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NORTH'S SPECIMENS OF THE BRITISH CRITICS.

Dryden.

Poetry, according to Lord Bacon a Third Part of Learning, must be a social interest of momentous power. That Wisest of Men—so our dear friends may have heard—extols it above history and above philosophy, as the more divine in its origin, the more immediately and intimately salutary and sanative in its use. Are not Shakspeare and Milton two of our greatest moral teachers? Criticism opens to us the poetry we possess; and, like a magnanimous kingly protector, shelters and fosters all its springing growths. What is criticism as a science? Essentially this—FEELING KNOWN—that is, affections of the heart and imagination become understood subject-matter to the self-conscious intelligence. Must feeling perish because intelligence sounds its depths? Quite the reverse. Greatest minds are those in which, in and out of poetry, the understanding contemplates the will. Then first the soul has its proper strength. Disorderly passions are then tamed, and become the massy pillars of high-built virtue. Criticism? It is a shape of self-intuition. Confession and penitence, in the church, are a moral and a religious criticism. The imagination is less august and solemn, but of the same character. The first age of the world lived by divine instincts; the later must by reason. How, then, shall we possess the poetry of our being, unless we guard and arm it? If it be a benign, holy, potent faculty, nevertheless it cannot, the most delicate of all our faculties, sustain itself in the strife of opinions raging and thundering around. Then, if it should rightly hold dominion over us, let legislative opinion acknowledge, establish, and fortify that impaled territory. The temper of the times is in sundry respects favourable, notwithstanding its too frequent possession by an incensed political spirit. Has there not been for half a century a spontaneous, an ardent, a loving return in literature, of our own and all countries, to the old and great in the productions of the human mind—to nature, with all her fountains? Does not the spirit of man, in the great civilized nations at this day, travail with desire of knowing itself, its laws, its conditions, its means, its powers, its hopes? It studies with irregular, often blind and perverted, efforts; but still it studies—itself. And is not criticism, when it speaks, much bolder, more glowing and generous, ampler-spirited, more inspiring, and withal more enquiring and philosophical? During the whole period we speak of, poetry and criticism—in nature near akin—with occasional complaints and quarrels, have flourished amicably together, side by side. Both have been strong, healthy, and good. Prigs of both kinds—the pert and the pompous—will keep prating about the shallowness and superficiality of periodical criticism—deep enough to drown the whole tribe in its very fords. They call for systems. Why will they not be contented with the system of the universe?—of which they know not that periodical criticism is a conspicuous part. Every other year the nations without telescopes see the rising of some new, bright, particular star. Comets, with tails like O'Connell, are so common as to lose attraction, and blaze by weekly into indiscoverable realms. We have constructed an Orrery of Ebony, which we mean to exhibit at the next great cattle-show, displaying, in their luminous order, the orbs and orbits of all the heavenly bodies. In the centre——but this is not the time for such high revelations. We have now another purpose; and, leaving all those golden urns to yield light at their leisure, we desire you to take a look along with us at the choice critics of other days, waked by our potent voice from the long-gathering dust. In our plainer style, we beg, ladies and gentlemen, to draw your attention to a series of articles in *Blackwood*, of which this is Alpha. Omega is intended for a Christmas present to your great-grandchildren.

Ay, there were giants in those days, as well as in these—also much dwarfs. But we shall not lose ourselves with you in the darkness of antiquity—one longish stride backwards of some hundred and fifty years or so, and then let us leisurely look about us for the Critics. Who comes here? A grenadier—Glorious John. Him Scott, Hallam, Macaulay, have pronounced, each in his own peculiar and admirable way, to have been, in criticism, "a light to his people." Him Samuel Johnson called "a man whom every English generation must mention with reverence as a critic and a poet."

"Dryden," says the sage, in a splendid eulogium on his prose writings, "may be properly considered as the father of English criticism—as the writer who first taught us to determine, upon principles, the merit of composition. Of our former poets, the greatest dramatist wrote without rules, conducted through life and nature by a genius that rarely misled, and never

deserted him. Of the rest, those who knew the laws of propriety had neglected to teach them." And he adds wisely—"To judge rightly of an author, we must transport ourselves to his time, and examine what were the wants of his contemporaries, and what were his means of supplying them. That which is easy at one time was difficult at another." Let us, then, examine some of Dryden's expositions of principles; and first, those on which he defends Heroic Verse in Rhyme, as the best language of the tragic drama.

This can be done effectually only by following him wherever he has treated the subject, and by condensing all his opinions into one consecutive argument.

His first play, (a comedy,) "The Wild Gallant," was brought on the stage in February 1662-3, and with indifferent success, though he has told us that it was more than once the divertisement of Charles II. by his own command, and a favourite with "the Castlemain." "The Rival Ladies" (a tragi-comedy) was acted and published in the year following, and the serious scenes are executed in rhyme. Of its success we know nothing in particular; but Sir Walter thinks that the flowing verse into which some part of the dialogue is thrown, with the strong point and antithesis which all along distinguished his style, especially his argumentative poetry, tended to redeem the credit of the author of the "Wild Gallant." Up to this time Dryden, now in his thirty-third year, had not written much; but in his "Heroic Stanzas on the death of Oliver Cromwell," "Astrea Redux, or Poem on the Happy Restoration and Return of his Sacred Majesty," and "A Panegyric on his Coronation," he had not only shown his measureless superiority to the Sprats and Wallers—poetasters of the same class after all, though Sprat was always but a small fish, while Waller was long thought like a whale—but manifested a vigour of thought and expression that gave assurance of a veritable poet. In those noble compositions he exults in his conscious power of numerous verse; and, like an eagle in the middle element, sweeps along majestically on easy wings. In "The Rival Ladies," the rhymed dialogue is exceedingly graceful, the blank verse somewhat cumbrous; and, in his dedication to the Earl of Orrery, he justifies himself "for following the new way; I mean, of writing scenes *in verse*." It may here, once for all, be remarked, that in all his disquisitions, by "verse" he usually means rhyme as opposed to blank verse. "To speak properly," he says, "it is not so much a new way amongst us, as an old way revived; for many years before Shakspeare's plays was the tragedy of 'Queen Gorboduc,' in English verse, written by that famous Lord Buckhurst, afterwards Earl of Dorset." Dryden here shows how little conversant he then was with the old English drama. For the tragedy of "Ferrex and Porrex" was first surreptitiously published under the title of "Gorboduc," who is not Queen, but King of England; and it is not written in rhyme, but, excepting the choruses, in blank verse; while Sackville's part of the play comprehends only the two last acts, of themselves sufficient to place him in the highest order of Noble Authors. "But supposing," he continues, "our countrymen had not received this writing till of late, shall we oppose ourselves to the most polished and civilized nations of Europe? * * * All the Spanish and Italian tragedies I have yet seen are writ in rhyme. * * * Shakspeare (who, with some errors not to be avoided in that age, *had undoubtedly a larger soul of poesy than ever any of our nation*,) was the first who, to shun the pains of continual rhyming, invented that kind of writing which we call blank verse, but the French more properly *prose mesurée*; into which the English tongue so naturally glides, that in writing prose it is hardly to be avoided." Here again, it is hardly indeed worth while to remark, is another mistake; Marlow and several other dramatists having used blank verse (but how inferior to the divine man's!) before Shakspeare. Coleridge somewhere quotes a verse or two forming itself in prose composition as a rarity and a fault; but, though it had better perhaps be avoided, and though its frequent recurrence would be offensive, yet, when words in their natural order do form a verse, it might be difficult to give a good reason why they may not be permitted to do so, more especially if they are not felt to be a verse insulated among the circumfluent prose. From the very best prose we could pick out thousands of single verses, which are to be found only when you seek for them; and not from rich prose only like Coleridge's own or Jeremy Taylor's, but from the poorest, like Dr Blair's or Gerald's of Aberdeen. Dryden says he cannot "but admire how some men should perpetually stumble in a way so easy"—that is, as blank verse—"into which the English tongue so naturally glides," and should strive to attain it by inverting the order of the words, to make the "blanks" sound more heroically—as, for example, instead of "Sir, I ask your pardon," "Sir, I your pardon ask." And adds—"I should judge him to have little command of English, when the necessity of a rhyme should force often upon this rock; though sometimes it cannot easily be avoided; *and, indeed, this is the only inconvenience with which rhyme can be charged*." In this lively style does he pursue his argument in favour of rhyme. For this it is which makes its adversaries say *rhyme is not natural*! But the fault lies with the poet who is not master of his art, and either makes a vicious choice of words, or places them, for rhyme's sake, so unnaturally as no man would in ordinary speech. But when it is so judiciously ordered that the first word in the verse seems to beget the second, and that again the next, till that becomes the last word in the line, which, in the negligence of prose, would be so; it must then be granted, that rhyme has all the advantages of prose—*besides its own*.

"Glorious John" (who must have been laughing in his sleeve) then declares, that the "excellence and dignity of it were never fully known till Mr Waller taught it;" that it was afterwards "followed in the epic by Sir John Denham, in his 'Cooper's Hill,' a poem which your lordship knows, for the majesty of the style, is, and ever will be, the exact standard of good writing;" and that we are "acknowledging for the noblest use of it to Sir William D'Avenant, who at once brought it upon the stage, *and made it perfect in the Siege of Rhodes*!"

Having thus carried things all his own way, he triumphantly declares, that the advantages which rhyme has over blank verse are so many, that "it were lost time to name them." And then, with

fresh vigour, he sets himself to name some of the chief—and first, that one illustrated by Sir Philip Sidney in his "Defence of Poesy," "the help it brings to memory, which rhyme so knits up by the affinity of sound, that by remembering the last word in one line, we often call to mind both the verses." Then, in the quickness of repartees (which in discoursive scenes fall very often) it has, he says, so particular a grace, and is so aptly united to them, that the sudden smartness of the answer, and the exactness of the rhyme, set off the beauty of each other.

But its greatest benefit of all, according to Dryden, is, that it bounds and circumscribes the fancy. The great easiness of blank verse renders the poet too luxuriant; he is tempted to say many things which might be better omitted, or at least shut up in fewer words. But when the difficulty of artificial rhyming is interposed; where the poet commonly confines his verse to his couplet, and must continue that verse in such words that the rhyme shall naturally follow them, not they the rhyme, the fancy then gives leisure to the judgment to come in; which, seeing so heavy a task imposed, is ready to cut off all unnecessary expenses. And this furnishes a complete answer, he maintains, to the ordinary objection, that rhyme is only an embroidery of verse, to make that which is ordinary in itself pass for excellent with less examination. For that which most regulates the fancy, and gives the judgment its busiest employment, is like to bring forth the richest and clearest thoughts. The poet examines that most which he produces with the greatest leisure, and which he knows must pass the severest test of the audience, because they are aptest to have it ever in the memory. In conclusion, he winds up skilfully by applying all he has said to "a fit subject"—that is, an Heroic Play. For neither must the argument alone, but the characters and persons, be great and noble, otherwise rhymed verse would be out of place, which, for the reasons assigned, is manifestly suited for the utterance of lofty sentiments, and for occasions of dignity and importance. Heroic Plays were then all the rage, and Dryden was meditating to enter on that career which for many years occupied his genius, not essentially dramatic, to the exclusion of other kinds of poetry in which he afterwards excelled all competitors.

