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CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

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MRS CHISHOLM.

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THIS lady will be ranked with the memorable persons of the age; her enthusiastic and ceaseless endeavours to do good, the discretion and intelligence with which she pursues her aims, and her remarkable self-sacrifices in the cause of humanity, placing her in the category of the Mrs Frys and other heroic Englishwomen. The history of Mrs Chisholm's labours

up to the present time is worthy of being fully told.

Caroline Jones, as this lady was originally called, is the daughter of William Jones, a respectable yeoman of Northamptonshire; and when about twenty years of age, she was married to Captain A. Chisholm of the Madras army. Two years after this event, she removed with her husband to India, where she entered upon those movements of a public nature that have so eminently distinguished her. Shocked with the depravities to which the children of soldiers are exposed in the barrack-rooms, she rested not till she had established a School of Industry for girls, which became eminently successful, and, under an extended form, has continued to be of great social importance to Madras. The pupils were taught to sew, cook, and otherwise manage household affairs; and we are told, that on finishing their education, they were eagerly sought for as servants, or wives, by non-commissioned officers. In this career of usefulness, Mrs Chisholm employed herself until 1838, when, for the benefit of her husband's health, and that of her infant family, she left India for Australia, the climate of which seemed likely to prove beneficial. At the end of the year, she arrived in Sydney, where, besides attending to family matters, there was plenty of scope for philanthropic exertion. Drawing our information from a small work purporting to present a memoir of Mrs Chisholm,^[1] it appears that 'the first objects that came under her notice, and were benefited by her benevolence, were a party of Highland emigrants, who had been sent to the shores of a country where the language spoken was to them strange and unknown, and without a friend to assist or guide them in that path of honourable labour which they desired. As a temporary means of relief, Mrs Chisholm lent them money to purchase tools and wheelbarrows, whereby they might cut and sell firewood to the inhabitants. The success of this experiment was gratifying both to the bestower and receiver; in the one it revived drooping hopes, the other it incited to larger enterprises of humanity.'

In 1840, Captain Chisholm returned to his duties in India, leaving his wife and family to remain some time longer in Sydney; and from this period may be dated her extraordinary efforts for meliorating the condition of poor female emigrants. What fell under her notice in connection with these luckless individuals was truly appalling. Huddled into a barrack on arrival; no trouble taken to put girls in the way of earning an honest livelihood; moral pollution all around; the government authorities and everybody else too busy to mind whether emigration was rightly or wrongly conducted—there was evidently much to be done. In January 1841, Mrs Chisholm wrote to Lady Gipps, the wife of the governor, on the subject; tried to interest others; and although with some doubts as to the result, all expressed themselves interested. Much jealousy and prejudice, however, required to be overcome. Bigotry was even brought into play. There might be some deep sectarian scheme in the pretended efforts to serve these young and unprotected females. We need hardly speak in the language of detestation of this species of obstructiveness, which prevents hundreds of valuable schemes of social melioration from being entered into. Fortunately, Mrs Chisholm treated with scorn or indifference the various means adopted to retard her benevolent operations. She persevered until she had organised the Female Emigrants' Home. She says: 'I appealed to the public for support: after a time, this appeal was liberally met. There were neither sufficient arrangements made for removing emigrants into the interior, nor for protecting females on their arrival. A few only were properly protected, while hundreds were wandering about Sydney without friends or protection—great numbers of these young creatures were thrown out of employment by new arrivals. I received into the Home several, who, I found, had slept out many nights in the government domain, seeking the sheltered recesses of the rocks rather than encounter the dangers of the streets. It was estimated that there were 600 females, at the time I commenced, unprovided for in Sydney. I made an offer to the government of gratuitously devoting my time to the superintendence of a Home of Protection for them in the town, and also to exert myself to procure situations for them in the country.'

While making arrangements for conducting the establishment for female emigrants, Mrs Chisholm acquired a consciousness that male emigrants of a humble class likewise required some degree of attention. Great numbers, for want of proper information, did not know what to do with themselves on arrival. 'At the time labourers were required in the interior, there were numbers idle in Sydney, supported at the expense of the government. Things wore a serious aspect; mischief-making parties, for some paltry gain, fed the spirit of discontent. The Irish lay in the streets, looking vacantly, and basking in the sun. Apart from them, Englishmen, sullen in feature, sat on gates and palings, letting their legs swing in the air. Another group was composed of Scotchmen, their hands thrust into their empty pockets, suspiciously glancing at everything and everybody from beneath their bushy eyebrows. Mrs Chisholm ventured to produce a change; she provided for the leaders first,

shewed how she desired to be the friend of the industrious man, and went with numbers in search of employment, far into the country. She undertook journeys of 300 miles into the interior with families; and the further she went, the more satisfactory was the settlement of the parties accompanying this brave lady. "When the public had an opportunity of judging of the effect of my system," writes Mrs Chisholm, "they came forward, and enabled me to go on. The government contributed, in various ways, to the amount of about L.150. I met with great assistance from the country committees. The squatters and settlers were always willing to give me conveyance for the people. The country people always supplied provisions. Mr William Bradley, a native of the colony, authorised me to draw upon him for money, provisions, horses, or anything I might require; but the people met my efforts so readily, that I had no necessity to draw upon him for a sixpence. At public inns, the females were sheltered, and I was provisioned myself without charge: my personal expenses, during my seven years' service, amounted to only L.1, 18s. 6d. As numbers of the masters were afraid, if they advanced the money for the conveyance by the steamers, the parties would never reach the stations, I met the difficulty by advancing the fare, confiding in the good feeling of the man that he would keep to his agreement, and to the principle of the master that he would repay me. Although in hundreds of cases the masters were then strangers to me, I only lost L.16 by casualties. At times, I have paid as much as L.40 for steamers, and, from first to last, in following out my system, I have been the means of settling 11,000 souls. The largest number that ever left Sydney under my charge, at one time, was 147; but from accessions on the road, they increased considerably. The longest journey of this kind occupied five weeks, three weeks of which were passed on the road."

One cannot but admire the enthusiasm with which all this was gone through. The whole thing was a labour of love, and carried through, as will be observed, not without vast personal toil, and some degree of pecuniary outlay. Mrs Chisholm says she lost only L.16; but how few people in her rank, and with as comparatively moderate means, would give L.16 to promote any benevolent project whatsoever! The bulk of mankind content themselves with contributing criticism. They applaud or censure according as the thing looks in the eye of the world: when money is spoken of, they keep discreetly aloof.

In her enterprise to put female emigrants on the road to fortune, Mrs Chisholm met with some curious cases of presumption. Many applications were made by young women who professed to be governesses, but were utterly incompetent for the situation. Among others came one who offered herself as a nursery governess, who, on inquiry, could neither read nor write nor spell correctly. Another wished for the situation of housekeeper, and with her the following dialogue took place:—"Can you wash your own clothes?" "Never did such a thing in my life." "Can you make a dress?" "No." "Cook?" "No." "What *can* you do?" "Why, ma'am, I could look after the servants; I could direct them: I should make an excellent housekeeper." "You are certain?" "Yes, or I would not say so." "Do you know the quantity of the different ingredients wanted for a beefsteak-pie of the size of that dish, and a rice-pudding of the same size?" "O no, ma'am—that's not what I meant: *I'd see that the servants did it!*" "But there might be great waste, and you not know it; besides, all, or nearly all, the servants sent to this colony require teaching."

'Nothing, observes Mrs Chisholm, but my faith in Providence, that there must be a place fitting for every body in society, enabled me to bear such inflictions: this faith made me labour in seeking some suitable employment for each, and had I not possessed it, but turned them out, their fate would have been inevitable and horrible.'

The business of attending to the 'Home,' and finding places for everybody, was not without some pleasant excitement. Mrs Chisholm was sometimes asked to find wives as well as servants; and as a specimen of applications on this delicate head, she gives the following amusing epistle, which is printed as she received it:—

"REVEREND MADAM—I heard you are the best to send to for a servant, and I heard our police magistrate say, it was best to leave all to you; and so I'll just do the same, as his honour says it's the best. I had a wife once, and so she was too good for me by the far, and it was God's will, ma'am; but I has a child, ma'am, that I wouldn't see a straw touch for the world; the boy's only four years old: and I has a snug fifty-acre farm and a town 'lotment, and I has no debts in the world, and one teem and four bullocks; and I'se ten head oh cattle, and a share on eight hundred sheep, so I as a rite to a desent servant, that can wash and cook and make the place decant; and I don't mind what religion she bey, if she is sober and good, only I'se a Protestant myself; and the boy I have, I promised the mother on her death-bed should be a Catholic,

and I won't, anyhow, have any interference in this here matter. That I do like in writing nothing else, I wouldn't, mam, on any account in the world, be bound to marry; but I don't wish it altogether to be left out. I'll ge her fourteen wages, and if she don't like me, and I don't like her, I'll pay her back to Sydney. I want nothing in the world but what is honest, so make the agreement as you like, and I'll bide by it. I sends you all the papers, and you'll now I'm a man wot's to be trusted. I sends you five pounds; she may get wages first, for I know some of the gals, and the best on um, to, are not heavy we boxes; and supposing anything should happen, I would not like it to be said she come here in rags. I wants, also, a man and his wife; he must be willing to learn to plough, if he don't now how, and do a good fair day's work at anything; his wife must be a milker, and ha dustrious woman; I'll give them as much as they can eat and drink of tea and milk, and, whatever wages you set my name down for, I'll be bound to pay it. With all the honer in the world, I'se bound to remain your servant till death." There was something, remarks Mrs Chisholm, in the character of this honest bushman, during his colonial residence, to admire; he had gained his freedom, sent home money to his parents, and, during a long and tedious illness of twenty months, had attended his sick wife with patient care. Who would not get up an hour earlier to serve such a man?—I did, for I knew that early in the morning is the *best* time to choose a wife. I went first into the governess-room—all asleep; I unlocked the Home-door—some dressed, others half-dressed, some too very cross: I have often remarked, that early in the day is the best time to judge of a woman's temper; but I wish this to be kept a secret. I remained half an hour in the Home; I then went through the tents, could not suit myself, and returned. At the Home-door, I found a girl at the wash-tub; she was at work with spirit; she was rather good-looking, very neat and tidy. I went into my office, and ascertained that, on board ship, her character was good. I desired the matron never to lose sight of her conduct, and report the same to me. Day after day passed, and I was at last fully determined to place her within reach of my applicant in the bush—that is, in a respectable family in his near neighbourhood; but I was able to arrange better, for I found that, amongst the families wanting situations, there was one related to her. I immediately engaged them as the bushman's servants; they were a respectable couple; the man a very prudent person. I told them to take the girl with them, and get her service near them, and on no account to allow her to live with a bachelor. I gave the girl three letters to respectable ladies, and she was engaged by one the fourth day after her arrival at ——. About a fortnight after, the bushman wrote to thank me for sending him the married couple; and concluded by saying: "With regard to that *other* matter, upon my word you have suited me exactly; and as soon as our month is up, we is to be married." I received, says Mrs Chisholm, forty-one applications of this kind; but the above is the only girl I ever sent into the country with a *direct* matrimonial intention.'

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That 'Providence has a place for everybody' is an axiom that cannot be too strongly insisted on. The difficulty, however, is to know where that place is. It will help considerably to relieve us of trouble on this score, if we bear in mind that we are not limited in our choice of country. If every place is filled in this old and settled territory, by all means go away to new regions which lie invitingly open for trial. In short, go to America, or go to Australia, and in either of these find your proper place. There can be no doubt of your discovering it, provided you but look for it. Great in this faith has Caroline Chisholm laboured. First, she helped women into situations in Australia; then she similarly helped men; next, she fell on the expedient of bringing wives and families to join husbands who longed for their society; and lastly, she organised plans for sending out young women to the colony, with a view to balance the inequality of the sexes. To execute her designs in a proper manner, she required to know the real wants and condition of settlers; and, will it be credited, that she set out on long and painful journeys in a covered spring-van, and did not desist till she had gathered six hundred biographies!

