr Meryon, more natives die annually of consumption than in any town in England of the same amount of population. In Genoa, one of the most prevalent and fatal of the indigenous diseases is pulmonary consumption. In Florence, pneumonia is marked by a suffocating character, and rapid progress towards its last stage. In Naples, 1 death from consumption occurs in a mortality of 2-1/3 while in the hospitals of Paris, where phthisis is notoriously prevalent, the proportion is only 1 in 3¼. In short, in all the celebrated sanatoria to which we fly for relief, we find the disease as firmly established as at home.

If we examine the analogies presented by the history of the inferior animals, we find no argument in favour of a foreign climate. The fishes, birds, and wild beasts of one region, die in another. 'Man, although endowed in a remarkable degree, and more so than any other animal, with the faculty of enduring such unnatural transitions, nevertheless becomes sensible of their injurious results. For familiar illustrations of this influence, we have only to look to the broken-down constitutions of our Indian officers, or to the emaciated frame of the shivering Hindoo who sweeps the crossings of the streets of London. The child of the European, although born in India, must be sent home in early life to the climate of his ancestors, or to one closely resembling it, in order to escape incurable disease, if not premature death. Again, the offspring of Asiatics born in this country pine and dwindle into one or other of the twin cachexiæ—

scrofula and consumption; and, if the individual survives, lives in a state of passive existence, stunted in growth, and incapable of enduring fatigue. If such extreme changes of climate prove obnoxious to the health of individuals having naturally a sound constitution, how are we to expect persons in a state of organic disease to be thereby benefited? In fact, view the subject in whatever light we may, we must eventually arrive at the natural and rational conclusion—that nature has adapted the constitution of man to the climate of his ancestors. The accident of birth does not constitute the title to any given climate. The natural climate of man is that in which not only he himself was born, but likewise his blood-relations for several generations. This is his natural climate, as well in health as when his constitution is broken down by positive disease, or unhinged by long-continued neglect of the common rules of hygiene.' It is Dr Burgess's theory, therefore, that when change is necessary, a modification of the patient's own climate—that is to say, change of air in the same climate—is more in accordance with the laws of nature, and more likely to effect good, than a violent transition to warmer countries.

With regard to the curability of this disease, there is now, we believe, no doubt of the fact, although, unfortunately the process has not yet come completely into the hands of the physician. That a cure has frequently taken place, somehow or other, even in advanced stages of pulmonary consumption, has been demonstrated by *post-mortem* examinations; but nature herself seems, in these cases, to have been her own doctor, for no mode of treatment of general applicability has been discovered. Some think that the progress of tubercles may be arrested in the first stage—others, that nothing can be effected till the second. Some resort to the water-cure—others, to the still more marvellous Spanish baths of Panticosa; and others, again, swear by cod-liver oil. As to the last remedy, our author quotes the statements of Dr Williams, 'that the pure fresh oil from the liver of the cod is more beneficial in the treatment of pulmonary consumption than any agent, medicinal, dietetic, or regimenal, that has yet been employed. Out of 234 cases carefully recorded, the oil disagreed, and was discontinued, in only 9 instances. In 19, although taken, it appeared to do no good; whilst in the larger proportion of 206 out of 234, its use was followed by marked and unequivocal improvement—this improvement varying in degree in different cases, from a temporary retardation of the progress of the disease, and a mitigation of distressing symptoms, up to a more or less complete restoration to apparent health. The most numerous examples of decided and lasting improvement, amounting to nearly 100, have occurred in patients in the second stage of the disease, in which the tuberculous deposits begin to undergo the process of softening. The most striking instance of the beneficial operation of cod-liver oil in phthisis, is to be found in cases in the *third* stage—even those far advanced, where consumption has not only excavated the lungs, but is rapidly wasting the whole body with copious purulent expectoration, hectic, night-sweats, colliquative diarrhoea, and other elements of that destructive process by which, in a few weeks, the finest and fairest of the human family may be sunk to the grave. The power of staying the demon of destruction sometimes displayed by the cod-liver oil is marvellous.' Dr Burgess, however, although witnessing the same results even in far-gone cases, limits their duration to a year or eighteen months, after which the medicine lost its effect. Although the oil, therefore, is serviceable through the process of nutrition, he considers it no specific, and concludes on the subject thus: 'All that our present knowledge enables us to state positively on the subject is this: cod-liver oil is the most effectual stay to the progress of consumption, in a great majority of cases, that we possess; this salutary action is not always lasting, and there are cases in which its administration cannot be borne, and others in which it produces no good effects whatever. In those cases in which the stomach rejects the pure oil, if it be given in combination with phosphoric acid, it will generally be borne easily, and the acid will assist the tonic action of the oil.'

The non-professional notion respecting the curative powers of climate is, that by breathing a mild and soothing atmosphere, the phthisical patient withdraws irritation, and leaves nature at liberty to effect her own cure. But this, it seems, is entirely erroneous, inasmuch as it is through the skin, not the lungs, that a warm climate acts beneficially. When an atmospheric change takes place so as to produce a chill, 'whereby the cutaneous transpiration is instantly checked, the skin then becomes dry and hard, so that the respiratory organs suffer from the excessive action they now undergo, for the matter of transpiration must be eliminated through the lungs if the action of the skin be interrupted.' This is illustrated by the instantaneous relief usually afforded by free perspiration in cases where difficult breathing and oppression of the chest have been occasioned by artificial heat. What really soothes, therefore, is *equability* of climate, not high temperature. Some authors even think that a cold climate is more suitable for consumption than a warm one, and point to Upper Canada, with its pure, dry, tonic atmosphere, affording hardly any

trace of the complaint at all.

Here we might stop, as the nature of our work precludes our following Dr Burgess in his exposition of the action of climate on the lungs and skin; but it may be useful, and at any rate amusing, to trace his iconoclastic progress through the popular shrines of Hygiea on the continent.

Malta is a famous resort for phthisical patients, although during the winter and spring the weather is cold and variable, and in autumn the sirocco is frequent. When a sirocco has blown for some days, it lulls suddenly, and is succeeded by an equally strong breeze from the north-west, contrasting violently with the former in temperature and everything else. The extremes of heat and cold are as great here and in other places in the Mediterranean as in London. In Malta, our author saw five or six cases of bronchitis, which in a single month terminated in incurable phthisis; and in two cases, six weeks only elapsed between the first signs of the tuberculous deposit and the death of the patients.

Madeira, a still more popular sanatorium for this disease, is a complete delusion. Instead of the climate being essentially dry, it is saturated with humidity during a great part of the year; and the peculiar sirocco of the place is of a hot, dry, irritating nature. An intelligent medical author, who had resorted to Madeira for change of air, remarks, that 'very frequent and remarkable variations in a given series of years, incontestably prove that Madeira is no more to be relied on than any other place for certainty of fine weather, and that it has equally its annual variations of temperature.... From what has been stated by writers, a person might be led to believe that disease was scarcely known there; but I am afraid, that were the subject thoroughly investigated, as it ought to be, few places would be found where the system is more liable to general disorder; while, at the same time, I suspect that the average duration of life would turn out to be inferior to that of our own country.'

Our author knows no place more unfavourable to patients suffering from organic diseases of the lungs, than the far-famed sanatoria—Aix and Montpellier. The atmosphere is pure, but ever and anon keen and piercing, and the *bise* and *marin*—one cold and cutting, and the other damp—irritate the lungs, and excite coughing. Add to this, that Provence is proverbially the land of dust, and, what is worse, the land of the *mistral*—a wind from the north-west, which carries stones, men, and carriages before it. 'For several days in spring the climate may no doubt be delicious, although, however, always too warm about mid-day, when suddenly the mistral, of evil celebrity, begins to blow. It is difficult to give an adequate idea of the change, or of the injurious effects of the climate under the influence of this scourge. The same sun shines in the same bright blue sky, but the temperature is glacial. The sun is there only to glare and dazzle, and seems to have no more power in producing warmth, than a rushlight against the boisterous winds, which chill the very marrow in one's bones. During the prevalence of this wind, it is impossible to stir out of doors without getting the mouth and nostrils filled with dust. All nature seems shrivelled and dried up under its baneful influence.'