Sir Robert Howard's Heroic Play, the "Indian Queen," "part of which was written by Dryden," and the whole revised and corrected no doubt, especially in the article of versification, was acted in 1664 with great applause. "It presented," says Sir Walter, "battles and sacrifices on the stage, aërial demons singing in the air, and the god of dreams ascending through a trap, the least of which has often saved a worse tragedy." Evelyn, in his Memoirs, has recorded, that the scenes were the richest ever seen in England, or perhaps elsewhere, upon a public stage. Dryden, by its reception, was encouraged to engraft on it another drama called the "Indian Emperor"—a continuation of the tale—which had the most ample success, and, till a revolution in the public taste, retained possession of the stage. Soon after its publication, Sir Robert Howard, in a peevish Preface to some plays of his, chose to answer what Dryden had said in behalf of verse in his Epistle Dedicatory to his "Rival Ladies," and not only without any mention of his name, but without any allusion to the "Indian Emperor," while he bestowed the most extravagant eulogies on the heroic plays of my Lord of Orrery—"in whose verse the greatness of the majesty seems unsullied with the cares, and the inimitable fancy descends to us in such easy expressions, that they seem as if neither had ever been added to the other, but both together flowing from a height, like birds so high that use no balancing wings, but only with an easy care preserve a steadiness in motion. But this particular happiness among those multitudes which that excellent person is an owner of, does not convince my reason but employ my wonder; yet I am glad that such verse has been written for the stage, since it has so happily exceeded those whom we seemed to imitate. But while I give these arguments against verse, I may seem faulty that I have not only written ill ones, but written any; but since it was the fashion, I was resolved, as in all indifferent things, not to appear singular—the danger of the vanity being greater than the error; and therefore I followed it as a fashion, though very far off." Sir Robert appears to have been in the sulks, for some cause not now known, with his great brother-in-law; and was pleased to punish him by thus publicly pretending ignorance of his existence as an heroic play-wright. Yet the "Annus Mirabilis" was about this time dedicated to Sir Robert; and only about a year before, John had had a helping hand with the "Indian Queen." My Lord of Orrery must have been a proud man to have his gouty too so fervently kissed by the jealous rivals. "The muses," Dryden had said in his dedication to that nobleman, "have seldom employed your thoughts but when some violent fit of the gout has snatched you from affairs of state; and, like the priestess of Apollo, you never come to deliver your oracles but unwillingly and in torments. So we are obliged to your lordship's misery for our delight. You treat us with the cruel pleasure of a Turkish triumph, where those who cut and wound their bodies, sing songs of victory as they pass, and divert others with their own sufferings. Other men endure their diseases—your lordship only can enjoy them." Dryden, however, was not disposed to stomach Sir Robert's supercilious silence, and took a noble revenge in his "Essay on Dramatic Poesy."

This celebrated Essay was first published at the close of 1668; and the writing of it, Dryden tells us, in a dedication, many years afterwards, to the Earl of Dorset, "served as an amusement to me in the country, when the violence of the last plague had driven me from the town. Seeing, then, our theatres shut up, I was engaged in these kind of thoughts with the same delight with which men think upon their absent mistresses." It is in the form of dialogue; under the feigned appellations of Lisideius, Crites, Eugenius, and Neander, the speakers are Sir Charles Sedley, Sir Robert Howard, Lord Buckhurst, and Dryden. Nothing can exceed the grace with which the dialogue is conducted—the choice of scene is most happy—and the description of it in the highest degree striking and poetical.

> "It was that memorable day, in the first summer of the late war, when our navy engaged the Dutch; a day wherein the two most mighty and best appointed fleets

which any age had ever seen, disputed the command of the greater half of the globe, the commerce of nations, and the riches of the universe. While these vast floating bodies, on either side, moved against each other in parallel lines, and our countrymen, under the happy conduct of his Royal Highness, went breaking, little by little, into the line of the enemies, the noise of the cannon from both navies reached our ears about the city; so that all men being alarmed with it, and in a dreadful suspense of the event which they knew was then deciding, every one went following the sound as his fancy led him; and leaving the town almost empty, some took towards the Park, some cross the river, some down it, all seeking the noise in the depth of silence.

"Amongst the rest, it was the fortune of Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius, and Neander, to be in company together, three of them persons whom their wit and quality have made known to all the town, and whom I have chose to hide under these borrowed names, that they may not suffer by so ill a narration as I am going to make of their discourse.

"Taking, then, a barge, which a servant of Lisideius had provided for them, they made haste to shoot the bridge, and left behind them that great fall of waters which hindered them from hearing what they desired; after which, having disengaged themselves from many vessels which rode at anchor in the Thames, and almost blocked up the passage towards Greenwich, they ordered the watermen to let fall their oars more gently; and then every one favouring his own curiosity with a strict silence, it was not long ere they perceived the air to break about them like the noise of distant thunder, or of swallows in a chimney—those little undulations of sound, though almost vanishing before they reached them, yet still seeming to retain somewhat of their first horror which they had betwixt the fleets. After they had attentively listened till such time as the sound, by little and little, went from them, Eugenius, lifting up his head, and taking notice of it, was the first who congratulated to the rest that happy omen of our nation's victory; adding, that we had but this to desire in confirmation of it, that we might hear no more of that noise which was now leaving the English coast. When the rest had concurred in the same opinion, Crites, a person of sharp judgment, and somewhat too delicate a taste in wit, which the world hath mistaken in him for ill-nature, said, smiling to us, that if the concernment of this battle had not been so exceeding great, he could scarce have wished the victory at the price he knew he must pay for it, in being subject to the reading and hearing of so many ill verses as he was sure would be made on that subject; adding, that no argument could 'scape some of these eternal rhymers, who watch a battle with more diligence than the ravens and birds of prey, and the worst of them surest to be first in upon the quarry; while the better able, either out of modesty writ not at all, or set that due value upon their poems, as to let them be often desired and long expected. There are some of those impertinent people of whom you speak, answered Lisideius, who, to my knowledge, are already so provided either way, that they can produce not only a panegyric upon the victory, but, if need be, a funeral elegy upon the Duke, wherein, after they have crowned his valour with many laurels, they will at last deplore the odds under which he fell, concluding that his courage deserved a better destiny. All the company smiled at the conceit of Lisideius; but Crites, more eager than before, began to make particular exceptions against some writers, and said the public magistrates ought to send betimes to forbid them; and that it concerned the peace and quiet of all honest people that ill poets should be as well silenced as seditious preachers."

We may perhaps have occasion, by and by, to notice other important topics spiritedly and eloquently discussed by these choice spirits in the barge; meanwhile our business is with the argument, "rhyme *versus* blank verse," between Crites and Neander. Crites maintains, sometimes in the very words, Sir Robert's views in the Preface to his plays, in which he had animadverted on Dryden's dedication to the "Rival Ladies," while Neander combats them; and it may be observed, that the worthy Baronet is made to speak forcibly and well—much better indeed, on the whole, than he does in his own preface. From beginning to end there cannot be imagined a more fair and gentlemanly dialogue. But first, we cannot resist giving the very beautiful close.

"Neander was pursuing this discussion so eagerly, that Eugenius had called to him twice or thrice ere he took notice that the barge stood still, and that they were at the foot of Somerset stairs, where they had appointed it to land. The company were all sorry to separate so soon, though a great part of the evening was already spent; and stood awhile looking back on the water, upon which the moonbeams played, and made it appear like floating quicksilver. At last they went up through a crowd of French people, who were merrily dancing in the open air, and nothing concerned for the noise of guns which had alarmed the town that afternoon. Walking three together to the Piazza, they parted there; Eugenius and Lisideius to some pleasant appointment they had made, Crites and Neander to their several lodgings."

But now to the argument. Crites, who is not more long-winded than may be permitted to a polite proser, at least on the Thames of a summer evening, somewhat condensed, reasoneth thus.

A play being the imitation of nature, dialogue is there presented as the effect of sudden thought; and since no man without premeditation speaks in rhyme, neither ought he to do it on the stage. The fancy may be elevated to a higher pitch of thought than it is in ordinary discourse, for men of excellent and quick parts may speak noble things extempore; but surely not when fettered with rhyme, for what more unnatural than to present the most free way of speaking in that which is the most constrained? The Greek tragedians, therefore, wrote in iambics, the kind of verse [Pg 139] nearest to prose, which with us is blank verse.

The champions of rhyme say that the quickness of repartees receives an ornament from it in argumentative scenes. But do men not only light on a sudden upon the wit but the rhyme too? Then must they be born poets. If they do not seem in the dialogue to make rhymes whether they will or no, it will look rather like the design of two than the answer of one—as if your actors hold intelligence together, and perform their tricks like fortune-tellers by confederacy. The hand of art will be too visible. Neither is it any answer to say that, however you manage it, 'tis still known to be a play; for a play is still an imitation of nature, and one can be deceived only with a probability of truth. The mind of man does naturally tend to truth, and the nearer any thing comes to the imitation of it, the more readily will the imagination believe.

Rhyme, it is said, circumscribes a quick and luxuriant fancy, which would extend itself too far on every subject, did not the labour which is required to well-turned and polished rhyme set bounds to it. But he who wants judgment to confine his fancy in blank verse, may want it as much in rhyme; and he who has it will avoid errors in both kinds. Latin verse was as great a confinement to the imagination as rhyme; yet Ovid's fancy was not limited by it, and Virgil needed it not to bind his. In our own language, Ben Jonson confined himself to what ought to be said, even in the liberty of blank verse; and Corneille, the most judicious of the French poets, is still varying the same sense a hundred ways, and dwelling eternally on the same subject, though confined by rhyme.

Such is the substance of Crites' answer to Dryden's Defence of Rhyme; and Neander, before replying, begs it to be understood that he excludes all comedy from his defence, and that he does not deny that blank verse may be also used; but he asserts that, in Serious Plays, where the subject and characters are great, and the plot unmixed with mirth, which might allay or divert those concernments which are produced, rhyme is there as natural, and more effective, than blank verse—for what other conditions, he asks, are required to make rhyme natural in itself, besides an election of apt words, and a right disposition of them? The due choice of your words expresses your sense naturally, and the due placing them adapts the rhyme to it. If both the words and rhyme be apt, one verse cannot be made merely for sake of the other, as Crites had urged; for supposing there be a dependence of sense betwixt the first line and the second, then, in the natural position of the words, the latter line must of necessity flow from the former; and if there be no dependence, yet still the due ordering of words makes the last line as natural in itself as the other. A good poet, he affirms, never establishes the first line till he has sought out such a rhyme as may fit the verse, already prepared to heighten the second. Many times the close of the sense falls into the middle of the next verse, or further off; and he may often avail himself of the same advantages in English which Virgil had in Latin—he may break off in the hemistich, and begin another line. The not observing these two last things, makes plays which are writ in verse so tedious; for though most commonly the sense is to be confined to the couplet, yet nothing that does run in the same channel can please always. 'Tis like the murmuring of a stream, which, not varying in the fall, causes at first attention, at last drowsiness. Variety of cadence is the best rule, the greatest help to the actor and refreshment of the audience.

If, then, verse may be made natural in itself, how becomes it unnatural in a play? The stage, you say, is the representation of nature, and no man in ordinary conversation speaks in rhyme. True; but neither does he in blank verse. All the difference between them, when they are both good, is the sound in one which the other wants; and if so, the sweetness of it, and other advantages, handled in the Preface to the "Rival Ladies," all stand good.