In 1845, Mrs Chisholm was joined by her husband from India, and she prepared to return to England. Five years of earnest and successful endeavour had wonderfully altered the general opinion respecting her operations. There was no longer any fault-finding. Jealousies had been overcome. It was now the fashion to speak well of plans that were once viewed with apathy or suspicion. 'In February 1846, a public meeting was held at Sydney, for the purpose of taking into consideration the presenting to Mrs Chisholm, then on the eve of her departure for England, a testimonial of the estimation in which her labours on behalf of the emigrant population were viewed by the colonists. Some idea may be formed of the respect felt for the admirable lady, and acknowledgment of her public services, when eight members of the Legislative Council, the mayor of Sydney, the high-sheriff, thirteen magistrates, and many leading merchants, formed themselves into a committee to carry the wishes of the meeting into effect. The amount of each

subscription was limited.' In a short time 150 guineas were raised, and presented with a laudatory address. 'Mrs Chisholm accepted the testimonial, in order to expend it in further promoting emigration, in restoring wives to husbands, and children to parents. In the course of her answer, she said: "It is my intention, if supported by your co-operation, to attempt more than I have hitherto performed." She left Australia in 1846, bearing with her the warm prayers of the working colonists, whose confidence and gratitude, both bond and free, she had thoroughly secured, charged with the self-imposed mission of representing in England the claims of those powerless classes who have neither honour nor pensions to bestow on their advocates.'

Since 1846, Mrs Chisholm has resided near London, and devoted herself to the promotion of her last great scheme. This is to send emigrants to Australia, in what are called Family Groups, under the auspices of the Family Colonisation Loan Society. The main features of the plan are these: suitable and well-recommended persons are enrolled as members on paying a small fee; and they are sent out on paying two-thirds of the passage-money—the remaining third being paid as a loan by the society, which loan is to be repaid from wages received in the colony. No security is required for the loan. The society reckon on the integrity and gratitude of the emigrants, and on the principle of associating parties into groups, the members of which exercise a mutual supervision. A group consists of twelve adults. Friendless young women are introduced to and grouped with families. These introductions usually take place at Mrs Chisholm's residence once every week, when the groups are addressed in a friendly manner, and furnished with hints for their government on board ship.

Another important feature in these operations, is to help poor emigrants to remit small sums to friends at home, the difficulty of making such remittances having formerly been very considerable. To organise a proper system of remitting, Captain Chisholm has returned to Australia, and, according to an account given by Mrs Chisholm in a letter to the *Times*, it appears that the system is realising all reasonable expectation. We copy the substance of this letter as a fitting conclusion to our sketch.

'This is the first organised attempt of enabling the English emigrants in Australia to imitate the generous devotion of the Irish settled in the United States. While contemplating with admiration the laborious devotion proved by the remittance of millions sterling from the American Irish to remove their relations from a land of low wages and famine, I have always had a firm belief that the English emigrants in Australia only required the opportunity to imitate the noble example, and the "remittance-roll" is evidence of the correctness of my opinion.

'Until very recently, there have been no channels through which the Australian settler could safely and cheaply remit small sums to England.

'When I was resident in Sydney, many emigrants were anxious to send small sums to their friends "at home," and came to me with money for that purpose; but I found that the banks charged as much for L.15 as for L.50, and that they altogether declined to take the trouble of remitting small amounts. On making a representation of this fact to his excellency Sir George Gipps, he communicated with the banks through the Colonial Secretary, and they consented to receive small remittances from labouring people, if I personally accompanied the depositor; but, with my other engagements, it was impossible for me to spare many hours in the week to introducing shepherds and stockmen, with their L.5 or L.10, to the cashiers of the banks. Many a man, within my knowledge, has gone away on finding that he could not remit his intended present to his relations, and spent the amount in a drunken "spree." I therefore determined, that on my return to England, I would endeavour to organise some plan which should render labourers remitting their little tributes of affection to their friends nearly as easy as posting a letter.

'As soon as the Family Colonisation Society was organised, Messrs Coutts & Co. consented to appoint agents, and receive the remittances due to the society. But in order to teach and encourage the labouring colonists to take advantage of the power of remitting to England, my husband saw that it was necessary that some one devoted to the work should proceed to the colonies. The society was not rich enough to pay an agent, or even to pay the expenses of an agent who would work without salary; therefore we determined to divide our income, and separate. My husband proceeded to the colony, to collect and remit the loans of the society's emigrants, and the savings of those emigrants who wished to be joined by parents, wives, children, brothers, sisters, or other relations. I remained here to assist such relations to emigrate in an economical, safe, and decent manner, as well as to carry on the

correspondence needful for discovering the relatives of long-separated emigrants—often a difficult task. We determined to work thus until the labourers' remittances should swell to such an amount as would render it worth the attention of bankers as a matter of business, if the society were not inclined to continue the trouble and responsibility.

'I am happy to say, my faith in the generous and honest disposition of British emigrants, English, Scotch, and Irish, has not been shaken, and that I may look forward with confidence to a very early date when the remittance connection of the Australian emigrants will be eagerly competed for by the most respectable firms.

'My husband writes me, that the people are filled with joy at finding that they can safely send their earnings, and secure the passage of their friends. In seven weeks he received L.3000 in gold-dust or cash, and confidently expects to remit L.15,000 within twelve months, and could collect double that sum if he were able to visit the diggings. These remittances are not only from the emigrants sent out by the society, but from various persons of the humbler class who desire to be joined by their relations, and wish them to come out under my ship arrangements.

'It is my intention to return to Australia in the early part of next year, and there endeavour to still further promote the reunion of families. I have addressed this letter to your widely-spread and influential columns, in order to call the attention of the commercial world to the profits which may be obtained by ministering to a demand which is arising among a humble class—in order to call the attention of statesmen and philanthropists to a new element of peace, order, and civilisation, more powerful than soldiers—to a golden chain of domestic feeling, which is bridging the seas between England and Australia. Many parents, wives, children, and brothers and sisters, have received remittances for passages.'

More need hardly be said. As is generally known, ships are sailing almost weekly with emigrants of the class for whom Mrs Chisholm has so warmly interested herself; and we are glad to know from good authority, that already large sums of the lent money have been repaid, proving that the trust put in the honesty of the emigrants has not been misplaced. A great scheme, auxiliary to ordinary emigration, is therefore at work, and its usefulness is acknowledged, not only by the press and the public at large, but by parties ordinarily less alive to projects of social melioration—ministers of the crown. Every one may well concur in paying honour to Caroline Chisholm!

FOOTNOTES:

[1] Memoirs of Mrs Caroline Chisholm. London: Webb, Millington, & Co. 1852.

A GHOST OF A HEAD.

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PETER LEROUX was a poor ploughman in the environs of Beaugeney. After passing the day in leading across the fields the three horses which were generally yoked to his plough, he returned to the farm in the evening, supped without many words, with his fellow-labourers, lighted his lantern, and then retired to bed in a species of shed communicating with the stables. His dreams were simple, and little coloured with the tints of imagination; his horses were for the most part their principal subject. On one occasion, he started from his slumbers in the midst of his fancied efforts to lift up the obstinate mare, which had taken it into her head to be weak in the legs; another time, the 'old gray' had entangled his hoof in the cords of the team. One night, he dreamed that he had just put an entirely new thong to his old whip, but that, notwithstanding, it obstinately refused to crack. This remarkable vision impressed him so deeply, that, on awaking, he seized the whip, which he was accustomed to place every night by his side; and in order thoroughly to assure himself that he was not stricken powerless, and deprived of the most gratifying prerogative of the ploughman, he took to smacking it violently in the dead of the night. At this noise, all the stable was in commotion; the horses, alarmed, neighed, and ran one against the other, almost breaking their cords; but, with some soothing words, Peter Leroux managed to appease all this tumult, and silence was immediately restored. This was one of those extraordinary events of his life which he never failed to relate every time that a cup of wine had made him eloquent, and he found a companion in the mood to listen to him.

About the same period, dreams of quite a different kind occupied the mind of a certain M. Desalleux, deputy of the public prosecutor in the criminal court of Orleans. Having made a promising *début* in that office only a few months previously, there was no longer any position in the magistracy which he believed too high for his future attainment; and the post of keeper of the seals was one of the most frequent visions of his slumbers. But it was particularly in the intoxicating triumphs of oratory that his thoughts would revel in sleep, when the whole day had been given to the study of some case in which he was to plead. The glory of the Aguesseaux, and the other celebrated names of the great days of parliamentary eloquence, scarcely sufficed for his impatient ambition; it was in the most distant periods of the past—the times of the marvellous eloquence of Demosthenes—that he delighted to contemplate the likeness of his own ideal future. The attainment of power by eloquence; such was the idea, the text, so to speak, of his whole life—the one object for which he renounced all the ordinary hopes and pleasures of youth.

One day, these two natures—that of Peter Leroux, lifted scarcely one degree above the range of the brute, and that of M. Desalleux, abstract and rectified to the highest pitch of intellectuality—found themselves face to face. A little contest was going on between them. M. Desalleux, sitting in his official place, demanded, upon evidence somewhat insufficient, the head of Peter Leroux, accused of murder; and Peter Leroux defended his head against the eloquence of M. Desalleux.

Notwithstanding the remarkable disproportion of power which Providence had placed in this duel, the accused, for lack of conclusive proofs, would in all probability have escaped from the hands of the executioner; but from that very scantiness in the evidence arose an extraordinary opportunity for eloquence, which could not fail to be singularly useful to the ambitious hopes of M. Desalleux. In justice to himself, he could not neglect to take advantage of it.

In the next place, an unlucky circumstance presented itself for poor Peter Leroux. Some days before the commencement of the trial, and in the presence of several ladies, who promised themselves the pleasure of being there to enjoy the spectacle, the young deputy had let fall an expression of his firm confidence in obtaining from the jury a verdict of condemnation. Every one will understand the painful position in which he would be placed if his prosecution failed, and Peter Leroux came back with his head upon his shoulders, to testify to the weakness of M. Desalleux's eloquence. Let us not be too severe upon the deputy of the public prosecutor: if he was not absolutely convinced, it was his duty to appear so, and only the more meritorious to utter such eloquent denunciations as for a century past had not been heard at the bar of the criminal court of Orleans. Oh, if you had been there to see how they were moved, those poor gentlemen of the jury!—moved almost to tears, when, in a fine and most sonorous peroration, he set before them the fearful picture of society shaken to its foundations—the whole community about to enter upon dissolution, immediately upon the acquittal of Peter Leroux! If you had only heard the courteous eulogiums exchanged on both sides, when the advocate of the accused, commencing his address, declared that he could not go further without rendering homage to the brilliant powers of oratory displayed by the deputy public prosecutor! If you had only heard the president of the court, making the same felicitations the text of his exordium, so well, that nothing would have persuaded you that it was not an academical fête, and that they were not simply awarding a prize for eloquence, instead of a sentence of death to a fellow-creature. You would have seen, in the midst of a crowd of 'elegantly-attired members of the fair sex,' as the newspapers of the province said, the sister of M. Desalleux, receiving the compliments of all the ladies around her; while, at a little distance, the old father was weeping with joy at the sight of the noble son and incomparable orator whom he had given to the world.