Nice, likewise, is scourged by the mistral, which there, however, divides its empire with winds from the north and north-east. 'But one of the greatest vices characterising the climate of Nice, if not the greatest, is the remarkable variation of temperature noticed between day and night—in the sun and in the shade. The land or continental winds prevail during the night; the southerly or maritime during the day. The former are cold and dry; the latter, soft and humid. As soon, therefore, as the former subside, and the sun rises in the horizon, the humidity commences to shew itself in the atmosphere; whilst, on the contrary, when the diurnal winds cease, and the sun sets, the above hygrometric condition of the air disappears.' M. Carrière cannot conceive why our countrymen prefer Nice to a milder climate, and considers that the annual mortality in the English colony ought to discourage other hectic invalids from going thither.

Central Lombardy is, in general, characterised by marshy swamps poisoning the whole atmosphere with their miasmatic exhalations. The meteoric influences are decidedly cold and variable; and the 'extremes of temperature increase in proportion as we approach the valleys at the foot of the Central Alps, especially those most distant from the Adriatic coast.' This climate, our author tells us, cannot afford more benefit to the consumptive than that of the fens of Lincolnshire, or of the marshes of Holland. Brescia, Pavia, Mantua, and other Lombard towns, also share in this character; and at Verona, Mr B. Honan writes, that of all humbugs, the humbug of an Italian climate is the most intolerable.

At Genoa, although the air is pure and transparent in fine weather, it is liable to sudden gusts of wind and violent transitions dangerous to the invalid.

'In no part of England could a climate be found more unfavourable for consumptive invalids than that of Florence, a town built in a deep ravine, almost surrounded by the Apennines, and intersected by a squalid river.... Extreme cold in winter, great heat in summer, the prevalence of the northerly winds, the chilling effects of which are not always neutralised by the antagonistic winds, rapid and violent transitions, profoundly affecting the system, even in healthy persons; and combined with these violent atmospheric and thermal variations are also, in similar proportions, hygrometric and electric ever-changing influences.' Leghorn, the seaport of Tuscany, is built in a sunk locality, in the midst of a marshy country. Beggars, galley-slaves, assassins, smugglers, these are the picturesque portions of the inhabitants; and the promenade is an arid beach, anything but soothing to the respiratory organs. The English cemetery is a touching spectacle, with its numerous monuments of brilliant marble; among which stands conspicuous the tomb of Smollett.

Of Pisa, the grand central depôt of Italy for foreign consumptive patients, Dr Burgess says: 'The excess of humidity and warm temperature of the Pisan climate depress the vital force, induce an overwhelming lassitude, and are, in my opinion, most unfavourable elements in a climate so generally recommended for pulmonary consumption. Whatever effect the humid mildness of the air may have in diminishing excitability, and in allaying pulmonary irritation in patients of a nervous temperament, it is decidedly injurious in those of a feeble and lymphatic habit.... The delusion of an Italian climate, as regards the cure or prophylaxis of tubercular consumption, is in no part of that country, so delightful to persons in sound health, more clearly portrayed than at far-famed Pisa. The stagnant life, the death-like silence, the dreary solitude of this dull town, whatever utility these elements may have in allaying the restless irritability of nervous and excitable patients, always produce serious evils upon those consumptive invalids of a melancholy turn of mind, or whose spirit is broken by hope deferred. Brooding over their melancholy condition, in a foreign land, away from the comforts of home, without the solace and cheering influence of friends and relations, they soon break down and perish.' M. Carrière and Sir James Clark consider the climate of Rome adapted only for consumptive patients in the first stage of the complaint; but Dr Burgess, after a train of reasoning founded on scientific facts, comes to a conclusion consonant with his own theory, that it is not adapted for consumption in any stage or form whatever.

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It is needless to follow our author to Naples, for this place is admitted by all writers to be injurious in cases of pulmonary consumption; but we may conclude this fragmentary survey by stating that, according to Dr Burgess, the least injurious portions of Italy are the Lake of Como and the city of Venice, *the air in neither of them being warm, but in both equable*. Here we end as we began: 'It is a mistake to suppose that a warm, humid, relaxing atmosphere can benefit pulmonary disease. Cold, dry, and still air, appears a more rational indication, especially for invalids born in temperate regions.' It will be seen that our author differs occasionally from both his great predecessors, Sir James Clark and M. Carrière; but even in so doing, he has at least the merit of fairly opening out a most important subject.

Let it be understood, that we have merely mentioned the nature of the contents of this volume, without attempting to follow Dr Burgess either in his reasonings or in the facts on which these are founded. We have now only to recommend the work as one that will be found highly interesting and suggestive, both by the medical and non-medical reader.^[3]

FOOTNOTES:

[2] *Climate of Italy in Relation to Pulmonary Consumption: with Remarks on the Influence of Foreign Climates upon Invalids*. By T. H. Burgess, M. D., &c. London: Longman, Brown, Green, & Longmans. 1852.

[3] We print the above as we received it from a respectable contributor, but without giving any opinion ourselves upon a subject of which we are not qualified to judge.—*Ed. C. J.*

THE DEVICE, OR IMPRESS.

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If the various works of useful and ornamental art discovered in the sepulchres of nations long since fallen into oblivion, were of no other value, at the present day, than merely to be applied to the purposes which they were originally intended to subserve; if they did not elucidate the manners, customs, and progressional refinement of men with passions and feelings similar to our own; the labour and expense incurred by their exhumation would be thrown away. It is not, then, for the intrinsic value of the specimens to be produced, neither is it for any very particular admiration of the 'good old times,' but to exhibit and illustrate a very general and exceedingly active phase of our ancestors' minds, that, turning over the refuse materials of history, we proceed to disinter, from their worm-eaten pages, the dead and almost forgotten art of Device—an art that once claimed an extensive literature, and canons of criticism, peculiarly its own. From about 250 to 400 years ago, were the high and palmy days of this 'dainty art.' Then, the learned and subtile schoolmen of the age did not disdain to write upon it, with ink scarcely dry upon the pens with which they had been discussing the most abstruse dogmas of theology; then, not unfrequently, the cureless curate, by the concoction of a happy device for a generous patron, found himself a beneficed bishop. Nor is such preferment to be wondered at. The qualifications considered necessary to constitute a device-maker, were fully equal to those which Imlac described to Rasselas as requisite to form a poet. 'Philosophy and poetry,' wrote Père le Moyne, 'history and fable, all that is taught in colleges, all that is learned in the world, are condensed and epitomised in this great pursuit; in short, if there be an art which requires an all-accomplished workman, that art is device-making.' Ruscelli says: 'It belongs only to the most exquisite wits and best-refined judgments to undertake the making of devices.' Yet, though the learned doctors of Padua, Wirttemberg, and the Sorbonne, engaged in deep disquisitions on the emblematical properties, natural and mythical, of cranes and crescents, sunflowers and salamanders, pelicans and porcupines—the length and language of mottoes—how the wind should be pictorially portrayed, with many other equally weighty considerations, still the chivalrous knights of the tourney, and the fair ladies of their *devoirs*, attained proficiency in the art. Wolf of Wolfrath, the lute-player, records, that at a grand tournament held at Vienna in 1560, crowns of laurel were awarded to the knights who wore the wittiest devices, as well as to those who excelled in feats of arms.

'But,' the reader very probably exclaims, 'what was this art of device?'