The dialogue of plays, you say, is presented as the effect of sudden thought; but that no man speaks *extempore* in rhyme, which cannot therefore be proper in dramatic poesy, unless we could [Pg 140] suppose all men born so much more than poets. But it must not be forgotten that the question regards the nature of a Serious Play, which is indeed the representation of nature, but nature wrought up to an high pitch. The plot, the characters, the wit, the passions, the descriptions, are all exalted above the level of common converse, as high as the imagination of the poet can carry them, with proportion to verisimility. Tragedy is wont to image to us the minds and fortunes of noble persons; and to portray these exactly, heroic rhyme is nearest nature, as being the noblest kind of modern verse. Verse, it is true, is not the effect of sudden thought; but this hinders not that sudden thought may be represented in verse, since these thoughts are such as must be higher than nature can raise them without premeditation, especially to a continuance of them, even out of verse; and consequently you cannot imagine them to have been sudden, either in the poet or the actors. A play to be like nature is to be set above it; as statues which are placed on high are made greater than the life, that they may descend to the sight in their just proportion.

But rhyme, it has been argued, appears most unnatural in repartees or short replies, when he who answers (it being presumed he knew not what the other would say, yet) makes up that part of the verse which was left incomplete, and supplies both the sound and the measure of it. This, 'tis said, looks rather like the confederacy of two than the answer of one. But suppose the repartee were made in blank verse, is not the measure as often supplied there as in rhyme?—the latter half of the hemistich as commonly made up, or a second line subjoined, as a reply to the

former? But suppose it allowed to look like a confederacy. What more beautiful than a well-contrived dance? You see there the united design of many persons to make up one figure: after they have separated themselves in many petty divisions, they rejoin one by one into a group: the confederacy is plain among them, for chance could never produce any thing so beautiful, and yet there is nothing in it that shocks your sight. True, then, the hand of wit appears in repartee, as it must in all kinds of verse. When, with the quiet and poignant brevity of it, there mingles the cadency and sweetness of verse—"the soul of the hearer has nothing more to desire."

Rhyme was said by its defender to be a help to the poet's judgment, by putting bounds to a wild overflowing fancy. And it was answered by the admirer of blank verse, that he who wants judgment in the liberty of his poesy, may as well show the defect of it when he is confined to verse; for he who has judgment will avoid errors, and he who has it not will commit them in all kind of writing. Granted that he who has judgment so profound, strong, and infallible that he needs no help to keep it always poised and right, will commit no faults in rhyme or out of it. But where is that judgment to be found? Take it, therefore, as it is found in the best poets. Judgment is indeed the master workman in a play; but he requires many subordinate hands, many tools to his assistance, and rhyme is one of them—it is a rule and line by which he keeps his building compact and even, which otherwise lawless imagination would raise loosely and irregularly—it is, in short, a slow and painful but the surest kind of working. Second thoughts being usually the best, as receiving the maturest digestion from judgment, and the last and most mature product of these thoughts being artful and laboured verse, it may well be inferred that verse is a great help to a luxuriant fancy, and that is what the argument opposed was to evince.

Sir Robert, though always made to speak well in the Dialogue, was yet made to speak on the losing side; and in an address to the reader, prefixed to "The Great Favourite, or the Duke of Lerma," a tragedy published soon after, having, by way of retaliation, sharply criticised some of Neander's dogmas about the drama, brought down on himself a cool but cutting castigation—more severe than was merited by so small an offence. His retort, in as far as the question of rhyme or blank verse is concerned, was, however, to say the best of it, very feeble. "I cannot, therefore, but beg leave of the reader to take a little notice of the great pains the author of an Essay of Dramatic Poetry has taken to prove rhyme as natural in a Serious Play, and more effectual, than blank verse: Thus he states the question but pursues that which he calls natural in a wrong application; for 'tis not the question, whether rhyme or not rhyme be best or most natural for a grave or serious subject; but what is nearest the nature of that which it presents. Now, after all the endeavours of that ingenious person, a play will still be supposed to be a composition of several persons speaking *extempore*, and it is as certain, that good verses are the hardest things that can be imagined to be so spoken; so that if any will be pleased to impose the rule of measuring things to be the best by being nearest to nature, it is proved, by consequence, that which is most remote from the thing supposed, must needs be most improper; and therefore I may justly say, that both I and the question were equally mistaken, for I do own, I had rather read good than either blank verse or prose, and therefore the author did himself injury, if he like verse so well in plays, to lay down rules and raise arguments only unanswerable against himself."

We had rather that Dryden should answer this than we; for much of it eludes our comprehension. In his "Defence of the Essay on Dramatic Poesy" he replies thus:—"A play will still be supposed to be a composition of several persons speaking extempore," quoth Sir Robert; "I must move leave to dissent from his opinion," requoth John; "for if I am not deceived, a play is supposed to be the work of the poet, imitating or representing the conversation of several persons; and this I think to be as clear as he thinks the contrary." There he has the baronet on the hip; and gives him a throw. He then makes bold to prove this paradox—that one great reason why prose is not to be used in Serious Plays is, "because it is too near the nature of converse." Thus, in "Bartholomew Fair," or the lowest kind of comedy, where he was not to go out of prose, Ben does yet so raise his matter, in that prose, as to render it delightful, which he could never have performed had he only said or done those very things that are daily spoken or practised in the fair; for then the fair itself would be as full of pleasure to an enquiring person as the play, which we manifestly see it is not. "But he hath made an excellent lazar of it. The copy is of price, though the original be vile." Even in the lowest prose comedy, then, the matter and the wording must be lifted out of nature—as *we* should now say, idealized. In "Catiline" and "Sejanus" again, where the argument is great, Ben sometimes ascends into rhyme; and had his genius been proper for rhyme—which Dryden more than once asserts it was not—"it is probable he would have adorned those subjects with that kind of writing. Thus prose," he finely says, "though the rightful prince, yet is by common consent deposed as too weak for the government of Serious Plays; and he failing, there now start up two competitors, one the nearer in blood, which is blank verse; the other more fit for the ends of government, which is rhyme. Blank verse is, indeed, the nearer prose, but he is blemished with the weakness of his predecessor. Rhyme (for I will deal clearly) has somewhat of the usurper in him, but he is brave and generous, and his dominion pleasing."

It was then, "for the reason of delight," that the ancients wrote all their tragedies in verse—and not in prose; because it was most remote from conversation. Rhyme had not then been invented. But again he reminds his adversary, that it seems to have been adopted by the general consent of poets in all modern languages—and that almost all their Serious Plays are written in it, which, though it be no demonstration that therefore they ought to be so, yet at least the practice first, and the continuation of it, shows that it attained the end, which was to please. It is thus that Dryden deals with Sir Robert, as if blank verse in Serious Plays had not a leg to stand on. Yet throughout he preserves a wonderful air of candour and moderation, as most becoming the victorious champion of rhyme. As, for example, where he allows that, whether it be natural or not

in plays, is a problem not demonstrable on either side. But in reference to Sir Robert's acknowledgment, that he had rather read good verse than prose, he adds triumphantly, "that is enough for me; for if all the enemies of verse will confess as much, I shall not need to prove that it is natural. I am satisfied if it cause delight; for delight is the chief, if not the only end of poesy; instruction can be admitted but in the second place, for poesy only instructs as it delights. It is true, that to imitate well is a poet's work; but to affect the soul, and to excite the passions, and, above all, to move admiration, (which is the delight of Serious Plays,) a bare imitation will not serve. The converse, therefore, which a poet is to imitate, must be heightened with all the arts and ornaments of poesy; and must be such as, strictly considered, could never be supposed spoken by any without premeditation."

In his various argument in defence of the use of rhyme on the stage, Dryden, we have seen, always speaks of its peculiar adaptation to "Serious Plays," or "Heroic Plays." In an essay thereon, prefixed to the "Conquest of Grenada," in the pride of success he says, "whether heroic verse ought to be admitted into Serious Plays, is not now to be disputed." And he again takes up the obstinate objection to rhyme, which he had not yet, it seems, battered to death, that it is not so near conversation as prose, and therefore not so natural. But it is very clear to all who understand poetry, that Serious Plays ought not to imitate conversation too nearly. If nothing were to be traced above that level, the foundation of poetry would be destroyed. Once grant that thoughts may be exalted, and that images and actions may be raised above the life, and described in measure without rhyme, and that leads you insensibly from your principles; admit some latitude, and having forsaken the imitation of ordinary converse, where are you now? "You are gone beyond it, and to continue where you are, is to lodge in the open fields between two inns." You have lost that which you call natural, and have not acquired the last perfection of art. It was only custom, he says, which cozened us so long; we thought because Shakspeare and Fletcher went no further, that there the pillars of poetry were to be erected; that because they excellently described passion without rhyme, therefore rhyme was not capable of describing it. *"But time has since convinced most men of that error.*"

What, then, according to Dryden's idea of it, was a serious or heroic play? An heroic play, he says, ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem; and, consequently, Love and Valour ought to be the subject of it. D'Avenant's astonishing "Siege of Rhodes"—formerly declared to be the *beau-idéal* of an heroic play—was after all, it seems, wanting in fulness of plot, variety of character, and even beauty of style. Above all, it was not sufficiently great and majestic. He knew not, honest man, that, in a true heroic play, you ought to draw all things as far above the ordinary proportion of the stage, as that is beyond the common words and actions of human life. The play that imitates mere nature as she walks in this world, may be written in suitable language; but, as in epic poetry all poets have agreed that we shall behold the highest pattern of human life, so in the heroic play, modelled by the rules of an heroic poem, we must be shown only correspondent characters. Gods and spirits, too, are privileged to appear on such a stage, and so are drums and trumpets. But Dryden himself denies that he was the first to introduce representations of battles on the English stage, Shakspeare having set him the example; while Jonson, though he shows no battle, lets you hear in "Catiline," from behind the scenes, the shouts of fighting armies. Warlike instruments, and some fighting on the stage, are indeed necessary to produce the effects of a heroic play. They help the imagination to gain absolute dominion over the mind of an audience.

Were we to believe Dryden, his heroic plays were dramatic imitations of such epic poems as the Iliad and the Æneid. And he has the brazen-faced assurance to say, that the first image he had of Almanzor, in the "Conquest of Grenada," was from the Achilles of Homer! The next was from Tasso's Rinaldo, and the third—*risum teneatis amici—from the Artaban of Monsieur Calpranede*! Unquestionably our English heroic plays were borrowed from the French—as these were the legitimate offspring of the dramas of Calpranede and Scuderi. But Dryden's compositions are unparalleled in any literature. Nature is systematically outraged in one and all—from beginning to end. Never was such mouthing seen and heard beneath moon and stars. Through the whole range of rant he rages like a man inspired. He is the emperor of bombast. Yet these plays contain many passages of powerful declamation—not a few of high eloquence; some that in their argumentative amplitude, if they do not reach, border on the sublime. Nor are their wanting outbreaks of genuine passion among the utmost extravagances of false sentiment—when momentarily heroes and heroines warm into men and women, and for a few sentences confabulate like flesh and blood.