Six weeks after this scene of family happiness, Peter Leroux, accompanied by the executioner, mounted the condemned cart, which waited for him at the door of the jail of Orleans. They proceeded together to the Place du Martroie, which is the spot where executions take place. Here they found a scaffold erected, and a considerable concourse of persons expecting them. Peter Leroux, with the slow and heavy ascent of a sack of flour going up by means of a pulley to the top of a warehouse, mounts the steps of the scaffold. As he reached the platform, a ray of sunlight, playing upon the brilliant and polished steel of the instrument of justice, dazzled his eyes, and he seemed about to stumble; but the executioner, with the courteous attention of a host who knows how to do the honours of his house, sustained him by the arm, and placed him upon the plank of the guillotine. There Peter Leroux found the clerk of the court, who had come for the purpose of reading formally the order

for execution; the gendarmes, who were charged to see that the public peace was kept during the business about to be transacted; and the assistants of the executioner, who, notwithstanding the ill name which has been given to them, pointed out to him, with a complaisance full of delicate consideration, the precise position in which to place himself under the axe. One minute after, Peter Leroux's head was divorced from his body, which operation was accomplished with such dexterity, that many of those present at the spectacle asked of their neighbours if it was already finished; and were told that it was; upon which they remarked, that it was the last time they would put themselves so much out of the way for so little.

Three months had passed since the head and body of Peter Leroux had been cast into a corner of the cemetery, and, in all probability, the grave no longer concealed aught but his bones, when a new session of assizes was opened, and M. Desalleux had again to support a capital indictment.

The day previous, he quitted at an early hour a ball to which he had been invited with all his family, at a château in the environs, and returned alone to the city, in order to prepare his case for the morrow.

The night was dark; a warm wind from the south whistled drearily, while the buzz of the gay scene that he had left seemed to linger in his ears. A feeling of melancholy stole over him. The memory of many people whom he had known, and who were dead, returned to his mind; and, scarcely knowing why, he began to think of Peter Leroux.

Nevertheless, as he drew near the city, and the first lights of the suburbs began to appear, all his sombre ideas vanished, and as soon as he found himself again at his desk, surrounded by his books and papers, he thought no longer of anything but his oration, which he had determined should be even yet more brilliant than any that had preceded it.

His system of indictment was already nearly settled. It is singular, by the way, that French legal expression, a 'system of indictment'—that is to say, an absolute manner of grouping an *ensemble* of facts and proofs, in virtue of which the prosecutor appropriates to himself the head of a man—as one would say, 'a system of philosophy'—that is, an *ensemble* of reasonings and sophisms, by the aid of which we establish some harmless truth, theory, or fancy. His system of indictment was nearly completed, when the deposition of a witness which he had not examined, suddenly presented itself, with such an aspect as threatened to overturn all the edifice of his logic. He hesitated for some moments; but, as we have already seen, M. Desalleux, in his functions of deputy-prosecutor, consulted his vanity at least as often as his conscience. Invoking all his powers of logic and skill for turning words to his purpose, struggling muscle to muscle with the unlucky testimony, he did not despair of finally enlisting it in the number of his best arguments, as containing the most conclusive evidence against the prisoner; but, unfortunately, the trouble was considerable, and the night was already far advanced.

The clock had just struck three, and the lamp upon his table, burning with a crust upon the wick, gave only a feeble light in the chamber. Having trimmed it, and feeling somewhat excited with his labours, he rose and walked to and fro, then returned and sat in his chair, from which, leaning back in an easy attitude, and suspending his reflections for awhile, he contemplated the stars which were shining through a window opposite. Suddenly lowering his gaze, he encountered what seemed to him two eyes staring in at him through the window-panes. Imagining that the reflection of the lamp, doubled by some flaw in the glass, had deceived him, he changed his place; but the vision only appeared more distinct. As he was not wanting in courage, he took a walking-stick, the only weapon within reach, and opened the window, to see who was the intruder who came thus to observe him at such an hour. The chamber which he occupied was high; above and below, the wall of his house was perfectly perpendicular, and afforded no means by which any one could climb or descend. In the narrow space between himself and the balcony, the smallest object could not have escaped him; but he saw nothing. He thought again that he must have been the dupe of one of those hallucinations that sometimes visit men in the night; and, with a smile, he applied himself again to his labours. But he had not written twenty lines, when he felt, before looking up, that there was something moving in a corner of the chamber. This began to alarm him, for it was not natural that the senses, one after the other, should conspire to deceive him. Raising his eyes, and shading them with his hand from the glare of the lamp beside him, he observed a dusky object advancing towards him with short hops like those of a raven. As the apparition approached him, its aspect became more terrifying; for it took the unmistakable form of a human head separated from the trunk and dripping with blood; and when at length, with a spring, it bounded upon the table, and

rolled about over the papers scattered on his desk, M. Desalleux recognised the features of Peter Leroux, who no doubt had come to remind him that a good conscience is of greater value than eloquence. Overcome by a sensation of terror, M. Desalleux fainted. That morning, at daybreak, he was found stretched out insensible on the floor near a little pool of blood, which was also found in spots upon his desk, and on the leaves of his pleadings. It was supposed, and he took care never to contradict it, that he had been seized with a hemorrhage. It is scarcely necessary to add, that he was not in a state to speak at the trial, and that all his oratorical preparations were thrown away.

Many days passed before the recollection of that terrible night faded from the memory of the deputy-prosecutor—many days before he could bear to be alone or in the dark without terror. After some months, however, the head of Peter Leroux not having repeated its visit, the pride of intellect began again to counterbalance the testimony of the senses, and again he asked himself, if he had not been duped by them. In order more surely to weaken their authority, which all his reasonings had not been able entirely to overcome, he called to his aid the opinion of his physician, communicating to him in confidence the story of his adventure. The doctor, who, by dint of long examining the human brain, without discovering the slightest trace of anything resembling a soul, had come to a learned conviction of materialism, did not fail to laugh heartily on listening to the recital of the nocturnal vision. This was perhaps the best manner of treating his patient; for by having the appearance of holding his fancy in derision, he forced, as it were, his self-esteem to take a part in the cure. Moreover, as may be imagined, he did not hesitate to explain to his patient, that his hallucination proceeded from an over-tension of the cerebral fibre, followed by congestion and evacuation of blood, which had been the causes of his seeing precisely what he had not seen. Powerfully reassured by this consultation, and as no accident happened to contradict its correctness, M. Desalleux by degrees regained his serenity of mind, and gradually returned to his former habits—modifying them simply inasmuch that he laboured with an application somewhat less severe, and indulged, at the doctor's suggestion, in some of those amusements of life which he had hitherto totally neglected.

M. Desalleux thought of a wife, and no man was more in a position than he to secure a good match; for, without speaking of personal advantages, the fame of his oratorical successes, and perhaps, more still, the little anxiety which he displayed for any other kind of success, had rendered him the object of more than one lady's ambition. But there was in the bent of his life something too positive for him to consent that even the love of a woman should find a place there unconditionally. Among the hearts which seemed ready to bestow themselves upon him, he calculated which was the particular one whose goodwill was best supported by money, useful relations, and other social advantages. The first part of his romance being thus settled, he saw without regret that the bride who would bring him all these, was a young girl, witty, and of elegant exterior; whereupon he set about falling in love with her with all the passion of which he was capable, and with the approbation of her family, until at length a marriage was determined upon.

Orleans had not, for a long time, seen a prettier bride than that of M. Desalleux; nor a family more happy than that of M. Desalleux; nor a wedding-ball so joyous and brilliant as that of M. Desalleux. That night he thought no more of his ambition; he lived only in the present. According to French custom, the guests remained until a late hour. Imprisoned in a corner of the saloon by a barrister, who had taken that opportune moment to recommend a case to him, the bridegroom looked, from time to time, at the timepiece, which pointed to a quarter to two. He had also remarked, that twice within a short time the mother of the bride had approached her, and whispered in her ear, and that the latter had replied with an air of confusion. Suddenly, at the conclusion of a contra-dance, he perceived, by a certain whispering that ran through the assembly, that something important was going on. Casting his eyes, while the barrister continued to talk to him, upon the seats which his wife and her ladies of honour had occupied during the whole evening, he perceived that they were empty; whereupon the grave deputy-prosecutor cutting short, as most men would have done under the circumstances, the argument of the barrister, advanced by a clever series of manœuvres towards the door of the apartment; and at the moment when some domestics entered bearing refreshments, glided out, in the fond and mistaken belief that no one had remarked him.

At the door of the nuptial chamber he met his mother-in-law, who was retiring with the various dignitaries, whose presence had been considered necessary, as well as some matrons who had joined the *cortège*. Pressing his hand, and

with a faltering voice, the mother whispered to him a few words, and it was understood that she spoke of her daughter. M. Desalleux, smiling, replied with some affectionate phrases. Most assuredly in that moment he was not thinking of poor Peter Leroux.

At the moment of closing the door of the chamber, the bride was already abed. He remarked, what appeared to him strange, that the curtains of her bed were drawn. The room was quite silent.

The stillness, and the strange fact of the close-drawn curtains embarrassed him. His heart beat violently. He looked around, and remarked her dress and all her wedding-ornaments lying around him, with a graceful air of negligence, in various parts of the room. With a faltering voice he called upon his bride by name. Having no reply, he returned, perhaps to gain time, towards the door, assured himself that it was well fastened, then approaching the bed, he opened the curtains gently.

By the flickering light of the lamp suspended from the ceiling, a singular vision presented itself to his eyes. Near his *fiancée*, who was fast asleep, the head of a man with black hair was lying on the white pillow. Was he again the victim of an error of the senses, or had some usurper dared to occupy his place? At all events, his substitute took little notice of him; for, as well as his wife, he was sound asleep, with his face turned towards the bottom of the alcove. In the moment when M. Desalleux leaned over the bed, to examine the features of this singular intruder, a long sigh, like that of a man awaking from slumber, broke the silence of the chamber; and at the same time the head of the stranger turning towards him, he recognised the face of Peter Leroux staring at him, with that very look of stupified astonishment with which for two hours the unlucky ploughman had listened to his brilliant discourse in the criminal court of Orleans.

Perhaps, on any other occasion, the deputy-prosecutor, on finding himself a second time visited by this horrible vision, would have suspected that he had been guilty of some wicked action, for which he was doomed to this persecution: his conscience, if he had taken the trouble to cross-examine it, would have very soon told him what was his crime, in which case, being a good Catholic, he would perhaps have gone out and locked the door of the haunted room until morning, when he would have immediately ordered a mass for the repose of the soul of Peter Leroux; by means of this, and of some contributions to the fund for poor prisoners of justice, he might, perhaps, have regained his tranquillity of mind, and escaped for ever from the annoyance to which he had been subjected. At such a time, however, he felt more irritation than remorse; and he accordingly endeavoured to seize the intruder by the hair, and drag him from his resting-place. At the first movement that he made, however, the head, understanding his intentions, began to grind its teeth, and as he stretched out his hand, the bridegroom felt himself severely bitten. The pain of his wound increased his rage. He looked around for some weapon, went to the fireplace and seized a bar of steel which served to support the fire-irons, then returned, and striking several times upon the bed with all his force, endeavoured to destroy his hideous visitor. But the head, ducking and bobbing like the white gentleman with black spots, whom Punch has never been able to touch, dexterously slipped aside at every blow, which descended harmlessly upon the bed-clothes. For several minutes the furious bridegroom continued to waste his strength in this manner, when, springing with an extraordinary bound, the head passed over the shoulder of its adversary, and disappeared behind him before he could observe by what way it had escaped.

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After a careful search, and considerable raking in corners with the bar of steel, finding himself at length master of the field of battle, the deputy-prosecutor returned to the bed. The bride was still miraculously asleep; and, to his horror, he perceived, on lifting the coverlet, that she was lying in a pool of blood, left no doubt by the bleeding head. Misfortunes never come alone: while seeking for a cloth about the chamber, he struck the lamp with his forehead, and extinguished it.