It consisted in translating an idea into a symbol, and illustrating that symbol by a tersely-expressed motto. 'The object of a device,' according to the Lord of Fosse, 'was to express covertly, by means of a picture and words, a conception of human wit;' and it was distinguished from an emblem, inasmuch as the emblem demonstrated something universal, whereas the device was peculiarly appropriate to the person who wore it. The old writers glory in its antiquity, citing many instances of its having been known and used by both Greeks and Romans. Even during the dark ages it was not entirely lost; it merely slumbered until the *renaissance*, and the invasions of Italy under Charles VIII. and Louis XII., when it awoke to a vigorous existence. Thus, though of much greater antiquity than heraldic blazonry, which only dates from the time of the Crusades, it was not hereditary, could be adopted or changed at pleasure, and did not define the rank of the wearer. Shakspeare, who well understood the nature of the device, distinguishes between it and armorial bearings in the passage where Bolingbroke recounts his injuries:

'Disparked my parks, and felled my forest woods;
From my own windows torn my household coat,^[4]
Razed out my impress'—

The old heralds, however, looked upon the device with but little favour. Camden sneeringly says, that 'Armes were most usual among the nobility in wars till about some hundred years since, when the French and Italians, in the expedition of Naples, beganne to leave armes, haply for that many of them had none, and to bear the curtaines of their mistresses' beddes, their mistresses' colours, as impresses in their banners, shields, and caparisons.' Daniel, one of our earliest English writers on the subject, is worth quoting for a definition of the impress, and to shew the exclusive spirit of the age. He says: '*Impresa*, used of the Italians for an enterprise taken in hand, with a firm and constant intent to bring the same to effect. As if a prince or capitaine taking in hand some enterprise of war, or any other perticulaire affaire, desirous by some figure and motto to manifest to the world his intent, this figure and motto together is called an impress, made to signify an enterprise, whereat a noble mind levelling with the aime of a deep desire, strives with a steely intent to game the prize of his purpose. For the valiant and hautie gentlemen, disdayning to conjoine with the vile and base plebeians in any

rustique invention, have procured to themselves this one most singulare.'

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Paul Jovius, a celebrated Italian historian and bishop, in his treatise on devices, says, that the figure or emblem, which he terms the *body* of the device, must be exactly fitted to the motto, which he terms its *soul*; and though it should not be so obscure as to require a sibyl to explain it, yet the motto ought to be in a foreign or dead language, so that it may not be comprehended by the vulgar—'such dainties not being intended for vulgar appetites.' The human figure, also, should never be introduced into the emblem, and the motto ought not to contain more than three or four words. These rules, however, were not strictly adhered to, even by Jovius himself. The treatise is written in the form of a dialogue between the bishop and his secretary; its gossiping manner, quaint style, and the great importance attributed to the subject-matter, remind us exceedingly of the *Complete Angler* of our old English friend Izaak Walton. As an example of a perfect device, Jovius mentions one worn in the Italian wars by Antonio Colonna, the friend of Michael Angelo. It represented a branch of palm laid across a branch of cypress, with the motto, *Erit altera merces* (There will be another reward.) Another, highly praised by the old device-writers 'for being of subtle invention, and singular in outward view,' was assumed by a Spanish knight, Don Diego Mendoza, to signify the slight encouragement he received from the fair lady who was mistress of his affections. It represented a well, with a circular machine for raising water, full buckets ascending and empty ones going down, the motto, *Los llenos de dolor, y los vazios de esperanza* (The full one is grief; the empty, hope.) By the way, we find a similar figure in *Richard II.*, where the unfortunate monarch says:

'Now is this golden crown like a deep well,
That owns two buckets, filling one another—
The emptier ever dancing in the air,
The other down, unseen, and full of water:
That bucket down and full of tears am I,
Drinking my grief while you mount up on high.'

Jovius also warmly commends a device worn by Edward Stuart, Lord of Albany, a famous captain of tried valour in the French army, during their Italian campaigns. Of the blood-royal of Scotland, being cousin to James IV., he wore, as his arms, a lion rampant in a field argent; and as his device, a buckle, with the motto, *Distantia jungit*; 'thereby implying that he was the bond which held united the kings of France and Scotland, to countervail the forces of their natural enemy, the king of England.'

A quaint bit of romance, in connection with a lady's device, is perhaps worthy of notice. Hippolita Fioramonda excelled all the ladies of her day in beauty and courtesy, and wore, as her device, moths, embroidered in gold, on a sky-blue robe—a warning to the amorous not to approach too closely the light of her beauty, lest, like moths attracted by a lamp, they should be burned. There being no motto, one of her admirers, the Lord of Lesui, a brave knight, famous for his horsemanship, asked her for an explanation of such a singular and imperfect device. She replied: 'It is to use the like courtesy to gentlemen who call to see me, as you do to those who ride in your company; you being accustomed to put on the tail of your horse a small rattle, to make him more fierce in kicking, so as to warn any who may approach you of the danger of his heels, thereby causing them to keep aloof.' Notwithstanding this repulse, the knight persevered, though unsuccessfully, in his suit, until he fell mortally wounded at the battle of Pavia. Then the lady Fioramonda relenting, had him sought for on the sanguinary field, and carried to her own house, where, to his great contentment, he died in her arms. Such imperfect devices, however, were considered unworthy of the name, unfit for men of gravity, and suited but to make sport with ladies. Of this description was that of Augustine Porco, a gentleman of Verona, who, being in love with a lady named Bianca, wore in his scarlet cap a small, real, white wax-candle, and perseveringly followed the lady to every place of public resort she visited. To the inquiries of his friends respecting this extraordinary device, he merely replied, that it signified *Candela bianca* (A white candle), and, consequently, doubts were entertained of the eccentric gallant's sanity. At last, though love is proverbially blind, the lady—probably she had a prompter—discovered that the true meaning was *Can de la Bianca* (The dog of Bianca), and with her hand rewarded the ingenuity and perseverance of Signor Porco.

Through devices we obtain glimpses at the morals, as well as the manners, of a foreign people and a bygone age. The amorous devices of many ecclesiastical dignitaries afford a capital reason for the rule, that the motto should not be comprehensible 'by the vulgar.' That of Cardinal Medici, who loved the lady Julian Gonzago, was a comet surrounded by stars, the motto,

Micat inter omnes (It shines among them all), from the lines of Horace:

Micat inter omnes Julium sidus
Velut inter ignes luna minores.

The allusion to the star of Julius in connection with the lady's name renders this device, in our opinion, rather neat and classical.

A still more startling sign of the times is exhibited by the device-loving bishop. He relates that one Mattei, a man of noble courage, when waiting with dissimulation and patience an opportunity to murder a person by whom he had been insulted, applied to him (Jovius) for an appropriate device; and the bishop, 'wishing to shew that a noble mind has power to *digest*, with time, every grievous injury,' designed an ostrich devouring a nail, with the motto, *Spiritus durissima conquit*. Mattei wore the device, and ultimately succeeded in assassinating his victim; and 'so much was this noble revenge commended,' that the pope promoted the ruffian to be captain of his guard—the family of the murdered man signing an agreement to cancel all future quarrels.

Great care was requisite, when framing a device, lest any part of it could be turned into ridicule by a witty or spiteful enemy. Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, bore a flint and steel, with the motto, *Ante ferit quam flamma micet* (As he strikes, the fire flashes); and when defeated, and slain at the battle of Nancy, the day being cold, with snow on the ground, his triumphant enemy, the Duke of Loreno, said: 'This poor man, though he has great need to warm himself, has not leisure to use his tinder-box.'

However puerile the 'art' may appear to us now, there can be little doubt, that the construction of devices, as an incentive to the acquisition of general knowledge, and as a kind of mental training, was not altogether useless in its day, and formed a link, were it ever so slender, in the development of the human mind. Estienne, a noted French device-author, observes, that 'to express the conceptions of our own mind in the most perfect device, there is nothing so proper, so *gentile*, so powerful, or so witty, as the similitudes we discover when walking in the spacious fields of Nature's wonderful secrets; for the grace of a device, as well as the skill of him who makes it, consists in discovering the correspondence of natural qualities and artificial uses with our own thoughts and intentions.'