But it is with Dryden as a critic, not as a poet, that we have now to do; and we have said these few words about his heroic plays only in connexion with our account of his argument in support of his doctrine with regard to heroic verse in rhyme. That blank verse is better adapted than any other for the drama, has been settled by Shakspeare. But though Dryden has driven his argument too far, till his doctrine, as he promulgates it, becomes untenable, as little do we doubt that he has made good this position, that there may be good plays in rhyme. His heroic plays are bad, not because they are in rhyme, but because they are absurd; the rhyme is their chief merit; 'tis not possible to dream what they had been in blank verse. True, that "All for Love" and "Don Sebastian" are in blank verse, and may be said, after a fashion, to be fine plays. But they are constructed on rational principles, and in them he was doing his best to write like Shakspeare. What reason is there for believing that those plays, in many respects excellent, are the better for not being in rhyme? None whatever. Rhyme, in our opinion, would have given them both a superior charm. In his heroic plays, it often carries us along with absurdities which we know not whether we should call tame or wild; it gives an air of originality to trivial commonplaces; it embellishes what is vigorous, and invigorates what is beautiful; and among events and characters

alike unnatural, its music sustains our flagging interest, and enables us to read on. There can be no doubt, that in representations on the stage, the same cause must have been most effective on audiences accustomed to that kind of pleasure, and who delighted in rhyme, to them at once a necessary and a luxury of life. "Aurengzebe," the last of his rhyming plays, is, to our mind, little if at all inferior to "All for Love," or "Don Sebastian;" and we know that it was most successful on the stage.

Sir Walter says, "that during the space which occurred between the writing of the 'Conquest of Grenada,' and 'Aurengzebe,' Dryden's researches into the nature and causes of harmony of versification, led him to conclude that the Drama ought to be emancipated from the fetters of rhyme—and that the perusal of Shakspeare, on whom Dryden had now turned his attention, led him to feel that something further might be attained in tragedy than the expression of exaggerated sentiment in smooth verse, and that the scene ought to represent, not a fanciful set of agents exerting their superhuman faculties in a fairyland of the poet's own creation, but human characters acting from the direct and energetic influence of human passions, with whose emotions the audience might sympathize, because akin to the feelings of their own hearts. When Dryden had once discovered that fear and pity were more likely to be excited by other causes than the logic of metaphysical love, or the dictates of fantastic honour, he must have found that rhyme sounded as unnatural in the dialogue of characters drawn upon the usual scale of humanity, as the plate and mail of chivalry would have appeared on the persons of the actors." All this is finely said; but does it not assume the point in question? Dryden may have learned at last from the study of Shakspeare, (in whom, however, he was well read many years before, as witness his Essay on Dramatic Poesy,) that "something further might be attained in tragedy than the expression of exaggerated sentiment in smooth verse." But we do not see the necessity of the inference, "that rhyme sounded unnatural in the dialogue of characters drawn upon the usual scale of humanity." Is rhyme self-evidently unnatural in the expression, in verse, of strong and deep human passion? To that question, put thus generally, the right answer is—NO. And is it, then, necessarily unnatural in the drama?

Like all great powers, that of rhyme is a secret past finding out. In itself a mere barbarous jingle, it yet gives perfection to speech. The music of versification has endless varieties of measures, and rhyme lends enchantment to them all. Not an affection, emotion, or passion of the soul that may not be soothed by its syllablings, enkindled, or raised to rapture. Pity and terror, joy and grief, love and devotion, are all alike sensible of its influence; as the sweet similarities keep echoing through some artful strain, that all the while is thought by them who listen to come in simplicity from the unpremeditating heart. Songs, hymns, elegies, epicedia, epithalamia—rhyme rules alike all the shadowy tribes. The triumphant ode—the penitential psalm—wisdom's moral lesson—the philosophic strain "that vindicates the ways of God to man;" such is the range of rhyme, down all the depths of the pathetic, up all the heights of the sublime. It is yet unlimited. Where shall we find its bounds? Let us try.

In the Epos, the poet in person is the relater. But he hides his own personality in that of the Muse he invokes; and offers himself to his auditors as the Voice only by which she speaks. She, the Muse, is thought to be throughout a faithful recorder; for she is supposed to have access to know all; and however marvellous may be the narrations, they are accepted with undoubting faith. Since she speaks, or rather sings, and the auditor only listens, the commonest and the most uncommon events are, in one respect, upon an even footing. For the hearer must picture them for himself. All are alike acted absent from the senses, and before the imagination alone. Hence the Epic Poet has an extraordinary facility afforded him for introducing into his work that order of representation which is called the marvellous. For it is just as easy to the hearer to set before his fancy a giant or a pigmy, as a man; the one-eyed monster Polyphemus, as the beautiful, the graceful, the swift, the strong, the sublime, the terrible Achilles. It is just as easy for him to transport himself in fancy to the summit of Olympus, to the palace of Jupiter, and to the Council or to the Banquet of the Gods, or to the deep sea-caves where Thetis sits with her companion nymphs in the hall of her father, the sea-god Nereus—as it is to remove himself from the festal hall, where the poet is singing to him and to the other guests, away to the camp of the Greeks, or to the court of Priam, or to the bower of Andromache. He has no more difficulty to think of Minerva darting, in the likeness of a hawk, from the snowy crest of Olympus to the shore of the Hellespont—or to imagine the Thunderer in his celestial car, lashing on his golden-maned steeds that pace the clouds and the air, and waft him at the speed almost of a wish from the unfolding portals of heaven to the summit of Mount Ida—than when he is called upon, in the midst of some totally different scene, to figure to himself a mortal hero, with waving crest, glittering in polished brass, advancing erect in his war-chariot, hurling his lance that misses his foe; and in return transpierced by that of his antagonist, falling backwards to the ground in his resounding arms, and groaning out his soul in the bloody dust. The truth is, that when you are called upon to see and to hear *within the mind*, you rejoice in the capacities of seeing and hearing that are thus unfolded in you, infinitely surpassing similar capacities which you possess in your bodily eye and ear; and therefore the stronger the demands that are made, the more readily even do you comply with them; and in this way, in part, we must understand the character that is impressed upon the *Iliad*, and the temper of mind in the hearer answering to the character. It is one of infinite liberty. The mind of the poet seems to be released from all bonds and from all bounds; and the temper in the hearer is the same. Another character, proper to Epic poetry, judging after its great model, the *Iliad*—is *universality*. In the direct narrative, we have gods and men, heaven, earth, sea, for seats of action—and, for a moment, a glimpse of hell. Recollect whilst the conflagration of war is raging, how the poet has found a moment, at the Scæan Gate, for the touching picture of an heroic father, a noble mother, and a babe in arms, scared at his father's dazzling and

overshadowing helmet, who smiles, puts it from his head upon the ground, and lifts up the boy, with a prayer to Jove. Sacrifices to the gods, games, funeral rites, come in the course of the relation; and because the scene of the poem is distracted with warfare, the great poet has found, in the Vulcanian sculptures on the shield of Achilles, place for images of peace—the labours of the husbandman; the mirthful gathering in of the vintage with dance and song; the hymeneal pomp led along the streets. And in the similes, what pictures from animal life and manners! And then our enchantment is heightened by a prevailing duplication. Throughout, or nearly so, the transactions that are presented in the natural, are also presented in the supernatural. Thus we have earthly councils, heavenly councils; warring men, warring gods; kings of men, kings of gods; mortal husbands and wives, and sons and daughters; immortal husbands and wives, and sons and daughters. Palaces in heaven as on earth. The sea, in a manner, triplicates. Terrestrial steeds—celestial steeds—marine steeds! The natural and supernatural are united—when Achilles is half of mortal, half of immortal derivation; when heavenly coursers are yoked in the chariots of men; when Juno, for a moment, grants voice to the horse of Achilles; and the horse, whom Achilles has unjustly reproved, answers prophesying the death of the hero.

Why Homer made the *Iliad* in hexameters, no man can tell; but having done so, he thereby constituted for ever the proper metre of Greek—and Latin—Epic poetry. But what a multitude of subjects, how different from one another does that, and every other Epic poem, comprehend! Glory to the hexameter! it suits them all. Now, in every Epic poem, and in few more than in the *Iliad*, there are many dramatic scenes. But in the Greek tragic drama, the dialogue is mainly in iambics; for this reason, that iambics are naturally suited for the language of conversation. Be it so. Yet here in the Epic, the dialogue is felt to be as natural in hexameters as the heart of man can desire. Hear Agamemnon and Achilles. Call to mind that colloquy in Pelides' tent.

Rhyme is unknown in Greek; and it is of rhyme that we are treating, though you may not see our drift. From Homer, then, pass on to Ariosto and Tasso. They, too, are Epic poets who have charmed the world. Their poems may not have such a sweep as the *Iliad*, still their sweep is great. Rich in rhyme is their language—rich the stanza they delighted in—*ottava rima*, how rich the name! Is rhyme unnatural from the lips of their peers and paladins? No—an inspired speech. Is hexameter blank verse alone fit for the mouths of Greek heroes—eight-line stanzas of oft-recurring rhymes for the mouths of Italian? Gentle shepherd, tell me why.

But the "Paradise Lost" is in blank verse. It is. The fallen angels speak not in rhyme—nor Eve nor Adam. So Milton willed. But Dante's Purgatory, and Hell, and Heaven, are in rhyme—ay, and in difficult rhyme, too—*terza rima*. Yet the damned speak it naturally—so do the blessed. How dreadful from Ugolino, how beautiful from Beatrice!

But the drama—the drama—the drama—is your cry—what say we to the drama? Listen, and you shall hear—

The Tragic Drama rose at Athens. The splendid and inexhaustible mythology of gods and heroes, which had supplied the Epic Muse with the materials of her magnificent relations, furnished the matter of a new species of poetry. A palace—or a temple—or a cave by the wild sea-shore, was painted; actors, representing by their attire, and their majestic demeanour, heroes and heroines of the old departed world; nay, upon high occasions, celestial gods and goddesses—trod the Stage and spoke, in measured recitation, before assembled thousands of spectators, seated in wonder and awe-stricken expectation. The change to the poet in the manner of communicating with his hearers, alters the character of the composition. The stage trodden by living feet, the scenery, voices from human tongues varying with all the changes of emotion, impassioned gestures, and events no longer spoken of, but transacted in presence, before the eyes of the audience, are elements full of power, that claim for tragedy and impose upon it a character of its own. The heart is more interested, and the imagination less. Persons who accompany the whole business that is to be done, with speaking—a poem consisting of incessant dialogue—must disclose, with more precise and profounder discovery, the minds represented as engaged. Motives are produced and debated—the sudden turns of thought—the violent fluctuations of the passions—the gentle variations of the feelings, appear. Time is given for this internal display—and a species of poetry arises, distinguished for the fulness and the decision with which the springs of action in the human bosom are shown as breaking forth into, and determining, human action. Meanwhile, the means that are thus afforded to the poet of a more energetic representation, curb in him the flights of imagination. To represent Neptune as at three strides from his seat on a mountain-top descending the slope, that with all its woods quakes under the immortal feet, and as reaching at the fourth step his wave-covered palace—this, which was easy between the epic poet and his hearer, becomes out of place and impossible for tragedy, simply because no actors and no stage can represent a god so stepping and the hills so trembling. We know what the pathetically sublime literature was which the drama gave to Athens; how poets of profound and capacious spirits, who had looked into themselves—and, so enlightened, had observed human life—were able, by taking for their subjects the strongly portrayed characters and the stern situations of the old Greek fable, to unite in their lofty and impressive scenes the truth of nature and the tender interests which endear our familiar homes, to the grandeur of heroic recollections, to the awe of religion, and to the pomp, the magnificence, and the beauty of a gorgeous yet intellectual art.

The Greek Tragic drama is from end to end in verse; and unavoidably, because 'tis a part of a splendid religious celebration. It is involved in the solemn pomp of a festival. Therefore it dons its own solemn festival robes. The musical form is our key to the spirit. And in that varying musical form there are three degrees—first, the Iambic, nearest real speech—second, the Lyrical

dialogue, farther off—third, the full Chorus—utmost removal. Pray, do not talk to us of the naturalness of the language. You never heard the like spoken in all your days. Natural it was on that stage—and over the roofless theatre the tutelary deities of Athens leant listening from the sky.