Meanwhile the night was advancing; already the window of the chamber began to glimmer with the coming day. Furious with the obstacles which heaven and earth seemed to set in his way, the deputy-prosecutor determined to solve the mystery. Approaching the bed again, he called upon his bride by the tenderest names, and endeavoured to awake her, yet she continued to sleep. Taking her in his arms, he embraced her passionately; but she slept on, and appeared insensible to all his caresses. What could this mean? Was it the feint of a bashful girl, or was he himself dreaming? It was growing lighter; and in the hope of dispelling the odious enchantments with which he was surrounded, M. Desalleux went to the window, and drew aside the blinds and

curtains to let in the new day. Then the unhappy lawyer perceived for the first time why the blood refused to be dried up. Blinded by his anger in his combat with the head of Peter Leroux, and while he had supposed himself to be chastising his disturber, he had, in fact, been striking the head of his unfortunate bride. The blows had been dealt so quickly and with such violence, that she had died without a sigh, or, perhaps, without her assailant's hearing one, in the fury of the struggle.

We leave to psychologists to explain this phenomenon; but on seeing that he had killed his bride, he was seized with a violent fit of laughter, which attracted the attention of his mother-in-law, who knocked gently at the door, and desired to know the cause of the disturbance. On hearing the voice of the mother of his wife, his terrible gaiety increased. Running to open the door, he seized her by the arm, and drawing her to the side of the bed, pulled back the curtains, and revealed to her the terrible spectacle; after which his laughter grew still more furious, until at length he sank exhausted on the floor.

Alarmed at the shrieks of the mother, all the inmates of the house became witnesses of the scene, the report of which spread rapidly through the city. The same morning, upon a warrant from the procureur-general, M. Desalleux was conducted to the criminal prison of Orleans; and it has since been remarked, as a singular coincidence, that his cell was the same that had been occupied by Peter Leroux up to the day of his execution.

The end of the deputy-prosecutor, however, was a little less tragic. Declared by the unanimous testimony of the physicians to be insane, the man who had dreamed of moving the world with his eloquence, was conducted to the hospital for lunatics, and for more than six months kept chained in a dark cell, as in the good old times. At the end of this time, however, as he appeared to be no longer dangerous, his chains were removed, and he was subjected to milder treatment.

As soon as he recovered his liberty, a strange delusion took possession of him, which did not leave him until he died. He fancied himself a tight-rope dancer, and from morning to night danced with the gestures and movements of a man who holds a balancing-rod, and walks upon a cord.

If any one visiting the city of Orleans would take the trouble to inquire of M. Troisétoiles, landlord of the Hôtel Aux Clés de la Ville, in the Place du Marché, he would obtain a confirmation of the truth of this history, together with many other facts and circumstances, collateral and ramificatory, concerning the bride and bridegroom, their relations and friends, which we have not thought necessary to state. With regard, however, to the tragic event which we have last described, M. Troisétoiles will simply relate what is known to the world on the subject—namely, that the deputy-prosecutor, being injured in mind by overstudy and application to business, knocked out his wife's brains on her wedding-night. We, however, although we decline to mention our sources of information, have been enabled to give the private and secret history of the tragedy, for the truth of which we are equally able to vouch.

A bookseller in Orleans, sometime afterwards, conceived the idea of collecting and publishing a volume of the speeches which he had pronounced during his short but brilliant oratorical career. Three editions were exhausted successively, and not long since a fourth was announced.

DIAMOND-CUTTING.

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THE Koh-i-noor, the great diamond that, thanks to the still greater Exhibition, so many have seen, and so many more have heard of, is now in the hands of skilful diamond-cutters, that, unlike the sable beauties of Abyssinia, its charms may be augmented by a judicious reduction in magnitude and gravity. Cut at first with the view of preserving intact as much of the stone as possible, it never possessed the sparkling lustre derived from the scientific disposition of the several sides and angles, technically termed facets, of a well-polished diamond. It is now intended to be fashioned into a brilliant; that is, to have the form of two flattened pyramids joined at the base, the upper pyramid much flatter than the lower one. In England, the art of diamond-cutting has ceased to exist, but in Holland it still maintains its ancient pre-eminence; and from thence the cutters of the Koh-i-noor have been brought to perform an operation, which, taking into consideration the size of the stone, had never previously been accomplished in this country.

It is not known, with any degree of certainty, whether the ancient inhabitants

of the East had any knowledge of the art of diamond-cutting; but it is at the same time very clear, that the nations of the West knew nothing of it till a very late period. Even to the latter part of the fifteenth century, the diamond was appreciated principally for its supposed talismanic properties and its hardness; and as that hardness prevented its hidden beauties from being brought to light by cutting and polishing, it was regarded more as a rare cabalistic curiosity than a precious ornament. Some diamonds, however, whose natural form and polish were more favourable to the development of their clouded brilliancy, foretold the splendour they would display were it possible to cut and polish them as other gems. Numerous attempts were made to attain this desired end, but all in vain, until, about 1460, Louis de Berghen, a young jeweller of Bruges, succeeded in cutting the first diamond.

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The invention of the art of diamond-cutting has, like many others, whether mythically or not, been mixed up with a love-story. Berghen, it is said, was a poor working-jeweller, who had the audacity to fall in love with his wealthy master's daughter. The young lady was favourable to his suit; but on proposing to her father, the old man reproached him for poverty, and sneeringly said, in allusion to the supposed utter impossibility of the feat: 'When you can cut a diamond, you may marry my daughter, but not before.' These discouraging words induced a train of reflection in the mind of the young man. He considered how other hard substances were cut; iron, he mentally cogitated, is cut by steel. 'What is steel,' he exclaimed, a light breaking upon him, 'but iron?—the diamond, then, may be cut by a diamond.' Laying out all his available means in the purchase of two small diamonds, he contrived, by cementing them to two pieces of wood, to rub them against each other till they were reduced to dust. With this dust, and a machine which he invented, he cut two facets on another diamond, which he triumphantly exhibited to the old jeweller. But a diamond had never previously been cut: men, wise in their generation, had said that a diamond never could be cut; and consequently, according to the general mode of treating inventors in those days, a charge of sorcery was brought against the first diamond-cutter. Berghen, thrown into prison, had abundant leisure for deliberation. Two courses were open to him: one was to keep his secret, and be burned as a sorcerer; the other, to clear himself of that charge by shewing how he cut the diamond by natural means, and thus lose the exclusive benefit of his invention, to which he considered he was so justly entitled. He adopted neither. Fortunately, Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, the ruler of Flanders, came to hold his court in the city of Bruges, and was soon informed of the diabolical art of the young jeweller. Charles was passionately fond of jewels, and possessed a very large diamond. Like the Spaniard, who, if the miracle were performed, did not care if Mohammed himself did it, the Bold duke sent for Berghen, and commanded him to cut and polish the large diamond, as he best could, either by aid of the Prince of Darkness, or his own unassisted efforts. In due time the work was completed; and Charles was so delighted with the brilliant beauty of the previously dull stone, that he remunerated the young jeweller with three thousand ducats. We need not inform the reader how Berghen soon married his lady-love; but we may state that, retaining the secret of diamond-cutting in his own family, he and his descendants acquired immense wealth. After the death of his patron Charles, he removed to Paris, where, for two centuries afterwards, the Berquins, as the name was Gallicised, were the most famous jewellers of their time.

The after-history of that large diamond, the first ever cut in Europe at least, is perhaps worthy of narration. Charles constantly carried it with him on his own person, till at last a soldier found it beside the duke's dead body, on the fatal battle-field of Nancy. Unconscious of its value, the finder sold it for a crown to a priest; the priest, equally ignorant, sold it for three ducats to a pedler; the pedler sold it for a large sum to the Duke of Florence. From that prince it passed into the hands of Antonio king of Portugal, who, when a refugee in France, sold it for 70,000 francs to Nicholas de Harlay, Lord of Sancy; thus it has since been known, in the history of precious stones, as the Sancy Diamond. Sancy was a faithful adherent to Henry IV. of France, and, during the civil war, was sent by that monarch to solicit the assistance of the Swiss. Finding that nothing could be done without money, he sent a trusty servant to Paris for the diamond, enjoining him never to part with it in life to any one but himself. The servant arrived in Paris, and received the diamond, but never returned to his master. After waiting a considerable time, Sancy, feeling confident that the man had been robbed and murdered by one of the many hordes of robbers that then infested France, set out to endeavour to gain some traces of him. After many adventures, he discovered that a person answering the description of the servant had been found, robbed and murdered, in the Forest of Dole, and had been buried by the peasantry. Sancy immediately had the body disinterred, and found the diamond—the faithful fellow having, in obedience to his master's injunction, swallowed it. Sancy

pawned the diamond with the Jews of Metz, and with the money raised troops for the service of his royal master. 'Put not your faith in princes,' is an adage as sound as it is ancient. Henry, seated on the throne that Sancy's exertions saved, took occasion of a petty court intrigue to ruin and disgrace his too faithful partisan. The pledged diamond never was redeemed; it remained in the hands of the Israelite money-lenders, till Louis XIV. purchased it for 600,000 francs. It then became one of the crown-jewels of France; but its vicissitudes were not over. In 1791, when the National Assembly appointed a commission of jewellers to examine the crown-jewels, the Sancy Diamond was valued at 1,000,000 livres. At the restoration of Louis XVIII., it was nowhere to be found, and nothing positive has been heard of it since. But as so well-known and large a diamond could not readily be secretly disposed of without attracting attention in some quarter, it is shrewdly suspected that a jewel sold in 1830, by the Prince of Peace, for 500,000 francs, to one of the wealthiest of the Russian nobility, was the missing Sancy Diamond.

The operation of diamond-cutting is exceedingly simple, and is without doubt performed by the cutters of the Koh-i-noor at the present time in almost precisely the same manner as invented by Berghen. The stone is held in the proper position by being embedded, all but the salient angle to be cut or polished, in a solder of tin and lead. It is then applied to a rapidly-revolving horizontal iron wheel, constantly supplied with diamond-dust, and moistened with olive-oil. The anxious care and caution required in this operation render it a very tedious one: the cutting of the Koh-i-noor will last many months, and be attended with an immense expense. A still more tedious operation, however, is sometimes performed by diamond-cutters, when it is found necessary to cut a stone into two parts; it is termed sawing, and is thus managed:—The stone to be sawn is scratched across in the desired direction by a very keen splinter of diamond, technically termed a *sharp*. An exceedingly fine iron wire, with a small portion of sweet-oil and diamond-dust, is then laid upon this guiding scratch; and the workman draws the wire backwards and forwards, as we may see blocks of stone sawn on a larger scale in the yard of the statuary. Still greater care and attention are required in this operation than in diamond-cutting: seven months have been occupied in sawing a good-sized stone. Sometimes the diamond is cut by two being cemented each upon a separate handle, and rubbed together over a box, which catches the precious dust as it falls; but the stones thus cut are disfigured by scratches, and must subsequently be polished upon the wheel.

For many years India supplied the rest of the world with diamonds; and it was long supposed that they were not to be found in any other part of the globe. The Portuguese settlers in Brazil, seeking for gold, found a number of small stones resembling pebbles, which, from their singularity, they kept as curiosities, using them as counters at their card-tables. An officer, who had been removed from the Portuguese settlements in India to serve in Brazil, suspected that these stones were diamonds, and sent a few to Portugal. The jewellers of Lisbon, having never seen a diamond in its unpolished state, laughed at the idea of such rude pebbles being of any value, and so the inquiry was for some time dropped. But the Dutch consul at Lisbon managed to procure one of the stones, and sent it to Holland, then almost the only country in Europe where diamond-cutting was pursued as a regular business. The stone, in due time, was returned to the consul in the form of a sparkling brilliant; and the Brazilian diamond-trade immediately commenced. The European dealers in diamonds, and many retired officers of the English and Dutch East India Companies, who, as was customary then, had, on their return to Europe, invested a large part of their wealth in those precious stones, fearing that a great reduction in price would follow, were alarmed when the Brazilian diamonds first came into the market. These interested parties published pamphlets, warning the public against purchasing the so-called Brazilian diamonds, stating that no diamonds were found in the Brazils, but that the inferior class of stones was purchased in India, sent to Brazil, and from thence imported as Brazilian diamonds. In consequence of these false statements being repeated by persons of rank and station, a strong prejudice existed against the Brazilian diamond, although it is now well known to be equal in every respect to its Indian brother. The Dutch, who then farmed the Brazilian diamond-mines from the crown of Portugal, met this trick of trade by another. They dug their diamonds in Brazil, brought them to Holland, and cut them, then sent them to India, from whence they returned to Europe as true Oriental jewels. We may add, that the anticipations of the dealers were not verified in defiance of the great influx from Brazil, and, later still, the discovery of the diamond in the Ural Mountains: the price of that stone is at present as high as ever it was.