The old scholastic logic was freely employed in the arguments by which the device-authors advanced their own opinions, or attacked those of their contemporaries. Ammirato condemns the unphilosophical definition of Jovius—that the emblem is the body, and the motto, the soul of a device. With long, and, we must acknowledge, to us at least, not very intelligible argument, he maintains, that 'the motto is the *major* part of a syllogism, and the emblem the *minor*; from the conjunction of which the conclusion is drawn.' Unprofitable and uninteresting are these discussions. We shall, in preference, mention the canons of device-criticism, which were of most general prevalence.

Comparison was considered an essential property of a perfect device. Thus the Pillars of Hercules, with the motto, *Plus ultra* (More beyond), adopted by Charles V., in allusion to the Spanish discoveries and conquests in America, and still to be seen on the coin of that nation, was, by the connoisseurs, termed a mere conceit. The scholar's two pens, with *His ad aethera* (By these fame), being also devoid of comparison, was equally inferior. Not more than three figures were permissible in the emblem, unless the greater number were of the same species. A device portraying an elephant, with a flock of sheep grazing quietly around, the motto, *Infestus infestis* (Hostile only to the wicked), was strictly correct, as the sheep, being all of one species, were recognised merely as one figure. Metaphor was not allowed in the motto: a device faulty in this respect, represented a ball of crystal, the motto, from Plautus, *Intus et in cute* (The same within and without); crystal being devoid of skin (*cutis*), the expression was metaphorical. The introduction of negatives into the motto was considered good: as a sundial, with *Ne aspiciatur non aspicitur* (Unless looked upon—by the sun—it is not esteemed, or is of no use), a good device for a king's favourite; a flame of fire, with *Nunquam deorsum* (Never downwards); a gourd floating on a stream, with *Jactor non mergor* (Abandoned, but not sunk.) When the motto was taken from a well-known classic, fewer words were required: thus in a device representing a flame blown upon by the wind, with *Lenis alit flammam, grandior aura necat* (A gentle wind nourishes flame, a stronger, extinguishes), the words, *grandior necat* (a stronger, extinguishes) would have been sufficient. Nice discrimination was required in selecting the most suitable language for a motto. According to Contile, the Spanish was most suitable for love-matters; the Italian, for pleasant conceits; the Greek, for fiction; and the Latin, for majesty. Household furniture, and implements of husbandry, were considered

improper subjects for the emblem of a device; consequently, that of the Academia della Crusca was set down as decidedly vulgar, it being a sieve, with *Il piu bel fior ne coglie* (It collects the finest flour of it)—a play on the word *crusca* (bran), assumed as the title of the Academy, from its having been instituted for the express purpose of purifying (sifting) the Italian language.

Objects that were not recognisable unless painted in colours, were also inadmissible; thus the otherwise clever device of the Earl of Essex—a rough diamond, with the motto, *Dum formas minuis* (In fashioning, you diminish), came under the censure of the critics. In like manner, objects not easily distinguishable from others, were liable to the same condemnation. The celebrated device assumed by Mary Queen of Scots on the death of her first husband, Francis II., representing a liquorice-plant, with *Dulce meum terra tegit* (The earth covers my sweet), was pronounced faulty, because the liquorice-plant could not be readily distinguished from other shrubs, the roots of which wanted the property of sweetness so necessary to give point to the device. Unnatural or chimerical figures could not be admitted, excepting those to which tradition or classical authors had given fixed forms and attributes—as the mermaid, harpy, phoenix; consequently, a device representing a winged tortoise, the motto, *Amor addidit* (Love has added them), was improper. Qualities ascribed to animate or inanimate bodies by the ancients, were considered legitimate, though known by the moderns to be fictitious. Thus the dolphin, from the story of Arion, appears in devices as the friend of the distressed; the salamander, living in fire, typifies the strong passions, natural, yet destructive to their victim; the young stork, carrying the old one, illustrates filial piety; the crane, which, according to Pliny, holds a stone in its claw to avert sleep, is a fit emblem of watchfulness; the pomegranate, king of fruits, wears a regal crown; the crocodile, symbol of hypocrisy, sheds deceitful tears. In short, almost everything that was in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, was seized by the device-maker, and converted into a symbol of some virtue, vice, or other quality of the mind. Nor was there only one emblem taken from each object; by varying the circumstances, they were multiplied to an enormous amount. Menestrier gives no less than 514 different devices, founded upon the properties of the sun alone.

Though devices previous to the reign of Henry VIII. were seldom worn in England, yet the insignia of the order of the Garter, instituted in 1350, in connection with its well-known motto and assumed origin, may be considered a genuine device. The next earliest we meet with was worn by Henry IV., and represented a blazing beacon, the motto, *Une sans plus* (One alone.) This motto has been termed inappropriate; but, considering that beacons were always placed at considerable distances from each other—one sufficing for a considerable district—we may conclude that the usurping Henry implied, that there was only one king in England, and that one was himself. Richard Duke of York, when he took up arms against Henry VI., assumed, as his device, a sun, partly visible only through thick clouds, with the motto, *Invitis nubibus* (Obscured by clouds.) After his death, his son Edward, in consequence of the success of the Yorkist cause, changed this device to a full sun unobscured. This was the sun of York so frequently alluded to by Shakspeare, and such a stumbling-block to his commentators. Henry VIII., on the occasion of his visiting Francis I. at the field of the Cloth of Gold, wore an English archer, dressed in Lincoln green, drawing his arrow to the head, the motto, *Cui adhereo præest* (He whom I aid, conquers); a very significant intimation to Charles V. and Francis, both of whom were anxious for Henry's alliance against each other. Ann Boleyn wore a white-crowned falcon standing on a golden stem, from which sprouted red and white roses, with the motto, *Mihi et meae* (To me and mine.) This device of the fair and unfortunate Ann has survived to the present day. Now, emblematical of her fall, as it was once of her high station, it is degraded to be the sign of an ale-house, and known to the village toppers as the *Magpie and Stump!* 'The gentle Surrey of the deathless lay,' one of the last victims of the tyrant Henry, wore a broken pillar, with the motto, *Sat super est* (Enough remains.) One of the charges brought against him, when arraigned for high treason, was for wearing this very device. Mary, when she ascended the throne, wore a representation of Time drawing Truth out of a well, with the words, *Veritas temporis filia* (Truth is the daughter of Time); and Cardinal Pole wore a serpent surrounding the terrestrial globe, with the motto, *Estote prudentes* (Be ye cunning.) Both of those devices were very significant of the period and of their wearers.

The romantic amusements of Queen Elizabeth raised the device to the highest pinnacle of importance it ever possessed in this country, Hentzner, a German traveller, who visited the palace of Whitehall in 1598, says, that he saw in her majesty's bedroom 'a variety of devices on paper, cut in the shape of shields, with mottoes, used by the nobility at tilts and tournaments, hung up there for

a memorial.' As to Elizabeth herself, Camden states, that the enumeration of the various devices worn by her would fill a large volume. The generality, however, of the devices of that reign were fulsome flatteries, allusive to the Maiden Queen; such as—the moon, with the words, *Quid sine te cœlum?* (What would Heaven be without thee?) or, Venus seated on a cloud, with, *Salva, me Domina!* (Save me, O lady!) The best of the time was worn by the impetuous and ill-starred Essex, to signify his grief on one of the occasions when he had lost the queen's favour. It represented merely a sable field, surrounded by the words. *Par nulla figura dolori* (Grief cannot be painted.) The 'English Bayard,' Sir Philip Sidney, does not appear to great advantage in his devices. One, we presume intended to shew the steadfastness of his purpose, represented the tideless Caspian Sea, the motto, *Sine refluxa* (Without ebb.) Another of 'that famous soldier, scholar, and poet,' throws a curious light on the manners of the age. Camden tells us that Sir Philip, 'who was a long time heir-apparent to the Earl of Leicester (his uncle), after the earl had a son born to him, used at the next tilt-day following the motto, *Speravi* (I had hoped), with a dash across the word, thereby signifying that his hope was dashed.' Would any gentleman now thus publicly express his disappointment at such an event?