The model, or law, or self of the English drama, is *Shakspeare*. The character of his drama is, the imaging of nature. A foremost characteristic of nature is infinite and infinitely various production, expressing or intimating an indefatigably and inexhaustibly active spirit. But such a spirit of life, so acting and producing, appears to us as a fountain, ever freshly flowing from the very hand of God. All *that* Shakspeare's drama images; and thus his art appears to us, as always the highest art appears to us to be, a Divine thing. The musical forms of his language should answer; and they do. They are; first, prose; second, loose blank verse; third, tied blank verse; fourth, rhyme.[1] This unbounded variety of the musical form really seems to answer to the premised idea; seems really to clothe infinite and infinitely varied intellectual production. Observe, we beseech you, what varieties of music! The rhyme—ay, the rhyme—has a dozen at least;—couplets—interlaced rhyme—single rhyme and double—anapests—diverse lyrical measures. Observe, too, that speakers of all orders and characters use all the forms. Hamlet, Othello, Lear, Coriolanus, Lance, use prose; Leontes and his little boy, Lear, Coriolanus, and his domestics—to say nothing of the Steward—Macbeth and his murderlings, use blank verse. Even Falstaff, now and then, a verse. All, high and low, wise, merry, and sad, *rhyme*. Fools, witches, fairies—we know not who else—use lyrical measures. Upon the whole, the *uttermost*—that is, the musical form—answers herein to the *innermost* spirit. The spirit, endlessly-varying, creates endlessly-varying musical form. The total character is accordingly self-lawed, irrepressible creation.

Blank verse, then, is the predominating musical form of Shakspeare's comedies, histories, and tragedies. To such a degree as that *all* the other forms often slip from one's recollection; and, to speak strictly, blank verse must be called the rule; while all other forms are diverse exceptions.

Only one comedy, the homely and English "Merry Wives of Windsor," has, for its rule, prose. Even here the two true lovers hold their few short colloquies in blank verse. And when the concluding fairy masque is toward, blank verse rages. Page and Ford catch it. The merry wife, Mrs Page, turns poetess to describe and project the superstitions to be used. In the fairy-scene Sir John himself, Shakspeare's most dogged observer of prose, is quelled by the spirit of the hour, and RHYMES. You would think that the soul of Shakspeare has been held chained through the play, and breaks loose for a moment ere ending it. All this being said, it may be asked:—"Why is blank verse the ordinary musical form of Shakspeare's Dramas?" And the obvious answer appears to be:—"Because it has a *middle removedness* or *estrangement* from the ordinary speech of men:—raising the language into imagination, and yet not out of sympathy."

Shakspeare and Sophocles agree in truth and strength, in life, passion, and imagination. They differ inwardly herein—Shakspeare founds in the power of nature. Under his hand nature brings forth art. The Attic tragedy begins from art. Its first condition is order, since it is part of a religious ceremonial. It resorts to nature, to quicken, strengthen, bear up art. Nature enters upon the Athenian stage, under a previous recognition of art as dominant.

From all that has been now said—and it is more than we at first intended to say—this conclusion follows, that there may be English rhymed dramas. There are French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian ones—and fine ones too; and nothing in nature forbids that there may be infinitely finer. That which universally affects off the stage, in all kinds of poetry, would, in the work of a great master, affect on it. The delusion of the theatre overcomes far greater difficulties carried with us thither in the constitution of our habitual life, than the use of rhyme by the visionary beings in the mimic scene. Beyond all doubt there might arise in rhyme a most beautiful romantic drama. Unreal infused into real, turns real at once into poetry. But this is of all degrees. In the lowest prose of life there is an infusion which we overlook. We should drop down dead without it. Let the unreal a little predominate; and now we become sensible to its presence, and now we *call* the compound poetry. Let it be an affair of words, and we require verse as the fitting form. Our stage and language have settled upon blank verse as the proper metrical form for the proper measure of the unreal upon the ordinary tragic stage. Rhymed verse has a more marked separation, or is more distant from prose than blank verse is. Hence, you might suppose that it will be fitted on the stage for a surcharge of the unreal. Dryden's heroic tragedies are a proof, as far as one authority goes; and even they had great power over audiences willing to be charmed, and accustomed to what we should think a wide and continued departure from nature. But imagine a romantic play, full of beautiful and tender imagination, exquisitely written in rhyme, and modelled to some suitable mould invented by a happy genius. Why, the "Gentle Shepherd," idealizing modern Scottish pastoral life, was, in its humble way, an achievement; and, within our memory, critics of the old school looked on it well pleased when acted by lads and lasses of high degree, delighting to deem themselves for an evening the simple dwellers in huts around Habbie's How.

Let us now collect together all that Dryden has, in different moods of his unsettled and unsteady mind, written about Shakspeare. In the Dialogue formerly spoken of, comparisons are made between the modern English and the modern French drama. "If you consider the plots," says Neander, "our own are fuller of variety, if the writing, ours are more quick and fuller of spirit." And he denies—like a bold man as he was—that the English have in aught imitated or borrowed from the French. He says our plots are weaved in English looms; we endeavour therein to follow the variety and greatness of characters, which are derived to us from Shakspeare and Fletcher; the copiousness and well-knitting of the intrigues we have from Jonson. These two things he

dares affirm of the English drama, that with more variety of plot and character, it has equal regularity; and that in most of the irregular plays of Shakspeare and Fletcher, (for Ben Jonson's are for the most part regular,) there is a more masculine fancy and greater spirit in the writing, than there is in any of the French. For a pattern of a perfect play, he is proposing to examine "the Silent Woman" of Jonson, the most careful and learned observer of the dramatic laws, when he is requested by Eugenius to give in full Ben's character. He agrees to do so, but says it will first be necessary to speak somewhat of Shakspeare and Fletcher; "his rivals in poesy, and one of them, in my opinion, at least his equal, perhaps his superior." Malone observes, that the caution observed in this decision, proves the miserable taste of the age; and Sir Walter, that Jonson, "by dint of learning and arrogance, fairly bullied the age into receiving his own character of his merits, and that he was not the only person of the name that has done so." This is coming it rather too strong; yet to stand well with others there is nothing like having a good opinion of one's-self, and proclaiming it with the sound of a trumpet.

> "To begin, then, with Shakspeare. He was the man who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul; all the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them, not laboriously but luckily; when he describes any thing, you more than see it—you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned, he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature, he looked inwards and found her there. I cannot say he is every where alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat and insipid; his comic wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great when some great occasion is presented to him—no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets,
>
> 'Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.'
>
> "The consideration of this made Mr Hales of Eton say, that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better done in Shakspeare: and, however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him, Fletcher, and Jonson, never equalled them to him in their esteem; and in the last king's court, when Ben's reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakspeare far above him.
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> "Beaumont and Fletcher, of whom I am next to speak, had, with the advantage of Shakspeare's wit, which was their precedent, great natural gifts, improved by study. Beaumont, especially, being so accurate a judge of plays, that Ben Jonson while he lived submitted all his writings to his censure, and, 'tis thought, used his judgment in correcting, if not contriving, all his plots. What value he had for him appeared by the verses he writ to him, and therefore I need speak no further of it. The first play that brought Fletcher and him into esteem was their 'Philaster;' for before that they had written two or three very unsuccessfully, as the like is reported of Ben Jonson before he writ 'Every Man in his Humour.' Their plots were generally more regular than Shakspeare's, especially those which were made before Beaumont's death; and they understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much better, whose wild debaucheries and quickness of wit in repartee no poet before them could paint as they have done. Humour, which Ben Jonson derived from particular persons, they made it not their business to describe; they represented all the passions very lively, but, above all, love. I am apt to believe the English language in them arrived to the highest perfection—what words have since been taken in are rather superfluous than ornamental. Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage, two of theirs being acted through the year for one of Shakspeare's or Jonson's; the reason is, because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays, which suits generally with all men's humours. Shakspeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben Jonson's wit comes short of theirs.
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> "As for Jonson, to whose character I am now arrived, if we look upon him while he was himself, (for his last plays were but his dotages,) I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theatre ever had. He was a most severe judge; of himself as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it in his works; you find little to retouch or alter. Wit and language, and humour also, in some measure, we had before him; but something of art was wanting to the drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who succeeded him. You seldom find him making love in any of his scenes, or endeavouring to move the passions; his genius was too sullen and saturnine to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such an height. Humour was his proper sphere, and in that he delighted most to represent mechanic people. He was deeply conversant in the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them. There is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors of those times, whom he has not translated in 'Sejanus' and 'Catiline.' But he has done his robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a

> monarch; and what would be theft in other poets is only victory in him. With the spoils of those writers he so represents old Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that, if one of their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his language it was, that he weaved it too closely and laboriously, in his comedies especially. Perhaps, too, he did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words, which he translated, almost as much Latin as he found them; wherein, though he learnedly followed their language, he did not enough follow with the idiom of ours. If I would compare him with Shakspeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shakspeare the greater wit. Shakspeare was the Homer, or father, of our dramatic poets; Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing. I admire him, but I love Shakspeare. To conclude of him, as he has given us the most correct plays, so, in the precepts which he has laid down in his 'Discoveries,' we have as many and profitable rules for perfecting the stage as any wherewith the French can furnish us."

Samuel Johnson truly says of the Dialogue, "that it will not be easy to find, in all the opulence of our language, a treatise so artfully variegated with successive representations of opposite probabilities, so enlivened with imagery, and heightened with illustration." But we have some difficulty in going along with him when he adds—"The account of Shakspeare may stand as a perpetual model of encomiastic criticism, exact without minuteness, and lofty without exaggeration. The praise lavished by Longinus on the attestation of the heroes of Marathon by Demosthenes, fades away before it. In a few lines is exhibited a character, so sublime in its comprehension, and so curious in its limitations, that nothing can be added, diminished, or reformed; nor can the editors and admirers of Shakspeare, in all their emulation of reverence, boast of much more than of having diffused and paraphrased his epitome of excellence; of having changed Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value, though of greater bulk." Since this great critic's day—ay, with all his defects and perversities, Samuel was a great critic—what a blaze of illumination has been brought to bear on the genius of Shakspeare! Nevertheless, all honour to Glorious John! Next comes the famous prologue:—

As when a tree's cut down, the secret root
Lives under ground, and thence new branches shoot;
So, from old Shakspeare's honour'd dust, this day
Springs up the buds, a new reviving play.
Shakspeare, who (taught by none) did first impart
To Fletcher wit, to labouring Jonson art;
He, monarch-like, gave those, his subjects, law,
And is that nature which they paint and draw.
Fletcher reach'd that which on his heights did grow,
While Jonson crept and gather'd all below.
This did his love, and this his mirth digest;
One imitates him most, the other best.
If they have since outwrit all other men,
'Tis with the drops which fell from Shakspeare's pen.
The storm which vanish'd on the neighbouring shore,
Was taught by Shakspeare's 'Tempest' first to roar.
That innocence and beauty which did smile
In Fletcher, grew on this enchanted isle.
But Shakspeare's magic could not copied be—
Within that circle none durst walk but he.
I must confess 'twas bold, nor would you now
That liberty to vulgar wits allow,
Which works by magic supernatural things;
But Shakspeare's power is sacred as a king's.
Those legends from old priesthood were received,
And he them writ as people them believed."