ASCENT TO THE BRËCHE-DE-ROLAND.

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I DO not think I shall be accused of exaggeration when I say, that the ascent to the Brèche-de-Roland is to the Pyrenean range what the passage of the Col de Géant is to the Alps. They are both tough undertakings, requiring sound legs and lungs, with a happy and powerful combination of patience, fortitude, and energy.

The difficulty of ascending to the Brèche-de-Roland does not consist so much in its height—though this is 9537 feet—as in the nature of the ground to be surmounted; and after I had accomplished the feat, I no longer wondered that several persons had given in, and retraced their steps without attaining the Brèche. Before detailing my ascent to this wonderful place, it may be proper to state what it is like. On the flanks of the formidable and gigantic Mont Perdu rises Mont Marboré, from the summit of which stretches to the west a wall of rock from 400 to 600 feet high, in most places absolutely vertical. This huge natural wall forms the crest of the Pyrenees, and divides France from Spain at this part of the chain. In the middle of the natural barrier is a gap, which, when viewed from the French valley of the Gave de Gavarnie, appears like a notch made in a jaw by the loss of a single tooth, but which is in reality a magnificent and colossal portal, 134 feet wide and 330 feet high.

Of course, legendary lore is not at fault to account in its own poetical manner for this natural phenomenon. According to that oracle, the Brèche owes its origin to Roland, the brave Paladin, who, mounted on his war-horse, in his hot pursuit of the Moors, clove with one blow of his trusty sword Durandal a passage through this mighty wall; and it must be admitted that the sides of the gap are so smooth, that it requires no great stretch of the imagination to suppose that they were fashioned in some such artistical manner. Independently of the Brèche itself, which alone is highly deserving of a visit, the surrounding scenery is of the most imposing and magnificent character, and the whole, therefore, most justly ranks as one of the chief lions of the Pyrenees.

The most usual, and by far the most advantageous starting-place, is the village of Gavarnie, near the Cirque of that name. In my ignorance, however, of the toilsome nature of the excursion, I started from Luz, eighteen miles from Gavarnie, where I was sojourning. Reader, were you ever at Luz? Sweet Luz! with its babbling crystal brook, in which tribes of pigs undergo sanitary ablutions; and its inn, famous for good cookery and active fleas. If you have been there, you will not have forgotten Madame Cazean—a model of a hostess. To her I made my wishes known respecting the ascent to the Brèche, and begged that she would find me a guide.

In Switzerland, at such a place as Luz, surrounded by numerous excursion points of great interest, guides would be abundant; here, however, there are only a few, and these are obliged to pursue the callings of agriculture and hunting to eke out a subsistence. So, when I demanded a guide, Madame Cazean said she would send to the fields for Jaques St Laur, who was the best guide to the Brèche. And indeed if strength of limb and a huge sinewy frame were the chief qualifications for the affair, Jaques, I apprehend, would have stood unrivalled, for I never saw a more sturdy or Titanic mountaineer.

The arrangements were soon made. We were to start at four o'clock in the morning—not a moment later: true to his promise, my burly guide appeared before the hotel door at that hour with two ponies, and in a few minutes we were *en route*. The morning broke gloriously. Peak by peak, the snow-crested first, and successively those beneath, became tinted by the rising sun, while the valleys gave evidence of approaching day by casting off their misty mantles. It makes the old young again, and the young to feel the blood dance yet more briskly through their veins, to breathe such air as wraps the Pyrenees in its balmy folds. The beauties of the valley, or rather gorge, begin at once. Woods, alternating with precipitous rocks, mountain peaks of great altitude and most picturesque forms, tower aloft; while below, the eye rests upon the *gave*, now deliciously green and peaceful, and now worming its way with agonised fury through the gorge. Many cascades of rare beauty streamed down from the summit of the precipices, and we were continually crossing high and narrow bridges suspended over deep gulfs. The box luxuriates in this defile, springing in tree-like proportions from every ledge.

Before reaching Gèdres, which is about half-way to Gavarnie, a fine, though tantalising view of the Brèche is obtained. I gazed at the object of my expedition with anxious eyes, wondering how I was to get to its cloud land

amidst the eternal snow-crowned Tours de Marboré; and I longed for the wings of one of the many eagles which sailed majestically overhead, to transport myself thither at once.

At Gèdres the view of the Marboré is lost; but there is an almost overabundance of grand scenery in the mountains that tower to the right and left, and the gorges are filled with foaming cascades and flowers of wondrous beauty. Close to the cascades—so close, that they seem on the point of being swept away—are mills, not much larger than goodly-sized boxes, one above the other, like rows of black beads strung upon the white torrent. These mills are primitive in their construction, closely resembling the old hand-mill; but they grind the corn, and what more could the best mill in Europe do?

Beyond Gèdres, a singularly grand and savage scene presents itself, called the Peyrada or Chaos. It is an *éboulement*, or slip of masses of gneiss which have fallen from great heights; and the ruins are so extensive, that it seems as if an entire mountain had been shivered to fragments. The path winds in zig-zags through a labyrinth of blocks, among which horse and rider appear like pigmies. The mountains increase in majesty as Gavarnie is approached—the Vignemale with its glaciers to the west; and the Pimène to the east, ranging among the highest. Gavarnie is a poor village, boasting one inn, in humble keeping with the place; poor, however, as it was, I was glad to draw bridle before the door, for we had ridden fast and furious, as my blood-stained spurs evidenced. I was about to dismount and recruit myself with a flask of the best wine, when Jaques peremptorily forbade such a proceeding. There was no time to be lost; a stirrup-cup and on. He, however, dismounted, and went into the house for ice-staffs and *crampons*, which were kept at the inn. Provided with these, and partially refreshed by a glass of very good wine, we hastened on our way. The morning continued most favourable; not a cloud obscured the outline of the mountains, and the snow-crested Marboré towered aloft, strongly pencilled against the deep-blue sky. Wonderful animals are the Pyrenean ponies. Small in stature, and with diminutive limbs, on they go, over ways rough enough to puzzle a goat, rarely pausing to pick their steps, and as rarely stumbling. The path, about half-way between Gavarnie and the Cirque, is carried over the torrent by two terribly narrow planks, without any manner of railing. Over this frail bridge, not three feet wide, my guide, much to my astonishment, rode his pony; and as my *monture* evinced no asinine disinclination to follow, but, on the contrary, evidently regarded the proceeding as nothing extraordinary, I slackened my bridle, pressed my knees a little closer to the saddle, and committed myself to my fate. The torrent rushed at a fearfully giddy rate some twenty feet beneath, and the roar of waters was terrific; but my steed was proof against these things, which would have tried the nerves of a pedestrian tourist, and passed steadily over the narrow causeway as unswervingly as if it had been the broadest highway in France. This was the last feat of our horses; for, after a brisk canter, we dismounted in the arena of the Cirque, and turned the animals to graze, a girl who had accompanied us from Gavarnie engaging to look after them. We had ridden eighteen miles, and I doubt whether the distance was ever accomplished in less time.

To render the first impression of the Cirque or *ouïe* more impressive, a small projecting wall of rock marks the entry to the gigantic amphitheatre. This passed, the end of the world seems gained: a vast semicircle of rocks rises precipitously to the height of between 1000 and 2000 feet. These gigantic walls are divided into three or four steps or ledges, on each of which rests a glacier, from which stream cascades. That to the left is 1266 feet high, and bears the reputation of being the highest waterfall in Europe. The summit of this wondrous amphitheatre is crowned by everlasting ice and snow, resting on the crests of the Cylindre, so called from its shape, and 10,500 feet high. The base of this fine mountain is embedded in a huge glacier, which gives birth to the high fall. Fit companion to the Cylindre rises the Tours de Marboré, forming a part of Mont Perdu. Not a scrap of vegetation breaks the ruggedness of the vast semicircle of rocks. The floor of the Cirque is an irregular heap of rocks, with the exception of a large heap of snow at the base of the precipices, under which the waters of the cascades run, like the torrents beneath the Swiss glaciers.

It was impossible to take in this sublime spectacle at once, so overpowering were its features; and as we gazed tremblingly at the huge Cirque, I felt as if on the eve of being crushed by its impending walls.

Within a few yards of the most western cascade, the ascent to the Brèche is made. Without a guide, however, the precise spot would be exceedingly difficult to find; and from its forbidding nature, few would be bold enough to make the essay. It is literally a rock-ladder, and is the only locality in the wide

sweep of the Cirque affording the means of ascent. The rugged strata, which are here vertical, serve as steps in which one can insert the toes and fingers; but as the guidebook truly says: 'It is as abrupt as the ascent of a ladder; and wide spaces of smooth rock often intervene without any notch or projection offering a foothold. To those who cannot look down a sheer precipice many hundred feet deep without a tendency to giddiness, there is danger in this escalade, as well as in passing over some smooth projecting shoulders of rocks.' The climb is, in truth, most arduous—'bien pénible,' as my guide said. My *chaussure* was sadly against me—thin-soled boots, which doubled under me. Let no one undertake this ascent without being strongly shod.

As we ascended, new wonders were revealed—more precipices, cascades, and glaciers: it was literally alps on alps. The top of the great waterfall was still far above us; and it gave me a very good idea of its altitude, when, after more than an hour's ascent, I found that we were still beneath the level of the glacier from whence it is supplied. About two hours were occupied in ascending the first series of precipices, above which patches of snow are met with. Our course now lay through a kind of vertical gully nearly filled with snow. Up this we scrambled, taking advantage of the hardness of the snow to make it our path. Above us rose tremendous precipices, terminating in jagged peaks, on which my guide with his practised eye discerned a herd of izzards. I saw them remarkably well through my telescope, balanced, like aerial creatures, on the giddy heights, one amongst them evidently acting as sentinel. It was beautiful to witness their wild attitudes, ready, at a moment's warning from their watchful leader, to bound from crag to crag, or descend the awful precipices, where man's foot has never been.

My guide, whose heart was evidently more in the hunting than in his present business, became half wild with excitement at the sight of these izzards. It was the largest herd he had seen that year, and, with many a *sacré*, he bemoaned his fate that he should be without his rifle; though I endeavoured to convince him that there was nothing to regret, as he could not at the same time hunt izzards and conduct me to the Brèche.

We now fairly lost sight of the Cirque, and were in the midst of snow and glaciers which covered a steep, inclined about forty-five degrees. The surmounting of this slope was a most fatiguing affair for me, as the snow was very slippery, and it happened that I retrograded nearly as often as I advanced. This part of the ascent occupied about an hour. My guide now turned to the left, for the purpose of crossing a glacier, the inclination of which is so great that it is the next thing to impossible to ascend it. The passage over this glacier, beyond which lies the Brèche, is by far the most dangerous part of the undertaking. At the place where we encountered it, its breadth may be about four hundred yards; but throughout, its inclination is such that the slightest false step would prove fatal, for beneath are precipices of fearful depth. Here crampons are used. I was fairly exhausted when I came to the edge of this glacier, and despite the protestations of my guide, who declared that there was no time to lose, I threw myself on the snow, and would, had I been left alone, have been asleep in a few moments.