The pedantry of the first James was almost as favourable to devices as the pageantry of Elizabeth; but the days of chivalry, the glories of the *triumph* and the tilt-yard, were fast passing away, while the new arts of wood and copper-plate engraving were rising into eminence; and consequently devices, instead of being worn singly on the shields and trappings of knights and maskers, were soon found collected, and seasoned with poetry on the pages of printed books. These books of emblems, as they were termed, are by no means uninteresting; haply, at a future time, we may have an opportunity of referring to them. The early printers, we should observe, were the first who used devices on paper, each having a distinguishing emblem and motto, which they displayed on the title-pages of their works. We read of only one device worn by James; it represented the Scottish thistle united with red and white roses, the motto, *Rosas Henricus, regna Jacobus*, implying that as Henry united roses, James united kingdoms. Though foreign to our subject, we may mention here, as it is not generally known, that it was James who removed the red dragon of the Tudors from the royal arms, placing as a supporter in its stead the unicorn of Scotland. We meet with only one device of the unfortunate Charles. It represented a snake that had just cast its skin, the motto, *Paratior* (More ready.) During the civil war, many mottoes and figures were adopted by both the royalist and parliamentary parties, but few of them can be termed regular devices. With the Restoration, a new description of court amusement came into fashion, and the device soon became a prey to 'dull forgetfulness.' Many emblems, however, were then and subsequently assumed as crests, and a great number of mottoes were taken to point the moral, if any, of heraldic blazonry. Though repudiated and unrecognised by the strict herald, they are now generally considered to be the particular property and distinguishing ensign of certain surnames and families, and as hereditary as the quaint and fanciful charges and quarterings of coat-armour itself.

FOOTNOTES:

[4] The armorial bearings or coat-armour of his house.

A COUNTRY WEDDING IN FRANCE.

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No part of France, with the exception of Brittany, has preserved its patriarchal habits, national character, and ancient forms of language, more than Touraine and Berry. The manners of the people there are extremely primitive, and some of their customs curious and interesting. The following account is from the pen of a modern French writer of great power of observation and description.

It was in winter, near the time of the carnival, a season of the year when it is very customary to celebrate country weddings. In the summer, there is seldom time, and the farm-work will not allow of a three days' holiday, to say nothing of the slackened diligence which is the unavoidable consequence of a village festival. I was seated under the large kitchen chimney, when the firing of pistols, the barking of dogs, and the squeaking sounds of the bagpipe, announced the approach of the betrothed couple. Presently after, old Maurice and his wife, with Germain and Marie, followed by Jacques and his wife, the chief respective kinsfolk, and the godfathers and godmothers of the

betrothed, made their entrance into the yard.

Marie, not having yet received the wedding-presents, called *livrées*, was dressed in the best attire of her simple wardrobe: a coarse dark gown; a white handkerchief, with large flowers of gaudy colours; a red calico apron; a snow-white muslin head-dress, the shape of which called to mind the *coiffure* of Ann Boleyn and Agnes Sorel. Marie's features were fresh-looking, and lighted up with a smile, but without any expression of pride, albeit she had some good reason for such a feeling at this moment. Germain was grave and tender in his attentions to his betrothed, like the youthful Jacob saluting Rachel at the wells of Laban. Any other girl would have assumed an air of importance and triumph; for in all classes of society, it is something for a girl to be married for her sparkling eyes. But Marie's eyes glistened with tears of emotion and love; you could see at a glance that she was too deeply affected to be heedful of the opinion of others. Père Maurice was the spokesman on the occasion, and delivered the customary compliments and invitations. In the first place, he fastened to the mantelpiece a branch of laurel ornamented with ribbons: this is called the *exploit*—that is to say, the form of invitation. He then proceeded to distribute to each of those invited a small cross, made of blue and rose coloured ribbon—the rose for the bride, the blue for the bridegroom; and the guests had to keep this token—the women to deck their head-dress, and the men their buttonhole, on the day of the wedding. This is their ticket of admission to the ceremonies.

Père Maurice, after making his compliments, invited the master of the house and all his 'company'—that is to say, all his children, his kinsfolk, his friends, and servants—to the benediction, to the entertainment, to the feast, to the dance, and 'to all the rest;' observing with the usual form of words: 'I have *done you the honour* of bidding you to the wedding.'

Notwithstanding the liberality of the invitation carried thus from house to house, through the whole parish, the natural politeness of the peasants, which is remarkably discreet, prescribes that only two persons of each family should avail themselves of the summons—the head of the family and one of the children.

The invitations being concluded, the betrothed couple and their relatives repaired to dinner together at the farmhouse, after which Marie tended her three sheep on the common, and Germain went to work in the fields, as if nothing had happened.

The day before that appointed for the wedding, at two o'clock in the afternoon, the band of music arrived—that is to say, the *bagpipe*, and the man with the *triangle*,—their instruments ornamented with long floating ribbons, and playing a march for the occasion, somewhat slow, indeed, for feet not indigenous to the country, but in perfect harmony with the character of the soil and the up-and-down nature of the roads in those parts. Some pistol-shots, fired by the young folks and children, announced the commencement of the nuptials. The company gradually assembled, and a dance was struck up on the grass-plot before the house. At nightfall, strange preparations were begun, the party separating into two bands; and when darkness closed in, they proceeded to the ceremony of the *livrées*, or present-making.

This took place at the house of the bride—Mrs Guillette's cottage. The good woman took with her her daughter; a dozen young and pretty *pastourelles*, Marie's friends and relatives; two or three respectable matrons, her neighbours, loquacious, quick of reply, and rigid guardians of ancient usages; then she selected a dozen vigorous champions from her kinsmen and friends; and lastly, the old *chavreur* or flaxdresser of the parish, a man of eloquence and address if ever there was one.

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The part that in Brittany is played by the *bazvalan* or village tailor, is in our part of the country acted by the flaxdresser or woolcomber—two professions which are often united. He is present at all solemnities, gay or grave, being essentially a man of erudition and a good speaker; and on these occasions he has always to act as spokesman, and to execute well and worthily certain formularies of speech, in use from time immemorial. His wandering profession, which introduces the man into so many family circles, without allowing him to fix himself in his own, naturally serves to render him talkative and amusing, a ready story-teller, and an able man of song.

The flaxdresser is particularly sceptical. He and another rustic functionary, of whom we shall speak presently, the grave-digger, are always the *esprits forts* of the place. They are so much in the habit of talking of ghosts, and are so well acquainted with all the tricks of which these evil spirits are capable, that they scarcely fear them at all. It is especially in the night that all these

worthies, grave-diggers, flaxdressers, and ghosts, exercise their industry. It is in the night also the flaxdresser relates his lamentable stories. But he is no more than the sacristan addicted exclusively to the pleasure of inspiring his auditors with fear; he delights in raising a laugh; and is jocose and sentimental by turns, when he comes to speak of love and Hymen. He is the man to collect and store up in memory the most ancient songs, and to hand them down to posterity; and, as usual, he was in the present instance the person charged with the presentation of the wedding-gifts at the nuptials of Marie.