Strange that he who could write so nobly about Shakspeare, could commit such an outrage on his divine genius as the play to which this is the prologue—"The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island," a Comedy. It was—Dryden tells us, and we must believe him—"originally Shakspeare's; a poet for whom Sir William D'Avenant had particularly a high veneration, and whom he first taught me to admire." So the two together, to show their joint and judicious admiration, set about altering "The Tempest." Fletcher had imitated it all in vain in his "Sea Voyage;" "the storm, the desert island, and the woman who had never seen a man, are all implicit testimonies of it." Few more delightful poets than Fletcher; but in an evil hour, and deserted by his good genius, did he then hoist his sail. But now cover your face with your hands—and then shut your ears. "*Sir John Suckling, a professed admirer of our author, has followed his footsteps* in his '*Goblins*;' his Regmella being an open imitation of Shakspeare's Miranda, and his spirits, *though counterfeit*, yet are copied from Ariel." But Sir William D'Avenant, "as he was a man of quick and piercing imagination, soon found that somewhat might be added to the design of Shakspeare, of which neither Fletcher nor Suckling had ever thought;" "and this excellent contrivance," he was pleased, says Dryden with looks of liveliest gratitude, "to communicate to me, and to desire my assistance in it." You probably knew what was the "excellent contrivance" by which "the last hand"—the hand after Suckling's—"was put to it;" so that thenceforth the "Tempest" was to be let alone in its glory. "The counterpart to Shakspeare's plot, namely, that of a man who had never

seen a woman, that by this means these two characters of innocence and love might the more illustrate and commend each other. *I confess that from the very first moment it so pleased me, that I never writ* any thing with more delight." Sir Walter says it seems to have been undertaken chiefly with a view to give room for scenical decoration, and that Dryden's share in the alteration was probably little more than the care of adapting it to the stage. But Dryden's own words contradict that supposition, and he further tells us that his writings received D'Avenant's daily amendments; "and that is the reason why it is not so faulty as the rest, which I have done without the help and correction of so judicious a friend." They wrote together at the same desk. And Dryden found D'Avenant of "so quick a fancy, that nothing was proposed to him on which he would not suddenly produce a thought, extremely pleasant and surprising. * * His imagination was such as could not easily enter into any other man." It had been easy enough, he adds, to have arrogated more to himself than was his due in the writing of the play; but "besides the worthlessness of the action, which deterred me from it, (there being nothing so base as to rob the dead of his reputation,) I am satisfied I could never have received so much honour in being thought the author of any poem, how excellent soever—as I shall from the joining of my imperfections with the merit and name of Shakspeare and Sir William D'Avenant." From all this, and more of the same sort, 'tis plain that Dryden's share in the composition was at least equal to—we should say, much greater than—D'Avenant's. [Pg 151]

You must not meddle with Miranda—for she is all our own. Yet we cheerfully introduce you to her sister, Dorinda, and leave you all alone by yourselves for an hour's flirtation. Hush! she is describing the ship!

"This floating Ram did bear his horns above,
And tied with ribands, ruffling in the wind:
Sometimes he nodded down his head awhile,
And then the waves did heave him to the moon,
He climbing to the top of all the billows;
And then again he curtsied down so low
I could not see him. Till at last, all sidelong
With a great crack, his belly burst in pieces."

We had but once before handled this performance—some threescore and ten years ago, when a man of middle age. We dimly remember being amused in our astonishment. Now that we are beginning to get a little old, we are, perhaps, growing too fastidious; yet surely it is something very shocking. Portsmouth Poll and Plymouth Sall—sisters originating at Yarmouth—when brought into comparison with Miranda and Dorinda of the enchanted island, to our imagination seem idealized into Vestal virgins. True, they were famous—when not half seas over—for keeping a quiet tongue in their mouths: with them mum was the word. Only when drunk as blazes, poor things, did they, by word or gesture, offend modesty's most sacred laws. But D'Avenant's and Dryden's daughters are such leering and lascivious drabs, so dreadfully addicted to innuendoes and *doubles entendres* of the most alarming character, that, high as is our opinion of the intrepidity of British seamen, we should not fear to back the two at odds against a full-manned jolly-boat from a frigate in the offing sent in to fill her water-casks. Caliban himself—and what a Caliban he has become!—fights shy of the plenireps. Why—if it must be so—we give our arm to his sister Sycorax, a "fearsome dear" no doubt, but what better could one expect in a misbegotten monster? Oh, the confounding mysteries of self-degrading genius!

In the preface to "An Evening's Love; or, the Mock Astrologer," we again meet with some criticism on Shakspeare. We learn from it that Dryden had formed the ambitious design of writing on the difference betwixt the plays of his own age and those of his predecessors on the English stage, in order to show in what parts of "dramatic poesy we were excelled by Ben Jonson—I mean, humour and contrivance of comedy; and *in what we may justly claim precedence of Shakspeare and Fletcher*! namely, in heroic plays." He had, moreover, proposed to treat "of the improvement of our language since Fletcher's and Jonson's days, and, consequently, of our refining the courtship, raillery, and conversation of plays." In great attempts 'tis glorious even to fail; and assuredly had Dryden essayed all this, his failure would have been complete. "I would," [Pg 152] said he, with his usual ignorance of his own and his age's worst sins and defects, "have the characters well chosen, and kept distant from interfering with each other, which is more than Fletcher *or Shakspeare did*! * * I think there is no folly so great in any part of our age, as the superfluity and waste of wit was in some of our predecessors, particularly Fletcher *and Shakspeare*." Refining the courtship, raillery, and conversation of plays! We cannot, perhaps, truly say very much in praise of those qualities in Ben's comedies, admirable as they are, and superior, in all respects, a thousand times over to the best of Dryden's and of his contemporaries'; but wilfully blind indeed, or worse, must the man who could thus write have been to the matchless grace, vivacity, delicacy, prodigality, and poetry of Shakspeare's comedy, which as far transcends all the happiest creations of other men's wit, as the pervading pathos and sublimity of his tragedy all their happiest inspirations from the holy fountain of ennobling or pitying tears.

In its day, the following Epilogue caused a great hubbub—

"They, who have best succeeded on the stage,
Have still conform'd their genius to their age.
Thus Jonson did mechanic humours show,
When men were dull, and conversation low.
Then comedy was faultless, but 'twas coarse:

Cobb's tankard was a jest, and Otter's horse.
And, as their comedy, their love was mean;
Except by chance, in some one labour'd scene,
Which must atone for an ill-written play.
They rose, but at their height could seldom stay:
Fame then was cheap, and the first comer sped;
And they have kept it since by being dead.
But, were they now to write, when critics weigh
Each line, and every word, throughout a play,
None of them, no not Jonson in his height,
Could pass without allowing grains for weight.
Think it not envy that these truths are told—
Our poet's not malicious, though he's bold.
'Tis not to brand them that their faults are shown,
But by their errors, to excuse his own.
If love and honour now are higher raised,
'Tis not the poet, but the age is praised.
Wit's now arrived to a more high degree;
Our native language more refined and free;
Our ladies and our men now speak more wit,
In conversation, than those poets writ.
Then, one of these is, consequently, true;
That what this poet writes comes short of you,
And imitates you ill (which most he fears,)
Or else his writing is not worse than theirs.
Yet, though you judge (as sure the critics will)
That some before him writ with greater skill,
In this one praise he has their fame surpast,
To please an age more gallant than the last."

Dryden was called over the coals for this sacrilegious Epilogue by persons ill qualified for censors—among others, by my Lord Rochester—and was instantly ready with his defence—an "Essay on the Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age." In it he repeats the senseless assertion, "that the language, wit, and conversation of our age are improved and refined above the last;" and he takes care to include among the writers of the last age, *Shakspeare*, Fletcher, and Jonson. "In what," he asks "does the refinement of a language principally consist?"

> "Either in rejecting such old words or phrases which are ill sounding or improper, or in admitting new, which are more proper, more sounding, and more luxuriant. * * * Malice and partiality set apart, let any man who understands English, read diligently the works of *Shakspeare* and Fletcher, and I dare undertake that he will find in every page either some solecism of speech, or some notorious flaw in sense; yet these men are reverenced, when we are not forgiven. That their wit is great, and many times their expressions noble, envy itself cannot deny. But the times were ignorant in which they lived. Poetry was then, if not in its infancy among us, at least not arrived to its vigour and maturity. Witness the lameness of their plots, many of which, especially those they writ first, (for even that age refined itself in some measure,) were made up of some ridiculous, incoherent story, which in one play many times took up the business of an age. I suppose I need not name 'Pericles, Prince of Tyre,' *nor the historical plays of Shakspeare*, besides many of the rest, as the 'Winter's Tale,' 'Love's Labour Lost,' 'Measure for Measure,' which were either founded on impossibilities, or at least so meanly written, that the comedy neither caused your mirth, nor the serious part your concernment."

In all this this rash and wretched folly, Dryden shows his ignorance of the order in which Shakspeare wrote his plays; and Sir Walter kindly says, that there will be charity in believing that he was not intimately acquainted with those he so summarily and unjustly condemns. But unluckily this nonsense was written during the very time he was said by Sir Walter to have been "engaged in a closer and more critical examination of the ancient English poets than he had before bestowed upon them;" and, from the perusal of Shakspeare, learning that the sole staple of the drama was "human characters acting from the direct and energetic influence of human passions." Yet Sir Walter was right; only Dryden's opinions and judgments kept fluctuating all his life long, too much obedient to the gusts of whim and caprice, or oftener still to the irregular influences of an impatient spirit, that could not brook any opposition from any quarter to its domineering self-will. For in not many months after, in the Prologue to "Aurengzebe," are these noble lines—

"But spite of all his pride, a secret shame
Invades his heart at Shakspeare's sacred name;
Awed when he hears his godlike Romans rage,
He, in a just despair, would quit the stage,
And to an age less polish'd, more unskill'd,
Does, with disdain, the foremost honours yield."

Less polished—more unskilled! Here, too, he is possessed with the same foolish fancy as when he said, in the "Defence of the Epilogue,"—"But these absurdities which those poets committed, may

more properly be called the age's fault than theirs. For besides the want of education and learning, (which was their particular unhappiness,) they wanted the benefit of converse. Their audiences were no better, and therefore were satisfied with what they brought. Those who call theirs the golden age of poetry, have only this reason for it, that they were then content with acorns before they knew the use of bread!" Then, after a somewhat hasty and unconvincing examination of certain incorrectnesses and meannesses of expression even in Ben Jonson, learned as he was, he asks, "What correctness after this can be expected from *Shakspeare* or Fletcher, who wanted that learning and care which Jonson had? I will therefore spare myself the trouble of enquiring into their faults, who, had they lived now, had doubtless written more correctly." Since Shakspeare's days, too, the English language had been refined, he says, by receiving new words and phrases, and becoming the richer for them, as it would be "by importation of bullion." It is admitted, however, that Shakspeare, Fletcher, and Jonson did indeed beautify our tongue by their *curiosa felicitas* in the use of old words, to which it often gave a rare meaning; but in that they were followed by "Sir John Suckling and Mr Waller, *who refined upon them*!" But the greatest improvement and refinement of all, "in this age," is said to have been in wit. Pure wit, and without alloy, was the wit of the court of Charles the Second, and of the Clubs. It shines like gold, yea much fine gold, in the works of all the master play-wrights. Whereas, "Shakspeare, who many times has written better than any poet in any language, is yet so far from writing wit always, or expressing that wit according to the dignity of the subject, that he writes, in many places, below the dullest writers of ours, or any preceding age. Never did any author precipitate himself from such height of thought to so low expressions, as he often does. He is the very Janus of poets; he wears almost every where two faces; and you have scarce begun to admire the one ere you despise the other." That the wit "of this age" is much more courtly, may, Dryden thinks, be easily proved by viewing the characters of gentlemen which were written in the last. For example—who do you think? Why, MERCUTIO. "Shakspeare showed the best of his skill in Mercutio; and he said himself that he was forced to kill him in the third act, to prevent being killed by him. But for my part I cannot find he was so dangerous a person: I see nothing in him but what was so exceedingly harmless, that he might have lived to the end of the play and died in his bed, without offence to any man." Wit Shakspeare had in common with his ingenious contemporaries; but theirs, to speak out plainly, "was not that of gentlemen; there was ever somewhat that was ill-natured and clownish in it, and which confessed the conversation of the authors." "In this age," Dryden declares the last and greatest advantage of writing proceeds from conversation. "In that age" there was "less gallantry;" and "neither did they (Shakspeare, Ben, and the rest) keep the best company of theirs." But let the illustrious time-server speak at large.