It is customary for the few tourists who visit the Brèche to take two guides, for the purpose of crossing this glacier in safety; and I had cause to regret my ignorance of the practice, for although I trod most cautiously in the notches cut by my guide, yet my limbs were so weak, that when about half-way across, I stumbled, and for a moment gave myself up for lost. Happily, my guide was sufficiently near to grasp my extended arms, and shouting: 'Prenez garde! prenez garde! Courage! courage!' he sustained me until I recovered my balance. Then it was that I became fully aware of the mistake I had committed in making this excursion without previous training; and I admonished Jaques in future, to give those who desired to scale the Brèche fair warning of the dangers and difficulties attendant upon the undertaking.

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My escape was not rendered the less interesting by a story which my guide related to me of an unfortunate traveller, who when his crampon, by some accident, caught his trousers, lost his balance, and there being no friendly hand to arrest him, in an instant sped down the sloping ice with the speed of an avalanche, and was almost instantaneously lost for ever.

It was here that Mr Paris, who was rash enough to attempt ascending to the Brèche without a guide, was obliged to give up the task. 'The sight of this glacier,' he observes, 'was too appalling. I could not summon sufficient resolution to attempt the passage, which was in distance about a quarter of a mile, and wisely, I think, abandoned it. To understand all its terrors, the place must be seen. Once slip, and you are gone for ever, past all human aid: the death is too frightful for contemplation.'

Bracing my shattered nerves for the occasion, I resumed my labour, taking care, however, to hold my guide's hand; and thus moving slowly and cautiously, I had at length the inexpressible satisfaction of achieving the formidable passage of this terrible glacier. The rest of the journey was comparatively easy, though the elevation—above 9000 feet—and the steepness were trying enough. But all sense of fatigue forsook me when the huge portal—the tiny notch as seen from Gèdres—yawned in all its stern magnificence before me. It was a fit reward for all my toil, and I felt that I would have willingly endured even greater sufferings to make acquaintance with such a scene as now met my astonished gaze.

Eager to achieve the crowning feat of my undertaking, I hastened onwards; and with beating heart I soon stood within the jaws of the mighty portal, through which swept the howling wind. A step more, and I was in Spain. Glaciers slope away on each side of the wall; but all along the front of the Brèche, on the French side, the glacier is scooped out into a deep fosse or cavity, by the action of the sun's rays pouring from the south through the opening. A wild world of mountains appeared to the south, those in the foreground covered with snow, and the more distant looming hazily over the plains of Saragossa. And this was Spain!—wondrous land, defying description, and in memory resembling, not realities, but fragments of tremendous dreams. Towards France, the scene is softer. Mountains there are, sky-piled, but there are forests too, the home of wolves

Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave!
Burning for blood; bony, and gaunt, and grim;

and vales of emerald, and silver streams, and gleaming lakes. But how hope to convey anything like a faithful impression of the panorama seen from the Brèche-de-Roland! I will not attempt it, preferring rather to advise the reader, should he not be stricken in years, to see it himself.

My guide produced the contents of his wallet, which, thanks to Madame Cazean's provident forethought, were good and abundant; and having placed the wine-flasks in the ice—there was enough at hand to ice the great Heidelberg tun—I sat down on the ridge of the Brèche, one leg in Spain, the other in France, and my body in amiable neutrality. Oh, the delight of that repast! there never was so tender a fowl, never wine so good. While thus engaged in refreshing exhausted nature, I even forgot that the terrible glacier had to be recrossed, and the steep snow-slopes to be descended.

The day continued faithful to its early morning promise. A bright sun—unfelt, however, at this great elevation—poured down a flood of light on the far-stretching glaciers and snow-fields, on which we discerned izzards, which seemed, when in motion, like points moving in space. These, and a few eagles, were the only living things that met our eye. Fain would I have spent hours here, but my guide was very properly obdurate; and having done great justice to our meal, we prepared to descend. Before leaving the Brèche, where we remained for about an hour and a half, he conducted me to a small cave on the Spanish side between the Brèche and the glacier, where smugglers pass the night, waiting for the early morning hours to descend into France. Desperate work! and desperate must be the men engaged in it. Being considerably recruited in strength, I found the passage of the glacier much less arduous than it was in ascending; and having passed it in safety, we flew down the snow inclines with delightful rapidity, in five minutes clearing ground which cost us an hour to surmount. We reached Gavarnie at seven o'clock, and pausing for half an hour, rode on to Luz, where we arrived as the night closed.

OUR WILD-FRUITS.

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WHY is it that the wild *flowers* of England have attracted so much attention of late years, whilst the wild *fruits* have been passed over in silence, and allowed to bud and bloom, to ripen their fruit, and to perish, inglorious and unnoticed? It would be difficult to give a reply to this question; I will therefore not attempt it, but rather invite you, my friends, to assist me in removing this reproach from the wild-fruits of our land, and give me a little of your attention whilst we inquire what these are, and where they grow, and examine a little into their structure and uses, as well as into their classification. In doing so, I think we shall find that, though England does not indigenously afford so many or such rich fruits as those which are the products of some other lands, yet that she possesses several kinds which, even in their uncultivated state, are

edible, and pleasant to the taste, and some of which form the stocks on which, by budding or grafting, many of the most valuable productions of our gardens and orchards are established. I think that many will be surprised to find, that the list I shall give them of fruits indigenous in England is so long and so respectable. The plum, the cherry, the apple and pear tribes—the raspberry, with its allies—the gooseberry, and currant, red and black—the service-tree, with its pleasant subacid fruit, and the abounding whortleberry and cranberry tribes, which cover immense tracts of our hills with their myrtle-like foliage and pretty heath-like bloom, and produce such harvests of useful fruit freely to whoever will take the trouble of gathering it—are surely treasures not to be despised!

It is true that in the present day, when the constantly increasing importation both of fruit and fruit-trees, together with the wonderful horticultural improvements which are daily taking place, have brought richer and better kinds of fruit more or less within the reach even of our poorest cottagers—when every little valley among the hills is enriched with its beautiful orchards, and every farmhouse and cottage may boast its luscious plum or cherry trees, and its row of bright fruited raspberry or strawberry plants—when all thrifty housewives may, at small expense, have their little store of pleasant jams and jellies made from fruits which used to be beyond the reach of even our island kings, and the 'sedulous bees' located on every homestead present us with their amber sweets—we can perhaps scarcely appreciate the real importance which must have attached to these now comparatively worthless fruits at a time when the land on which our most populous cities stand was covered by woods and brakes, nay, in many places by thick, tangled forests, or wild and deep morasses. But, even now, these fruits are treasures to the cotter and the child, as we shall see in the course of our discussion; and even to persons of more luxurious habits, several of those that I have named are of value and importance. Let us first look at those which rank under the natural order *Rosaceæ*, under which head we shall find the greatest number of our English fruit-bearing plants. We will give a little botanical sketch of the general characteristics of this order, as elucidatory of what we may hereafter have to say before we proceed to the details of any of its members. The chief of these characteristics are, that in the order *Rosaceæ* the calyx is in most cases formed of five lobes, *with the petals and stamens rising from it*, the latter being generally numerous; the ovaries are several, or solitary, each of one cell, including, in most cases, one ovule or incipient seed—in some cases many—the style being lateral or terminal. Most flowers thus formed produce edible and harmless fruits. Loudon says: 'The ligneous species, which constitute this order, include the finest flowering shrub in the world—the rose—and trees which produce the most useful and agreeable fruit of temperate climates—namely, the apple, pear, plum, cherry, apricot, peach, and nectarine;' and he might have included the medlar and service trees. Now, this vast order is subdivided into several sub-orders or sections, under the first of which are classed all whose fruit is a drupe, of which the plum and cherry are examples. We will then take them first into our consideration, and begin by giving an account of what is the structure of a drupe.

That part of the carpel called the ovary, which encloses the seed, thickens, and changes into a fleshy substance, which, as the fruit matures, softens, and becomes a juicy, and often delicious pulp; this is the part which we eat in the plum, cherry, apricot, peach, and all which we call stone-fruits. The lining of the ovary at the same time extends, and hardens into the stony case which encloses the kernel, which kernel is the young seed enlarged and perfected. All fruits of this formation are called drupes, as those of the apple and pear form are called pomes, and those of the bramble, and some other tribes, berries. Our woods supply us with two sorts of plum, both edible—the sloe, or blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), and the wild bullace (*P. institia*.) Every one knows the sloe, at least every one who has spent any part of his youth amidst woodland scenes; but as there are some who, having been 'all their life in populous cities pent,' know but little of country delights, for their benefit we will describe the growth and appearance of our plants, as well as their qualities, obvious or hidden. The sloe is more frequently seen as a spiny shrub than as a tree; but when the suckers are removed, and the strength of the plant is all allowed to go into one stem, it forms a highly characteristic small tree. In hedges, it seldom exceeds twenty feet in height, but in woods and parks, it often attains to thirty. The wood is hard, and takes a fine polish, but is apt to crack, and is therefore seldom used, except for the handles of tools, and other such purposes. It throws up very long upright shoots, which make excellent walking-sticks; indeed, more are made from this tree throughout Europe than from any other. The dry branches are valuable in forming hedges, and protection for young trees, as well as for other agricultural purposes. The bark is black, whence its name of blackthorn; the blossoms appear before the leaves, and beautify our hedges with their delicate

whiteness during the cold month of March, when few other shrubs send forth their blossoms; and this season is therefore called by country-people 'blackthorn winter.' The leaves form a better substitute for tea than any other European plant; and they have been, and are abundantly used in the adulteration of that commodity. The fruit is a plum about the size of a small filbert, of a dark purple hue, coated with a most exquisite blue bloom. The flesh is of a sharp, bitter acid, yet not unpleasant even when raw; when fully ripe, it makes a tolerable preserve, or pudding, and the juice, when well fermented, makes a wine not unlike new port. The sloe, as well as the cherry, and all other plants of its tribe, contains in it a portion of prussic acid; but the quantity is so minute, that there can be no injury derived from the use of either the leaves or fruit of most species. The common laurel (*Cerasus laurocerasus*) contains it in greater quantity than any other kind, but even of this the berries may be eaten with impunity, and are freely used by gipsies, who both eat them raw and make them into puddings.

The other plum of our wilds is the bullace (*P. institia*), the fruit of which differs from that of the sloe in being larger and less bitter. It is sometimes black, but oftener yellowish and waxy, beautifully tinted with red, and makes better pies and puddings than the sloe, for which purposes it is often sold in the markets. In Provence, where, as in other parts of France, this plum abounds, it is called 'Prune sibanelle,' because, from its sourness, it is impossible to whistle after eating it! The entire plant is used for much the same purposes as the sloe. Old Gerard says, that its leaves are 'good against the swelling of the uvula, the throat, gums, and kernels under the ears, throat, and jaws.' How far modern physicians might agree in this is doubtful; possibly they might class the prescription, as he does some of those of his predecessors, under the head of 'old wives' fables.' Both the plum and cherry send out from their bark a sort of gum, which exudes freely, particularly in old and diseased trees. It was formerly supposed to be sovereign against some diseases. The number of varieties which have been grafted on these wild stocks is very great. So long ago as 1597, Gerard recounts: 'I have threescore sorts in my garden (at Holborn), all strange and rare: there be in other places many more common, and yet yeerely commeth to our hands others not knowne before.' The bark of both kinds of wild plum was formerly much used in medicine, and considered equal to the Peruvian bark in cases of intermittent fever. But we must not forget, in recounting the *uses* of these and other fruits, to take into our consideration the important additions that their free growth affords to the sources of enjoyment and amusement of our youthful population in country districts. 'Snagging' (for sloes are called *snags* in some counties), nutting, blackberry picking, cherry hunting—all in their turn form attractions to the boys and girls in our villages; and many a merry party sallies forth into the woods on a half or whole holiday, with satchel, bag, and basket, to enjoy the fresh air and bright sunshine, and to leap, and jump, and rejoice in all the wild vagaries of youth among the fresh uplands and hills, scrambling over all obstruction—the elder climbing the old trees, and rifling them of their spoil—the younger and less adventurous hooking down the branches, and claiming the right of all they can collect 'by hook or by crook.' But wo to the poor mothers who have to mend the garments in which the onslaught has been made!—wo to the little boy or girl whose mother has not the good sense to discern, in her child's rosy cheeks and bright eyes, a compensation for the rags in the frock or trousers, which is sure to be the consequence of a day spent in harrying the shrubs and briers! But many centuries must our youth have thus 'imbibed both sweet and smart' from yielding to these woodland attractions. May not we fancy whole herds of our little British or Anglo-Saxon ancestors rushing forth into the almost inaccessible woods which in those days clothed our island, their long sunny hair hanging to the waist—for 'no man was allowed to cut his hair until he had slaine an enemy of his country in the field, or at least taken his armes from him'—clothed in linen, their fair skins disfigured by the blue woad with which they were accustomed to paint themselves, and armed with cross-bows, all as merry, as idle, and as reckless as the children of the present century? We may fancy these little Leowulphs and Siegfrieds, with their admiring little Edgithas and Edithas looking on, whilst they climbed the tall trees with the agility of wild-cats and squirrels, most proud when they could attain the richest and ripest fruit, and but spurred on to greater enthusiasm by the knowledge that wolves and bears were by no means rare visitors in those pristine forests. Or we may picture to ourselves their parents and elders, after a long summer-day spent in hunting the wild-boar, the bear, or the more timid deer, rejoicing to slake their thirst, and refresh themselves with the cool and pleasant, though somewhat crude fruit, of the plum and bullace trees; and in doing so, we may perhaps come nearer to having some just idea of their real worth, and be led to see how graciously God adapts his gifts to the wants and circumstances of his creatures.