As soon as all were assembled in the house, the doors and windows were closed with the greatest care; the very leucomb shutter of the granary was barricaded; planks, trussels, and tables were put up across all the points of egress, as if one was preparing to sustain a siege; and within this fortification reigned a solemn silence of expectation, until from a distance were heard singing, laughter, and the sound of rustic instruments. These were the bridegroom's band, Germain at its head, accompanied by his stoutest companions, the grave-digger, kinsfolk, friends, and servants, who formed a joyous and solid *cortège*.

As they approached the house, however, they slackened their pace, consulted together, and were silent. The young girls, shut up in the house, had contrived to find little slits in the windows, through which they watched the procession as it arrived, and formed in order of battle. A fine chilly rain fell, which added to the excitement of the situation, whilst a large fire crackled and blazed on the hearth within doors. Marie would gladly have shortened the inevitable slowness of this state of siege: she did not at all like to see her betrothed dawdling about in the wet and cold; but she had no voice in the affair—nay, she had even to share ostensibly in the cruelty of her companions.

When the two camps were thus pitched in face of one another, a discharge of firearms from the party without doors set all the dogs in the neighbourhood in commotion: those belonging to the house flew to the gate, barking loudly; and the little children, whom their mothers vainly endeavoured to quiet, fell to crying and trembling with fear. The grave-digger, the bard and orator of the bridegroom, now stationed himself before the door, and in a pitiable voice began a dialogue with the flaxdresser, who was at the garret-window over the same door.

Grave-digger. Hollo! my good folks, my dear neighbours, for mercy's sake open the door.

Flaxdresser. Pray who may you be; and how come you to take the liberty of calling us your dear neighbours? We don't know you.

G. We are honest folks in trouble. Don't fear us, my friends, but bestow your hospitality on us. The sleet falls fast, our feet are all frozen, and we have come such a distance that our shoes are worn out.

The flaxdresser inquires sharply who they are, and receives various ridiculous answers. At length the besiegers say—

Grave-digger. Well, then, if you'll not listen to reason, we shall enter by force.

Flaxdresser. Try, if you like. We are strong enough not to fear you; and as you are insolent, we shall not answer you any more.

So saying, the flaxdresser slammed to the wicket with a bang, and went down a ladder into the room below. He then took the bride elect by the hand, and the young folks joining them, all fell to dancing and shouting gaily, whilst the matrons of the party sang with shrill voices, and amidst shouts of laughter, at the people outside, who were attempting the assault. The besiegers, on their side, pretended rage; they fired their pistols at the doors, set the dogs barking, rattled the shutters, thumped the walls, and uttered loud cries.

The garrison at last seemed to manifest some desire to capitulate; but required as a condition that the opposite party should sing a song. As soon as the song was begun, however, the besieged replied with the second line; and so long as they were able to do this, they were safe. The two antagonists were the best hands in the country for a song, and their stock seemed inexhaustible. Once or twice the flaxdresser made a wry face, frowned, and turned to the women with a disappointed look. The grave-digger sang something so old that his adversary had forgotten it, or perhaps had never known it; but instantly the good woman took up the burden of the song with a shrill voice, and helped their friend through his trouble. At length the party of the bride declared they would yield, provided the others offered her a present

worthy of her. Thereupon began the song of the *Wedding-gifts*, to an air as solemn as a church psalm, the men outside singing bass in unison, and the women answering from within in falsetto. In twenty couplets at least the men enumerate all the wedding-presents, and the matrons at length consent that the door should be opened.

On this being arranged, the flaxdresser instantly drew the wooden spigot which fastened the door on the inside—the only fastening known in most of the dwellings in our village—and the bridegroom's band rushed in, but not without a combat, for the lads who garrisoned the place, even the old flaxdresser and the ancient village dames, considered it their duty to defend the hearth. The invaders were armed with a goose stuck upon a large iron spit, adorned with bouquets of straw and ribbons, and to plant this at the fire was to gain possession of the hearth. Every effort was of course made to attain this object. Now came a veritable battle, although the combatants did not come to actual blows, and fought without any anger or ill-will. But they pressed and pushed one another so closely, and there was so much emulation in the display of muscular power, that the results might have been more serious than they appeared amidst the singing and laughter. The poor old flaxdresser, who fought like a lion, was pinned to the wall, and squeezed until he could hardly get breath. More than one hero was rolled in the dust, more than one hand was withdrawn bleeding from an attack on the spit. These sports are dangerous, and in consequence of the occurrence of serious accidents, our peasants have resolved to drop them. The enormous iron spit was twisted like a screw before it was at length flung across the fire-irons, and the conquest achieved.

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There was now no lack of talk and laughter. Each one exhibited the wounds he had received; but as they were in many cases given by the hand of a friend, nobody complained. The matrons cleaned the stone-floor, and order was re-established. The table was covered with pitchers of new wine. When they had all drunk together, clinking their glasses, and had taken breath, the bridegroom was led into the middle of the room; and, furnished with a ring, he had to undergo a new trial.

During the contest, the bride had been concealed, with three of her companions, by her mother, her godmother, and her aunts, who had seated the four young girls on a bench, in a corner of the room, and covered them with a large white cloth. The three girls had been selected of the same height as Marie; and this cloth veiling them from head to foot, it was impossible to distinguish one from another. The bridegroom was only allowed to touch them with the end of his switch, to point out which he guessed to be his bride. If wrong, he could not dance with the latter that evening, but only with the one he had selected in error.

The party then separated, to re-assemble at eight o'clock the next morning. At the appointed time, after a breakfast of milk-soup, well peppered to stimulate the appetite—for the nuptial-feast promised to be a rich one—all assembled in the farmyard. A journey of several miles had to be performed to obtain the nuptial benediction. Germain mounted the gray mare, which had been new shod and decked with ribbons for the occasion; the bride rode behind him; whilst his brother-in-law, Jacques, was mounted on the old gray, with the grandmother. The joyous cavalcade set out, escorted by the children on foot, who kept firing pistols and making the horses start. Mrs Maurice, the mother, seated with the children and the village fiddlers in a cart, opened the procession to the sounds of the little band of music.

A crowd was gathered at the *mairie* and the church to see the pretty bride. We must describe her dress, it became her so well. Her clean muslin cap, embroidered all over, had lappets trimmed with lace; a white kerchief, modestly crossed in front, left visible only the delicate outline of a neck rounded like that of a dove; her dress of fine green cloth set off her pretty figure; and she wore an apron of violet silk, with the *bavette* or bib, which the village lasses have since then foolishly given up.

At the ceremony of the *offrande*, Germain, according to custom, placed the *treizaine*—that is to say, thirteen pieces of silver—in the hand of his bride, and slipped on her finger a silver ring of a peculiar form, which had existed unchanged for ages, but which has now been replaced by the *alliance d'or*.

We pass over the ceremony of the wedding. The party remounted their steeds, and returned home at a rapid pace. The feast was splendid, and lasted till midnight, interspersed with song and dance. The old folks did not quit the table for fourteen hours. The grave-digger superintended the *cuisine*, and filled his part to admiration; in fact, he was famous in this line, and between the services, he left his cooking and joined in the dance and song. He was

strong, fresh, and gay as a lark. On leaving a wedding-party, he would go and dig a grave, or nail down a coffin—a task of which he acquitted himself with pious care.