> "Now, if they ask me, whence it is that our conversation is so much refined? I must freely, and without flattery, ascribe it to the court; and in it, particularly to the king, whose example gives a law to it. His own misfortunes, and the nation's, afforded him an opportunity, which is rarely allowed to sovereign princes—I mean of travelling, and being conversant in the most polished courts of Europe; and, thereby, of cultivating a spirit which was formed by nature to receive the impressions of a gallant and generous education. At his return, he found a nation lost as much in barbarism as in rebellion; and, as the excellency of his nature forgave the one, so the excellency of his manners reformed the other. The desire of imitating so great a pattern, first awakened the dull and heavy spirits of the English from their natural reservedness; loosened them from their stiff forms of conversation, and made them easy and pliant to each other in discourse. Thus, insensibly, our way of living became more free; and the fire of the English wit, which was before stifled under a constrained, melancholy way of breeding, began first to display its force by mixing the solidity of our nation with the air and gaiety of our neighbours. This being granted to be true, it would be a wonder if the poets, whose work is imitation, should be the only persons in three kingdoms who should not receive advantage by it; or, if they should not more easily imitate the wit and conversation of the present age than of the past.
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> "Let us, therefore, admire the beauties and the heights of Shakspeare, without falling after him into a carelessness, and, as I may call it, a lethargy of thought, for whole scenes together."

Shakspeare lethargic—comatose!

Sir Walter's admiration of "glorious John" was so much part of his very nature, that he says, "it is a bold, perhaps presumptuous, task to attempt to separate the true from the false criticism in the foregoing essay: for who is qualified to be umpire betwixt Shakspeare and Dryden?" None that ever breathed, better than his own great and good self. Yet surely he was wrong in saying, that when Shakspeare wrote for the stage, "wit was not required." Required or not, there it was in perfection, of which Dryden, with all his endowments, had no idea. The question is not as he puts it, were those "audiences incapable of receiving the delights which a cultivated mind derives from the gradual development of a story, the just dependence of its parts upon each other, the minute beauties of language, and the absence of every thing incongruous or indecorous?" They may have been so, though we do not believe they were. But the question is, are Shakspeare's Plays, beyond all that ever were written, distinguished for those very excellences, and free from almost all those very defects? That they are, few if any will now dare to deny. While the best of Dryden's own Plays, and still more those of his forgotten contemporaries, infinitely inferior to Shakspeare's in all those very excellences, are choke-full of all manner of faults and flagrant sins against decorum and congruity, in the eyes of mere taste; and with a few exceptions, according

to no rules can be rated high as works of art. The truth of all this manifestly forced itself upon Sir Walter's seldom erring judgment, as he proceeded in the composition of the elaborate note, in which he would fain have justified Dryden even at the expense of Shakspeare. And, as it now stands, though beautifully written, it swarms with *non-sequiturs*, and perplexing half-truths.

In the Preface to "Troilus and Cressida," (1679,) Dryden again—and for the last time—descants, in the same unsatisfactory strain, on Shakspeare. Æschylus, he tells us, was held in the same veneration by the Athenians of after ages as Shakspeare by his countrymen. But in the age of that poet, the Greek tongue had arrived at its full perfection, and they had among them an exact standard of writing and speaking; whereas the English language, even in his (Dryden's) own age, was wanting in the very foundation of certainty, "a perfect grammar:" so, what must it have been in Shakspeare's time?

> "The tongue in general is so much refined since then, that many of his words, and more of his phrases, are scarce intelligible. And of those which we understand, some are ungrammatical, others coarse; and his whole style is so pestered with figurative expressions, that it is as affected as it is obscure. It is true that, in his latter plays, he had worn off somewhat of the rust; but the tragedy which I have undertaken to correct was in all probability one of his first endeavours on the stage.... So lamely is it left to us, that it is not divided into acts. For the play itself, the author seems to have begun it with some fire. The characters of Pandarus and Thersites are promising enough; but, as if he grew weary of his task, after an entrance or two, he lets them fall; and the latter part of the tragedy is nothing but a confusion of drums and trumpets, excursions, and alarms. The persons who give name to the tragedy are left alive. Cressida is false, and is not punished. Yet, after all, because the play was Shakspeare's, and that there appeared in some places of it the admirable genius of the author, I undertook to remove that heap of rubbish, under which many excellent thoughts lay wholly buried. Accordingly, I have remodelled the plot, threw out many unnecessary persons, improved those which were begun and left unfinished, as Hector, Troilus, Pandarus, and Thersites, and added that of Andromache. After that, I made, with no small trouble, an order and connexion of all the scenes, removing them from the place where they were inartificially set; and though it was impossible to keep them all unbroken, because the scene must be sometimes in the city and sometimes in the court, yet I have so ordered them, that there is a coherence of them with one another, and a dependence on the main design: no leaping from Troy to the Grecian tents, and thence back again, in the same act, but a due proportion of time allowed for every motion. I need not say that I have refined the language, which before was obsolete; but I am willing to acknowledge, that as I have often drawn his English nearer to our times, so I have sometimes conformed my own to his; and consequently, the language is not altogether so pure as it is significant."

John Dryden and Samuel Johnson resemble one another very strongly in their treatment of Shakspeare. Both of them seem at times to have perfectly understood and felt his greatness, and both of them have indited glorious things in its exaltation. Their praise is the utterance of worship. You might believe them on their knees before an idol. But theirs is a strange kind of reverence. It alternates with derision, and is compatible with contempt. The god sinks into the man and the man is a barbarian, babbling uncouth speech. "Coarse," "ungrammatical," "obscure," "affected," "unintelligible," "rusty!" The words distilled from the lips of Cordelia, Desdemona, Juliet, Imogen!

Dryden informs us, that ages after the death of Æschylus, the Athenians ordained an equal reward to the poets who could alter his plays to be acted in the theatre, with those whose productions were wholly new, and of their own. But the case, he laments, is not the same in England, though the difficulties are greater. Æschylus wrote good Greek, Shakspeare bad English; and to make it intelligible to a refined audience was a hard job. Sorely "pestered with figurative expressions" must have been the transmogrifier; and he had to look for wages, not to a nation's gratitude, but a manager's greed. It was, indeed, a desperate expedient for raising the funds. In his judgment the Play itself was but a poor affair—an attempt by an apprentice, that, to be producible, required the shaping of a master's hand. "Lamely left" it had to be set on its feet ere it could tread the stage. With what *nonchalance* does he throw out "unnecessary persons," and improve "unfinished!" Hector, Troilus, Pandarus, and Thersites, skilless Shakspeare had but begun—artful Dryden made an end of them; Cressida, who was false as she was fair, yet left alive to deceive more men, became a paragon of truth, chastity, and suicide; and by an amazing stretch of invention, far beyond the Swan's, was added Andromache. Dryden proudly announces that "the scenes of Pandarus and Cressida, of Troilus and Pandarus, of Andromache with Hector and the Trojans, in the second act, are wholly new; together with that of Nestor and Ulysses with Thersites, and that of Thersites with Ajax and Achilles. I will not weary my reader with the scenes which are added of Pandarus and the lovers in the third, and those of Thersites, which are wholly altered; but I cannot omit the last scene in it, which is almost half the act, betwixt Troilus and Hector. I have been so tedious in three acts, that I shall contract myself in the two last. The beginning scenes of the fourth act are either added, or changed wholly by me; the middle of it is Shakspeare's, altered and mingled with my own; three or four of the last scenes are altogether new; and the whole fifth act, both the plot and the writing, are my own additions." O heavens! why was it not all "my own?"

No human being can have a right to use another in such a way as this. Shakspeare's plays were then, and are now, as much his own property as the property of the public—or rather, the public holds them in trust. Dryden was a delinquent towards the dead. His crime was sacrilege. In reading *his* "Troilus and Cressida," you ever and anon fear you have lost your senses. Bits of veritable Shakspearean gold, burnished star-bright, embossed in pewter! Diamonds set in dirt! Sentences illuminated with words of power, suddenly rising and sinking, through a flare of fustian! Here Apollo's lute—there hurdy-gurdy.

"For the play itself," said Dryden insolently, "the author seems to have begun it with some fire;" and here it is continued with much smoke. "The characters of Pandarus and Thersites are promising enough;" here we shudder at their performance. Such a monstrous Pandarus would have been blackballed at the Pimp. Thersites—Shakspeare's Thersites—for Homer's was another Thersites quite—finely called by Coleridge, "the Caliban of demagogic life"—loses all individuality, and is but a brutal buffoon grossly caricatured. The scene between Ulysses and Achilles, with its wondrous wisdomful speech, is omitted! of itself, worth all the poetry written between the Restoration and the Revolution.

Spirit of Glorious John! forgive, we beseech thee, truth-telling Christopher—but angels and ministers of grace defend us! WHO ART THOU? Shakspeare's ghost.

Prologue, spoken by Mr Betterton, representing the Ghost of Shakspeare.

"See, my loved Britons, see your Shakspeare rise,
An awful ghost confess'd to human eyes!
Unnamed, methinks, distinguish'd I had been
From other shades, by this eternal green,
About whose wreaths the vulgar poets strive,
And, with a touch, their wither'd bays revive.
Untaught, unpractised, in a barbarous age,
I found not, but created first the stage;
And if I drain'd no Greek or Latin store,
'Twas that my own abundance gave me more.

On foreign trade I needed not rely,
Like fruitful Britain, rich without supply.
In this my rough-drawn play you shall behold
Some master-strokes, so manly and so bold,
That he who meant to alter, found 'em such,
He shook, and thought it sacrilege to touch.
Now, where are the successors to my name?
What bring they to fill out a poet's fame?
Weak, short-lived issues of a feeble age;
Scarce living to be christen'd on the stage!
For humour farce, for love they rhyme dispense,
That tolls the knell for their departed sense.
Dulness, that in a playhouse meets disgrace,
Might meet with reverence in its proper place.
The fulsome clench that nauseates the town,
Would from a judge or alderman go down—
Such virtue is there in a robe and gown!
And that insipid stuff which here you hate,
Might somewhere else be call'd a grave debate:
Dulness is decent in the church and state.
But I forget that still 'tis understood
Bad plays are best decried by showing good.
Sit silent, then, that my pleased soul may see
A judging audience once, and worthy me.
My faithful scene from true records shall tell,
How Trojan valour did the Greek excel;
Your great forefathers shall their fame regain,
And Homer's angry ghost repine in vain."