The cherry is the next wild fruit which claims our attention, and of this we find two varieties. The first, the gean-tree (*Cerasus sylvestris*), called by the peasants in Suffolk and Cheshire, 'Merny-tree,' from the French word *merisier*, is found in most parts of England in woods and coppices. This fruit is also called in some countries coroon, from *corone*, a crow. Its flowers are in nearly sessile umbels of the purest white; its leaves broadly lance-shaped and downy beneath, pointed and serrated, with two unequal glands at the base. The fruit is a drupe, globose, fleshy, and devoid of bloom. Several varieties occur in this species, differing chiefly in the colour of the fruit, which is, however, usually black. The wood is firm, strong, and heavy. Evelyn includes it in his list of forest-trees, and describes it as rising to a height of eighty feet, and producing valuable timber: he says, 'if sown in proper soil, they will thrive into stately trees, beautified with blossoms of surpassing whiteness, greatly relieving the sedulous bees and attracting birds.' The wood is useful for many purposes, and polishes well. Though the cherry is now classed among the fruits native to this isle, authors inform us that it was introduced by the Romans. Evelyn says: 'It was 680 years after the foundation of Rome ere Italy had tasted a cherry of their own, which being then brought thither out of Pontus, did, after 120 years, travel *ad ultimos Britannos*.' Its name is derived from Kerasoon, the city whence it was first brought into Europe by Lucullus; and so valuable did he consider the acquisition, that he gave it a most conspicuous place among the royal treasures which he brought home from the sacking of the capital of Armenia. The fruit of the gean-tree is rather harsh till fully ripe, and then becomes somewhat vapid and watery, yet it is very grateful to the palate after a day's rambling in the woods; and, moreover, this wild stock is the source whence we have, by culture, obtained the rich varieties which now grace our gardens. The cherry is a very prolific tree. We have heard of one, the fruit of which sold for L.5 per annum for seven successive years; but it requires care in pruning, as it produces its fruit generally at the points of the branches, which should therefore never be shortened. Phillips says: 'Cherries bear the knife worse than any other sort of fruit-trees, and we would therefore impress on the pruner, that though the fruit was won by the sword, it may be lost by the knife!' The other species of cherry is the bird-cherry (*Cerasus padus*), a pretty little smooth-branched tree, with doubly-serrate, acute leaves, and beautiful white blossoms, which grow in long-shaped racemes, hanging in pendulous clusters, and forming an elegant ornament to the hedges and woods in May. It grows chiefly in Scotland and the north of England, where the peasants call the fruit, which is small, black, and harsh, 'hagberries.' This fruit can scarcely be called edible, but it gives an agreeable flavour to brandy; and in Sweden and other northern countries is sometimes added to home-made wines. There is, or was, a feast celebrated in Hamburg, called the Feast of Cherries, in which troops of children parade the streets with green boughs ornamented with cherries, to commemorate a triumph obtained in the following manner:—'In 1432, the Hussites threatened the city of Hamburg with immediate destruction, when one of the citizens, named Wolf, proposed that all the children in the city, from seven to fourteen years of age, should be clad in mourning, and sent as suppliants to the enemy. Procopius Nasus, chief of the Hussites, was so touched with this spectacle, that he received the young suppliants, regaled them with cherries and other fruits, and promised them to spare the city. The children returned crowned with leaves, holding cherries, and crying "Victory!"'

THINGS TALKED OF IN LONDON.

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September 1852.

PROGRESS, in one or other of the many forms in which it has of late presented itself, is now the prime subject of talk; and if the progress be real, it would not be easy to find a more satisfactory cause of conversation. Go-ahead people take much interest in the ocean steam-boat question; and now that the Collins line of steamers is supported by a grant from the United States government, double the amount of that paid to the British line, it is said that we are to be irrecoverably beaten in the passage of the 'ferry,' as Jonathan calls it, between Liverpool and New York. East sailing is no doubt an essential desideratum in these days—but what a price to pay for it! A quarter of a million on one side the Atlantic, and half a million on the other: as though there were not enterprise enough in either land to undertake the work—and do it well too—without a subsidy. One result may be safely predicated—that the winner will be the first to give in; and the timid may comfort themselves with the assurance, that neither national prosperity nor 'decadence' depends on the issue. A line to run from Liverpool to Portland, in the state of Maine, is in

contemplation; and the Cunard Company are building four screw-steamers—the *Andes*, *Alps*, *Jura*, and *Etna*—which are to carry the mails to Chagres, as well as New York.

The first steam-collier has come into the Thames, having run the distance from Newcastle in forty-eight hours. Forty hours, we are told, will surface in future, when the stiffness of the new machinery shall have worked off. She consumed eight tons of coal on the voyage, and brought 600 tons as cargo, the whole of which was discharged in the day, and the vessel went back for a further supply. Apart from the facilities for loading and unloading, the certainty with which these steamers will make the passage, will benefit the citizens of London, by saving them from the rise in price which inevitably follows the fall of the thermometer in December.

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But with all this, our already crowded river is becoming overcrowded, to remedy which a promising project is afoot for a new dock at Plaistow Marshes, a few miles below London Bridge, where a fleet or two of the ever-multiplying ships may find accommodation. The extent is to be ninety acres, with a mile of wharfage, and nearly 200,000 feet of fireproof warehouse-room. How far this will meet the want, may be inferred from the fact, that the tonnage of the port of London has increased from 990,110 tons in 1828, to 2,170,322 tons in 1852. And if an experience of three years may be relied on, the increase is to be progressive; for of new British-built ships in 1849, the amount was 121,266 tons; in 1850, 137,530 tons; in 1851, 152,563 tons. Such an augmentation shews, that we have nothing to fear from repeal of the Navigation Laws; and the fruits of unrestriction are shewn in the increased size of ships, in their improved external form, and interior accommodation. It may be mentioned here, that the Lords of the Admiralty have ordered that all ships' log-books sent to their department shall be true and faithful copies, with a track-chart of the winds experienced on the outward and homeward voyage, in addition to the usual information. Steam-vessels are to keep a record of the quantity of coal on board at noon each day—of the time it is estimated to last—and of the number of miles steamed in the previous twenty-four hours.

Railways, too, exhibit signs of progress. The gross proceeds of the traffic for the first seven months of 1851 amounted to L.8,254,303, while for the same portion of the present year the sum is L.8,504,002; a result the more striking when it is remembered that last year we had the Exhibition. The new lines opened in 1851 comprised not more than 269 miles—the smallest amount in any year since 1848—so that, at the end of December, we had 6890 miles of railway actually opened, and 5101 miles authorised and still to be made. It is clear that the greater portion of the latter will never be attempted, seeing that people have really found out that railways are not exempt from the operation of the great natural laws of supply and demand. Some of the facts of last year's traffic are astounding: the total number of passengers conveyed was 85,391,095—twelve millions more than in the preceding year; and the aggregate returns amounted to L.14,997,459. What a difference when compared with the sum paid for travel and transport twenty years ago! In the United States, the number of miles of railway actually open is 13,200, which, by the end of 1855, it is expected will be increased to 18,000 or 20,000. There are 27,000 miles of electric telegraphs, but in this estimate the five or six lines between any two places are all counted. On one of the lines from New York to Washington, 253,857 messages were sent in the year ending last July, the toll for which amounted to 103,232 dollars—over L.20,000.

Notwithstanding all this material development, in some respects there is no advance—except it be of fares, which on some lines running out of London have been increased in accordance with 'arrangements' between companies who seem desirous of substituting wholesale monopoly for wholesome competition. Murmurs on every side already attest the effects of such a change of system, and it is to be hoped that imperative means will be found of insuring more attention than at present to the comfort and safety of passengers. No one out of the position of a director or shareholder can see any good reason why English railway carriages should be less comfortably fitted up than those of the continent. How is it that second-class carriages are to be seen abroad with stuffed seats and padded backs, and never in England? It cannot be that we do not pay enough for the accommodation. We pay too much—a fact worth remembering with railway amalgamation looming in the future; an event which must not take place without the public coming in demonstrably as third party.

The British Association have met, and gone through their usual routine of business, with what results—beyond the reports in the public prints—will be best shewn by the movement of science for the next few months. It is always

something that knowledge is increased; but whether the accumulating of fact on fact, to the neglect of generalising those facts, be the true means thereunto, remains to be proved. Science has been soaring in search of facts; for the committee appointed to manage the Kew Observatory, thinking that the phenomena of meteorology would answer further questioning, have sent up a balloon, with instruments and observers, to make a series of observations. The temperature was read off from highly sensitive thermometers at each minute during the ascent, so as to ascertain the difference of the heat of successive strata of the atmosphere, and the rate of variation. In the first flight, the party reached the height of 19,500 feet, and came to a temperature of 7 degrees, or 25 degrees below the freezing-point, which, considering the state of the temperature at the surface, was an unexpected result—in fact, an abnormal one; and not dissimilar to that which so much astonished our neighbours across the Channel when Barral and Bixio went up. But if it be abnormal, as is said, it is remarkable that precisely the same temperature was met with at about the same height on the second ascent. Another object was, to bring down specimens of air from different altitudes, for analysis; to try the effect of the actinometer at great elevations; and to note the hygrometric condition. There are to be four ascents, so as, if possible, to obtain something like satisfactory data by repetition; and in due time, detailed reports of the whole of the observations will be made public.

As ozone is at present attracting attention, it might have been worth while to ascertain the proportion of this constituent in the higher regions of the atmosphere. According to Messrs Frémy and Becquerel, the term ozone ought to be abandoned; for, after a series of careful experiments, they have come to the conclusion, that there is no real transformation of matter in the production of ozone, but that it is nothing more than 'electrified oxygen,' or oxygen in a particular state of chemical affinity. Further research will perhaps show us whether they or Schoenbein are in the right. At all events, the inquiry is interesting, particularly at this time, when cholera—to which ozone is antagonistic—is said to be again about to pay us a visit; and seeing that the doctrine of non-contagion, put forth so authoritatively by our General Board of Health, is disputed; and that a certain morbid influence can be conveyed and imparted, is shewn by abundant evidence to be alike probable and possible. What took place lately in Poland is cited as a case in point. Excavations were being made at Lask, near Kalisch, which laid open the cemetery where the bodies of those who died of cholera in 1832 had been buried. All who were engaged in the work died, and the disease spread fatally throughout the neighbourhood. What an important question here remains to be settled! and how is it to be settled while people are unclean and towns undrained?