We now come to the third and most curious day of the nuptials, which is still strictly observed. As the ceremony of the *livrées* is the symbol of taking possession of the heart and home of the bride, that of the *chou* is the type of the fecundity of marriage. After breakfast the next morning, this performance commenced—a custom of ancient Gallic origin, which became gradually a sort of Mystery or Morality of the middle ages. Two lads disappear during the breakfast, go and dress themselves up, and then return, accompanied by music, dogs, children, and firing of pistols. They represent a couple of beggars—husband and wife—covered with rags: they are called the gardener and his wife (*le jardinier* and *la jardinière*), and give out that they have the charge and the cultivation of the sacred cabbage. The man's face is bedaubed with soot and wine- lees, or sometimes covered with a grotesque mask. A broken pot or an old shoe, suspended to his belt with a bit of string, serves him to beg for and collect the offerings of wine. No one refuses; and he pretends to drink, and then pours the wine on the ground, in token of libation. He now feigns to be tipsy, and rolls in the mud; whilst his poor wife runs after him, reproaching him pathetically, and calling for help. A handbarrow is now brought, on which is placed the gardener, with a spade, a cord, and a large basket. Four strong men carry him on their shoulders. His wife follows on foot, and the old folks come after with a grave and pensive air; then the nuptial procession march two by two to the measure of the music. The firing of pistols recommences, the dogs bark more loudly than ever at the sight of the gardener thus borne in triumph, and the children jeer him as he passes. The procession arrives at the bride's dwelling, and enters the garden. There a fine cabbage is selected—a matter which is not effected in a hurry, for the old folks hold a council, each one pleading for some favourite cabbage. Votes are taken; and when the choice is made, the gardener ties his cord round the stalk, and retreats to the further end of the garden, whilst the other actors in the comedy—the flaxdresser, the grave-digger, the carpenter, and the shoemaker—all stand round the cabbage. One digs a trench, advances, recedes, makes a plan, spies at the others through a pair of spectacles; and, in short, after various difficulties and mummeries, the gardener pulls the cord, his wife spreads her apron, and the cabbage falls majestically amidst the hurrahs of the spectators. The basket is then brought, the two gardeners plant the cabbage in it with all sorts of precautions; fresh earth is put round its root, it is propped with sticks, and carefully tied up. Rosy apples on the end of sticks, branches of thyme, sage, and laurel are stuck all round it, and the whole is decked with ribbons and streamers. The trophy is then replaced on the handbarrow with the gardener, who has to hold it upright, and prevent any accident. Lastly, the procession leaves the garden in good order, and to a measured march. On coming, however, to the gate, and again when they enter the court-yard of the bridegroom's house, an imaginary obstacle opposes their passage. The bearers of the burden stumble, raise a great outcry, draw back, advance again, and, as if repelled by some invincible force, pretend to give way under their load. Meantime the bystanders keep exclaiming, to excite and encourage the bearers: 'Bravo!' 'Well done, my boys!' 'Courage!' 'Have a care!' 'Patience!' 'Stoop now; the gate is too low!' 'To the left—now to the right!' 'Look sharp now!' 'Now you're through!'

On reaching the court-yard of the bridegroom, the cabbage is lifted off the barrow, and carried to the highest point of the house—whether a chimney, a gable, or a pigeon-house. The gardener plants it there, and waters it with a large pitcher of wine, whilst a salvo of pistol-shots, and the joyous contortions of the *jardinière*, announce its inauguration. The same ceremony is immediately recommenced: another cabbage is removed from the bridegroom's garden, and carried with the same formalities to the roof of the house which his wife has just quitted. These trophies remain there, until the wind and rain destroy the baskets, and carry away the plants; but they generally remain long enough to verify the predictions of the village dames, that ere their removal, the new-married couple shall be blessed with a pretty little addition to their domestic happiness.

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The day is far advanced when these ceremonies are accomplished, and all that remains, is to escort with music the parents of the young couple to their homes. There they have a dance, and all is over.

NOBLE INSTANCE OF TURKISH GENEROSITY AND HONESTY.

I HAPPENED, a short time ago, to be in company with a retired shipmaster in Liverpool, who, after spending forty-five years of his life chiefly in command of vessels from that port, had retired to enjoy the fruits of a well-deserved competency. The conversation turned upon the difficulty, nay, almost the impossibility, of being able, in this highly-civilised and *moral* country, in the ordinary business of life, to trust only to the *word* or *honour* of the contracting parties. The Ancient Mariner fully agreed with me in my opinions, and said, that during a long intercourse with his species in every quarter of the globe, the only men he had met with whose words were equal to their bonds, or whose *honesty* would stand the test of being trusted with untold gold, were —*the Turks*. On my expressing surprise at this unqualified encomium in favour of a set of men on whom, as a nation, we have generally been accustomed to look with distrust and suspicion, the old gentleman said: 'I will give you an account of the circumstances which first led me to form this opinion, and leave you to judge for yourself;' and added, that during an occasional intercourse with them, extending over a period of twenty years, he had had it only the more strengthened and confirmed. He then said: 'It is now upwards of thirty years since I had, for the first time, any intercourse with the Mediterranean: our vessel was chartered to Constantinople; and one of the principal owners, a Liverpool merchant, was aboard acting as his own supercargo. Although it was *my* first acquaintance with the Turks, it was not *his*, as the sequel will shew.

'As we approached our destination, we availed ourselves of the customary aid of one of the local pilots; but he who on this occasion undertook the responsibility, proved but an inexperienced guide; and from some mistake in his bearings, ran the vessel upon a sandbank, from which every effort to dislodge her, laden as she was, proved unavailing. We were on a bleak part of the coast, and not more than half a mile from the shore, although a considerable distance from our destined port. It was necessary, therefore, to take out several boat-loads of the cargo, and send them on shore, whatever might be the risk they ran of being left there, while we were getting the ship afloat again. On expressing my fears as to their safety to the merchant whose property the goods were, he at once said: "I know the Turks, and will abide the consequences of the step;" although, situated as we were, we could not shrink from the results, whatever they might be, without incurring a much heavier loss, if not the entire destruction of the vessel. Accordingly, the boats were got out, and part of the cargo at once transferred to them, and conveyed to the shore, I acting as cockswain on the occasion. As the foremost boat approached, a number of turbaned figures were seen advancing, who, as soon as it touched the beach, rushed into the surf, and, with a shout, hauled it high and dry, and commenced at once to bear off its cargo to a field in the immediate neighbourhood, above high-water mark. Remonstrance or resistance would have been equally out of the question, as neither understood a word the other said, and their numbers were overpowering. So rapidly did the goods vanish from the boat under their active operations, that I had not even time to take a note of the particular packages. As soon as the boat was emptied of its contents, they assisted in pushing it off again into deep water; and in a very desponding state of mind regarding the ultimate fate of the goods which I had left on shore, I returned to the ship. On expressing my fears on that score to the merchant, who met me at the gangway, he smiled, and said: "It's all right, I saw by the turbans and dresses of the men who came down to you that they were Turks; and I know, from experience, that we run no risk whatever in leaving the goods under their self-imposed guardianship." As he was the party who was most interested in the result, I said nothing more, but proceeded to lighten the ship as speedily as possible, by making several additional trips to the shore with as much of the cargo as enabled us to get at the ballast; and on each occasion we received the same prompt and energetic assistance from our turbaned allies, each boat-load being carried to the corner of the field where the others were deposited. It required two days to get the ship sufficiently lightened of her ballast, so as to get her afloat again, and this we were enabled to do without her sustaining any damage of a serious nature, as the weather, fortunately for us, continued perfectly calm.

'During these two nights that the goods were left on shore, they were watched by *two of the Turks alone*; and when we were ready for their reshipment, they assisted us as energetically in replacing them in the boat, as they did at first in removing them from it. On our last trip to the shore, the merchant went with us, and I took several pieces of gold with me, which I offered to the honest fellows who had so generously and voluntarily rendered us such efficient service; when, to my still greater surprise, they, to a man, making a low bow, and muttering something, which to me was unintelligible, put their hands on their hearts, and refused to accept it. The merchant, who

understood a word or two only of their language, said that he could make out that what they had said was, that *we were brothers*, and *in distress*, and *that* was enough to induce them to do what they could to assist us.

'Our vessel then proceeded on her voyage to Constantinople, which she reached in a short time, and got her cargo safely disembarked. While there, I occasionally met in the streets several of the men who had assisted us, and received from them in passing always a pleasing smile of recognition.'