Astronomers have given good proof of activity during the present year, by the discovery of four new planets and one new comet—two of them by Mr Hind, who has now the merit of having discovered half a dozen of these minor members of our planetary system. Fifty years ago, such an achievement would have made an exalted reputation; but in these days of keen enterprise in science, as well as in commerce, we do not think much of finding such little worlds as those in question. If nothing short of the marvellous is to satisfy us, who shall say that even this will not present itself to the far-piercing ken of the new monster telescope—refracting, not reflecting—established on Wandsworth Common, at the cost of an amateur astronomer, for the promotion of the celestial science? Lord Rosse has now a competitor; and with a tube of eighty feet in length, and the power of looking direct at the distant object, may we not hope to hear of great discoveries by means of the new instrument? Photographers will be able to obtain what has long been a desideratum—a large image of the moon; and the sun will doubtless have to reveal a few more secrets concerning his physical constitution, to say nothing of the remote and mysterious nebulae. Apropos of the sun, Father Secchi, of the observatory at Rome, has been questioning the great luminary with philosophical apparatus, to ascertain whether any difference could be detected in the heat from different parts of its surface, and the proportion lost in its passage through the atmosphere. He finds that the equatorial region is the hottest; and that, as on our earth, the temperature diminishes towards the poles: it is in the central region that spots most frequently appear. The result of the investigations is that, after allowing for absorption, the heat which comes to the earth corresponds in amount to that inferred from photometric experiments, whereby the experiments made at Paris and at Rome confirm each other.

Now that Mr Fox Talbot has so praiseworthy given up his patent right to Talbotypes, except in the matter of portraits, the art of photography will find itself stimulated to yet further developments; and with free practice, many new applications of it will be discovered. Magic-lantern slides, for instance, obtained from the negative image, are already lowered in price, while their

style and finish are singularly beautiful. The architect of the bridge now being built over the Neva, at St Petersburg, is turning it to account in a very practical manner. Being an Englishman, he has had to endure much jealousy and misrepresentation, and attempts have been made to prejudice the authorities against him. To counteract these designs, he takes every week photographs of the work, which distinctly shew its progress, and these he sends to the emperor, who looks at them in a stereoscope of the largest size, and can thus satisfy himself of the actual condition of the bridge by means which malice or envy would not easily falsify. If the photograph shews finished arches, of what use will it be to deny their existence? People out of Russia may perhaps find it worth while to try the same experiment; and before long, a new order of 'detectives' on elevated stations, will be taking photographs of all that passes in the streets, and pickpockets *in delicto* will find their offence and their likeness imprinted by one and the same process. With such a means of detection, and all the police stations connected by telegraphic wires, what are the thieves to do?

Manchester shews itself earnest in the cause of education, by having established a Free Library of 16,000 volumes for reference, and 5000 for lending, and paid for it by voluntary subscription—L.800 of which was contributed by 20,000 of the working-classes. To their honour be it recorded! But the inhabitants have done yet more; they have made over the library to the town-council, that it may become one of their public institutions, and have agreed to pay a half-penny rate to provide the necessary funds for its perpetual maintenance. May they have their reward!

Considering that educational reform or renovation may ere long be looked for at Oxford, in accordance with the recommendations of the University Commission, it behoves other parts of the kingdom to be fully awake to the importance of the subject. 'There is a spreading conviction, that man was made for a higher purpose than to be a beast of burden, or a creature of sense;' and it will not do to stifle this conviction. Comprehensive endeavours must be made to educate and enlighten; to touch the heart as well as to train the intellect. And it must not be forgotten, that education involves very much besides mere book-learning—the mechanical duties, namely, of everyday life. Something of the latter is to be tried in the City Hospice and Soup-kitchen just opened near the foot of Holborn Hill. Though fitted up in an old house, it is a training institute of a new kind, where individuals of both sexes will acquire useful knowledge in a practical way, best explained by a passage from the report of the opening:

'In one portion of the educational department is an ironing-table, provided with the necessary utensils, for the purpose of instructing the women and girls in that necessary portion of domestic science, from the finest description of work down to the very coarsest. Adjoining this is a table laid out *en famille*; this also being considered, and justly so, no unimportant branch of knowledge. In another portion is a table prepared for a large party: every variety of glass likely to be required being properly placed, and every napkin being differently folded, so as to enable the ambitious neophyte to suit the taste of all mistresses. Beyond this is a small closet, with a window resembling those of an ordinary-sized house; and this the men and women are both taught to clean, while the closet itself serves as a cover for the simple operation of polishing boots and shoes. To this succeeds a table, upon which are placed the utensils for cleaning plate, and on another table the instruments for cleaning lamps.' Such an establishment ought to prosper; and perhaps this one will, if the giving away of soup for nothing, which is another part of its functions, does not kill it. There seems something incongruous in encouraging industry and self-reliance with one hand, and helplessness with the other.

On the whole, it must be admitted that we are making progress, and those who think so, may very properly talk about it. Among a large number, the Crystal Palace becomes daily a greater subject of importance. Soon the last portions of the famous structure will be removed from Hyde Park, to rise in renewed beauty on the hill-slope at Sydenham; where the restored edifice is to become a permanent object of interest, far transcending all previous achievements in the way of exhibitions.

Of foreign matters which have attracted attention, there is the remarkable fall of *grain*, not rain, in Belgium, a few weeks since, of a kind altogether unknown in that country. Some of it has been sown, with a view to judge of it by the plant; meanwhile, the learned are speculating as to its origin. The Dutch, pursuing their steady course of reclamation, have just added some hundreds of acres to their territory on the borders of the Scheldt; and it is said that the grand enterprise of draining the Haarlemmer-Meer is at last

completed, there being nothing now left but a small running stream across the lowest part of the basin. The quantity pumped away in the last eight months of 1851, averaged a little over three inches per month, a small amount, apparently; but when it is known, that lowering the lake one inch only took away four million tons of water, we may form a fair idea of the importance of the work, and of the quantity lifted in the eight months. The depth at the beginning of this year was three feet eight inches, and this is now discharged. To have carried such a work to a successful issue, may be ranked among the greatest of engineering triumphs.

To turn to another part of the world: there is something interesting from the Sandwich Islands. The king wishes to assimilate his government to that of England, to guard against the casualty of a *coup d'état*, and a small military force has been organised for defence. The Report of the Minister of the Interior states, that 130 persons had taken the oath of allegiance within the year, of whom 66 were citizens of the United States; 31 British; 15 Chinese; and 18 of other countries. The foreign letters received and sent numbered 24,787—more than half to the United States; besides which 31,050 domestic letters were transmitted among the group of islands. There are 535 free-schools, of which 431 are Protestant, with 12,976 scholars, and 104 Roman Catholic, with 2056 scholars. There were 1171 marriages; and the population returns shew that the number of natives is still slowly on the decrease, the births among them having been 2424, while the deaths were 5792.

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ADVENTURES OF A YORKSHIRE GROOM.

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Letters from Parma, of the 9th instant, announce that the resolution has been taken at Vienna to deprive the Duke of Parma of the administration of his states, and to put in a regency, of which Ward is to be the head. The elevation of Ward affords not only a singular instance of the mutability of human affairs, but of the tendency of the Anglo-Saxon race, when transplanted to foreign countries, to emerge to eminence, and surpass others by the homely but rare qualities of common-sense and unfaltering energy. Ward was a Yorkshire groom. The Duke of Lucca, when on a visit to this country, perceiving the lad's merit, took him into his service, and promoted him, through the several degrees of command in his stable, to be head-groom of the ducal stud. Upon Ward's arrival in Italy with his master, it was soon found that the intelligence which he displayed in the management of the stables was applicable to a variety of other departments. In fact, the duke had such a high opinion of Ward's wisdom, that he very rarely omitted to consult him upon any question that he was perplexed to decide. As Louis XII. used to answer those who applied to him on any business, by referring them to the Cardinal d'Amboise, with the words: 'Ask George,' so Charles of Lucca cut short all applications with 'Go to Ward.' He now became the factotum of the prince, won, in the disturbances which preceded the revolutionary year of 1848, a diplomatic dignity, and was despatched to Florence upon a confidential mission of the highest importance. He was deputed to deliver to the Grand Duke the act of abdication of the Duke of Lucca. Soon after, in 1849, when the Duke of Lucca resigned his other states to his son, Ward became the head counsellor of this prince. Ward was on one occasion despatched to Vienna in a diplomatic capacity. Schwarzenberg was astonished at his capacity; in fact, the *ci-devant* Yorkshire stable-boy was the only one of the diplomatic body that could make head against the impetuous counsels, or rather dictates, of Schwarzenberg; and this was found highly useful by other members of the diplomatic body. An English gentleman, supping one night at the Russian ambassador's, complimented him upon his excellent ham. 'There's a member of our diplomatic corps here,' replied Meyendorff, 'who supplies us all with hams from Yorkshire, of which county he is a native.' Ward visited England. The broad dialect and homely phrase betraying his origin through the profusion of orders of all countries sparkling on his breast, he rarely ventured to appear at evening *soirées*. Lord Palmerston declared he was one of the most remarkable men he had ever met with. Ward, through all his vicissitudes, has preserved an honest pride in his native country. He does not conceal his humble origin. The portraits of his parents, in their home-spun clothes, appear in his splendid saloon of the prime-minister of Parma.—*Newspaper paragraph.*

DURATION OF PLANTS.

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The several kinds of plants vary exceedingly in their degrees of longevity, some being annual, perfecting their growth within a year, ripening their seeds and perishing; others are perennial, and continue to grow and flourish for years and centuries. Warm and cold climates have much influence on the duration of plants, and, in some few instances, plants that are annual in cold climates become perennial when transplanted into warm regions, and the contrary when transplanted from warm to cold ones. There are some kinds of trees that are very short-lived, as the peach and the plum; others reach a great age, as the pear and the apple. Some kinds of forest-trees are remarkable for their duration, and specimens are in existence seemingly coeval with the date of the present order of things on our globe. The oak, chestnut, and pine of our forests, reach the age of from 300 to 500 years. The cypress or white cedar of our swamps has furnished individuals 800 or 900 years old. Trees are now living in England and Constantinople more than 1000 years old, of the yew, plane, and cypress varieties; and Addison found trees of the boabab growing near the Senegal, in Africa, which, reckoning from the ascertained age of others of the same species, must have been nearly 4000 years of age. It may be remarked, that plants of the same variety attain about the same age in all climates where they are produced.—*American Courier*.

THE RETURN TO LEZAYRE.

BY THE REV. JAMES GILBORNE LYONS, LL.D.

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Lezayre is the name of a beautiful district in the Isle of Man.

I came to the place where my childhood had dwelt,
To the hearth where in early devotion I knelt—
The fern and the bramble grew wild in the hall,
And the long grass of summer waved green on the
wall:

The roof-tree was fallen, the household had fled,
The garden was ruined, the roses were dead,
The wild bird flew scared from her desolate stone,
And I breathed in the home of my boyhood—alone.

That moment is past, but it left on my heart
A remembrance of sadness which will not depart:
I have wandered afar since that sorrowful day,
I have wept with the mournful, and laughed with the
gay;

I have lived with the stranger, and drank of the rills
Which go warbling their music on loftier hills;
But I never forgot, in rejoicing or care,
That mouldering hearth, and those hills of Lezayre.

Yet droop not, my spirit! nor hopelessly mourn
Over ills which the best and the wisest have borne:
Though the greetings of love, and the voices of mirth,
May for ever be hushed in the homesteads of earth;
Though the dreams and the dwellings of childhood
decay,

And the friends whom we cherish go hasting away,
No young hopes are scattered, no heart-strings are
riven,
No partings are known in the households of Heaven.

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