I ask my readers whether they think that, if such a thing had occurred on almost any part of *our own coasts*, a similar result would have taken place? Is it not notorious, and a deep and indelible stain on the great proportion of our population on the coast, that on a wreck taking place, the natives not only pilfer all that they can lay their hands upon, but sometimes do not even hesitate, it is alleged, to extinguish any glimmering sparks of life that may be perceptible in the bodies of the unfortunate mariners who have been washed ashore—with a view to protect themselves in the possession of their basely acquired spoil? And is it not equally notorious, that so far from their doing anything to warn a ship in distress, that they see approaching their iron-bound shores, of its danger, and doing anything to prevent it, they very often shew false signals, so as to draw the unfortunate vessel upon the rocks which it is so anxious to avoid? Such practices are an everlasting disgrace to the natives of many parts of our coasts; and how nobly, therefore, does the conduct of the poor Turks contrast with it, and that, too, be it borne in mind, even when rendered to those whom they are taught to regard as Infidels!

My venerable informant also told me, that during an occasional intercourse, extending over a period of nearly twenty years, with the natives of several parts of Turkey, he had never met with a solitary instance even of dishonesty, or a departure from an agreement, the conditions of which had only been settled by a *verbal* engagement, even when the result would evidently be unfavourable to them.

LADY BETTY, THE HANGWOMAN.

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[The following curious sketch is from Mr W. R. Wilde's *Irish Popular Superstitions*, printed in M'Glashan's *Readings in Popular Literature*. It does not refer to a superstition, but to one of those facts which exhibit as much of the preternatural as the wildest excursion of fancy. A portion of the little volume is reprinted from the *Dublin University Magazine*, and, for aught we know, Lady Betty may have made her appearance originally in that work.]

THE old jail of Roscommon stood, and, although now converted to other purposes, still stands in the market-place, in the centre of the town. It is an exceedingly high, dark, gloomy-looking building, with a castellated top, like one of the ancient fortresses that tower above the houses in many of the continental cities. It can be discerned at a great distance; and, taken in connection with the extensive ruins of O'Connor's Castle, in the suburbs, and the beautiful abbey upon the other side of the town, seems to partake of the character of the middle-age architecture. The fatal drop was, perhaps, the highest in Ireland. It consisted of a small doorway in the front of the third storey, with a simple iron beam and pulley above, and the *lapboard* merely a horizontal door hinged to the wall beneath, and raised or let fall by means of a sliding-bolt, which shot from the wall when there was occasion to put the apparatus of death in requisition. Fearful as this elevated gallows appeared, and unique in its character, it was not more so than the finisher of the law who then generally officiated upon it. No decrepit wretch, no crime-hardened ruffian, no secret and mysterious personage, who was produced occasionally disguised and masked, plied his dreadful trade here. Who, think you, *gentle* reader—who now, perhaps, recoils from these unpleasant but truthful minutiae—officiated upon this gallows high?—a female!—a middle-aged, stout-made, dark-eyed, swarthy-complexioned, but by no means forbidding-looking woman—the celebrated Lady Betty—the finisheress of the law—the unflinching priestess of the executive for the Connaught circuit, and Roscommon in particular, for many years. Few children, born or reared in that county thirty, or even five-and-twenty years ago, who were not occasionally frightened into 'being good,' and going to sleep, and not crying when left alone in the dark, by *huggath a' Pooka*, or, 'here's Lady Betty.' The only fragment of her history which we have been able to collect is, that she was a person of violent temper, though in manners rather above the common, and possessing some education. It was said that she was a native of the County Kerry, and that by her harsh usage she drove her only son from her at an early age. He enlisted; but, in course of years, returned with some money

in his pocket, the result of his campaigning. He knocked at his father's door, and asked a night's lodging, determined to see for himself whether the brutal mother he had left had in any way repented, or was softened in her disposition, before he would reveal himself. He was admitted, but not recognised. The mother, discovering that he possessed some money, murdered him during the night. The crime was discovered, and the wretched woman sentenced to be hanged, along with the usual dockful of sheep-stealers, Whiteboys, shop-lifters, and cattle-houghers, who, to the amount of seven or eight at a time, were invariably 'turned off' within four-and-twenty hours after their sentences at each assizes. No executioner being at hand, time pressing, and the sheriff and his deputy being men of refinement, education, humanity, and sensibility, who could not be expected to fulfil the office which they had undertaken—and for which one of them, at least, was paid—this wretched woman, being the only person in the jail who could be found to perform the office, consented; and under the name of Lady Betty, officiated, unmasked and undisguised, as *hangwoman* for a great number of years after; and she used also to flog publicly in the streets, as a part of her trade. Numerous are the tales related of her exploits, which we have now no desire to dwell upon. We may, however, mention one extraordinary trait of her character. She was in the habit of drawing, with a burnt stick, upon the walls of her apartment, portraits of all the persons she executed.

THE WILL AND THE WAY.

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I learned grammar when I was a private soldier on the pay of sixpence a day. The edge of my berth, or that of my guard-bed, was my seat to study in; my knapsack was my bookcase, and a bit of board lying in my lap was my writing-table. I had no money to purchase candle or oil; in winter, it was rarely that I could get any light but that of the fire, and only my turn even of that. To buy a pen or piece of paper, I was compelled to forego some portion of food, though in a state of half-starvation. I had not a moment of time that I could call my own; and I had to read and write amid the talking, laughing, singing, whistling, and bawling of at least half a score of the most thoughtless of men—and that, too, in the hours of their freedom from all control. And I say, if I, under these circumstances, could encounter and overcome the task, is there—can there be, in the whole world, a youth who can find an excuse for the non-performance?—*William Cobbett*.

PAPER-MILLS.

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A return has been made of the number of paper-mills at present at work in England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland; also of the number of 'beating-engines' in each mill. From this it appears that there are in England 304 paper-mills at present in activity, having 1267 beating-engines at work, and 107 silent. In Scotland, there are 48 mills, having 278 beating-engines at work, and 8 silent. In Ireland, there are 28 mills, having 71 beating-engines at work, and 15 silent. In Wales, there are no paper-mills. The total is, 880 mills, having 1616 beating-engines at work, and 130 silent.

LINES TO ——.

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O COULD I love thee, love as thou art worthy to be
loved,
Thy deep, thy constant tenderness my purpose might
have moved.
I know, might I accept thy heart, a blissful lot were
mine;
Would we had earlier met—but no! I never could be
thine.

I love thee as a sister loves a brother kind and dear,
And feel a sister's thrilling pride whene'er thy praise I
hear;
And I have breathed a sister's prayer for thee at
Mercy's throne,

And ne'er a truer, purer love might sister's bosom
own.

I knew this trial was in store; I felt it day by day;
And oft in agony I prayed this cup might pass away;
And yet I lacked the power to tell, what thou too late
must hear,
To tell thee that another claims this heart to thee so
dear.

Alas! that I must cause thee pain—I know that thou
wilt grieve—
For oh! thou art all truthfulness; thou never couldst
deceive;
And I have wept when anxious care sat heavy on thy
brow,
Have wept when others wounded thee, and I must
wound thee now.

It may be that in after-years we yet shall meet again,
When time has cancelled every trace of this dark hour
of pain:
O may I see thee happy, blest, whate'er my lot may be,
And, as a sister and a friend, I shall rejoice with thee.

HARRIET.

PROCESS FOR PRODUCING TAPERED IRON.

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In No. 430 of this Journal, page 207, there is some mention of the patented rolling process for tapering bar-iron by machinery. This important invention is not of American origin, as persons unacquainted with the facts might imagine: it was first practised at the Mersey Steel and Iron Company's works at Liverpool, and then patented by Mr William Clay in the United States. The Company mentioned were awarded for the manufacture the prize-medal of the Great Exhibition, and the silver medals of the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, and the American Institute of New York.

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