The best hand of any man that ever lived, at prologue and epilogue, was Dryden. And here he showed himself to be the boldest too; and above fear of ghosts. For though it was but a make-believe, it must have required courage in Shakspeare's murderer to look on its mealy face. The ghost speaks well—nobly—for six lines—though more like Dryden's than Shakspeare's. *That* was not his style when alive. The seventh line would have choked him, had he been a mere light-and-shadow ghost. But in death never would he thus have given the lie to his life. "Untaught," he might have truly said—for he had no master. "Unpractised!" Nay, "Troilus and Cressida" sprang from a brain that had teemed with many a birth. "A barbarous age!" Read—"Great Eliza's golden time," when the sun of England's genius was at meridian. "Sacrilege to touch!" Prologue had not read Preface. Little did the "injured ghost" suspect the spectacle that was to ensue. Much of what follows is, in worse degree, Drydenish all over. Sweetest Shakspeare scoffed not so!

Suppose Shakspeare's ghost to have slipped quietly into the manager's box to witness the performance. Poets after death do not lose all memory of their own earthly visions. Thoughts of the fairest are with them in Paradise. At first sight of Dorinda he would have bolted.

Dryden says, that "he knew not to distinguish the blown puffy style from true sublimity." He would then have done so, and no mistake. "The fury of his fancy often transported him beyond the bounds of judgment, either in coining of new words and phrases, or racking words which were in use, into the violence of catachresis." His ears would have been jarred by Prospero's "polite conversation," so unlike what he, who had not "kept the best society," was confined to "in a barbarous age." Yet Dryden confessed that he "understood the nature of the passions," and "made his characters distinct;" so that "his failings were not so much in the passions themselves, as in his manner of expression." Unfortunately, his vocabulary was neither choice nor extensive, and he "often obscured his meaning by his words, and sometimes made it unintelligible."

> "To speak justly of this whole matter: it is neither height of thought that is discommended, nor pathetic vehemence, nor any nobleness of expression in its proper place; but it is a false measure of all these, something which is like them, and is not them; it is the Bristol stone, which appears like a diamond; it is an extravagant thought instead of a sublime one; it is a roaring madness instead of vehemence; a sound of words instead of sense. If Shakspeare were stripped of all the bombasts in his passions, and dressed in the most vulgar words, we should find the beauties of his thoughts remaining; if his embroideries were burnt down, there would still be silver at the bottom of the melting-pot, but I fear (at least let me fear it for myself) that we, who ape his sounding words, have nothing of his thought, but are all outside; there is not so much as dwarf within our giant's clothes. Therefore, let not Shakspeare suffer for our sakes; it is our fault, who succeed him in an age that is more refined, if we imitate him so ill that we copy his failings only, and make a virtue of that in our writings which in his was an imperfection.

> "For what remains, the excellency of that poet was, as I have said, in the more manly passions; Fletcher's in the softer. Shakspeare writ better betwixt man and man; Fletcher betwixt man and woman: consequently the one described friendship better—the other love. Yet Shakspeare taught Fletcher to write love; and Juliet and Desdemona are originals. It is true, the scholar had the softer soul, but the master had the kinder. Friendship is both a virtue and a passion essentially; love is passion only in its nature, and is not a virtue but by accident: good-nature makes friendship, but effeminacy love. Shakspeare had an universal mind, which comprehended all characters and passions; Fletcher, a more confined and limited: for though he treated love in perfection, yet honour, ambition, revenge, and generally all the stronger passions, he either touched not, or not masterly. To conclude all he was a limb of Shakspeare."

THE TOWER OF LONDON.—A POEM.

By Thomas Roscoe.

Part I.

Proud Julian towers! ye whose grey turrets rise
In hoary grandeur, mingling with the skies—
Whose name—thought—image—every spot are rife
With startling legends—themes of death in life!
Recall the voices of wrong'd spirits fled—
Echoes of life that long survived their dead;
And let them tell the history of thy crimes,
The present teach, and warn all future times.

Time's veil withdrawn, what tragedies of woe
Loom in the distance, fill the ghastly show!
Oh, tell what hearts, torn from light's cheering ray,
Within thy death-shades bled their lives away;
What anxious hopes, strifes, agonies, and fears,
In thy dread walls have linger'd years on years—
Still mock'd the patient prisoner as he pray'd
That death would shroud his woes—too long delay'd!

Could the great Norman, with prophetic eye,
Have scann'd the vista of futurity,
And seen the cell-worn phantoms, one by one,
Rise and descend—the father to the son—
Whose purest blood, by treachery and guilt,
On thy polluted scaffolds has been spilt,
Methinks Ambition, with his subtle art,
Had fired his hero to a nobler part.

Yes! curst Ambition—spoiler of mankind—
That with thy trophies lur'st the dazzled mind,

That 'neath the gorgeous veil thy conquests weave,
Would'st hide thy form, and Reason's eye deceive—
By what strange spells still dost thou rule the mind
That madly worships thee, or, tamely blind,
Forbears to fathom thoughts, that at thy name
Should kindle horror, and o'erwhelm with shame.

Alas, that thus the human heart should pay
Too willing homage to thy bloody sway;
Should stoop submissive to a fiend sublime
And venerate e'en the majesty of crime!
How soon to those that tempt thee art thou near—
To prompt, direct, and steel the heart to fear!
Oh, not to such the voice of peace shall speak,
Nor placid zephyr fan their fever'd cheek;
Sleep ne'er shall seal their hot and blood-stain'd eye,
But conscious visions ever haunt them nigh;
Grandeur to them a faded flower shall be,
Wealth but a thorn, and power a fruitless tree;
And, as they near the tomb, with panting breast,
Shrink from the dread unknown, yet hope no rest!

Stern towers of strength! once bulwarks of the land,
When feudal power bore sway with sovereign hand—
Frown ye no more—the glory of the scene—
Sad, silent witness of what crimes have been!
Accurst the day when first our Norman foe
Taught Albion's high-born Saxon sons to bow
'Neath victor-pride and insolence—learn to feel
What earth's dark woes—when abject vassals kneel;
And worse the hour when his remorseless heir,
Alike uncheck'd by heaven, or earthly prayer,
With lusts ignoble, fed by martial might,
Usurp'd man's fair domains and native right.

Ye generous spirits that protect the brave,
And watch the seaman o'er the crested wave,
Cast round the fearless soul your glorious spell,
That fired a Hampden and inspired a Tell—
Why left ye Wallace, greatest of the free,
His hills' proud champion—heart of liberty—
Alone to cope with tyranny and hate,
To sink at last in ignominious fate?
Sad Scotia wept, and still on valour's shrine
Our glistening tears, like pearly dewdrops, shine,
To tell the world how Albyn's hero bled,
And treasure still the memory of her dead.
Whose prison annals speak of thrilling deeds,
How truth is tortured and how genius bleeds?
Whose eye dare trace them down the tragic stream—
Mark what fresh phantoms in the distance gleam,
As dark and darker o'er th' ensanguined page
The ruthless deed pollutes each later age?
See where the rose of Bolingbroke's rich bloom
Fades on the bed of martyr'd Richard's tomb!
Look where the spectre babes, still smiling fair,
Spring from the couch of death to realms of air!
Oh, thought accurst! that uncle, guardian, foe,
Should join in one to strike the murderous blow.

Ask we for tears from pity's sacred fount?
"Forbear!" cries vengeance—"that is my account."
There is a power—an eye whose light can span
The dark-laid schemes of the vain tyrant, man.
Lo! where it pierces through the shades of night,
And all its hideous secrets start to light—
In vain earth's puny conquerors heaven defy—
Their kingdom's dust, and but one throne on high.
See heaven's applause support the virtuous wrong'd,
And 'midst his state the despot's fears prolong'd.
Thou tyrant, yes! the declaration God
Himself hath utter'd—"I'm the avenging rod!"
Words wing'd with fate and fire! oh, not in vain
Ye cleft the air, and swept Gomorrah's plain,
When, dark idolatry unmask'd, she stood
The mark of heaven—a fiery solitude!

And still ye sped—still mark'd the varied page
In every time—through each revolving age—
Wherever man trampled his fellow man,
Unscared by crimes, ye marr'd his ruthless plan—
Still shall ye speed till time has pass'd away,
And retribution reigns o'er earth's last day.

Methinks I hear from each relentless stone
The spirits of thy martyr'd victims groan,
And eager whispers Echo round each cell
The oft repeated legend, and re-dwell,
With the same fondness that bespeaks delight
In childhood's heart, when on some winter's night,
As stormy winds low whistle through the vale,
It shuddering lists the thrilling ghostly tale.
It seems but now that blood was spilt, whose stain
Proclaims the dastard soul—the bloody reign
Of the Eighth Harry—vampire to his wife,
Who traffick'd for his divorce with her life;
So fresh, so moist, each ruddy drop appears
Indelible through centuries of years!
And who is this whose beauteous figure moves,
Onward to meet the reeking form she loves;
Whose noble mien—whose dignity of grace,
Extort compassion from each gazing face?
'Tis Dudley's bride! like some fair opening flower
Torn from its stem—she meets fate's direst hour;
Still unappall'd she views that bloody bier,
Takes her last sad farewell without a tear.

Each weeping muse hath told how Essex died,
Favourite and victim, doom'd by female pride.
How courtly Suffolk spent his latest day,
And dying Raleigh penn'd his deathless lay.
Here noble Strafford too severely taught
How dearly royal confidence is bought;
Received the warrant which demands his breath,
And with a calm composure walk'd—to death.
Nor 'mong the names that liberty holds dear,
Shall the great Russell be forgotten here;
His country's boast—each patriot's honest pride—
For them he lived—for them he wept and died.

And must we yet another page unfold,
To glean fresh moral from the deeds of old?

Ye busy spirits that pervade the air,
And still with dark intents to earth repair;
That goad the passions of the human breast,
And bear the missives of Fate's stern behest—
Say, stifle ye those thoughts that Heaven reveals—
The tears of sympathy—the glow that steals
O'er the young heart, or prompts soft pity's sigh—
The prayer to snatch from harsh captivity
The virtuous doom'd—teach but to praise—admire—
Forbid to catch one spark of generous fire?
The godlike wish of genius, man to bless,
With rank and wealth still leaguing to oppress!
Oh! when shall glory wreathe bright virtue's claim,
And both to honour give a holier fame?

Ye towers of death!—the noblest still your prey,
Here spent in solitude their sunless day;
In your wall'd graves a living doom they found;
Broke o'er their night no ray, no gladd'ning sound.
Yet the mind's splendour, with imprison'd wings,
Rose high, and shone where the pure seraph sings;
Where human thought taught conscience it was free,
And burst the shackles of the Romish See.
Oh, sweetest liberty! how dear to die!
Bound by each sacred link;, each holy tie;
To save unspotted from the spoiler's hand,
Child of our heart—our own—our native land!
And, oh! how dear life's latest drop to shed,
To free the minds by superstition led;—
To spread with holy earnest zeal abroad,

That priceless gem—freedom to worship God!
To keep unmingled with the world's vain lore,
The faith that lightens every darken'd hour;
That faith which can alone the sinner save,
Prepare for death, and raise him from the grave;
Show how, by yielding all, we surest prove,
How humbly, deeply, truly, we can love;
How much we prize that hope divinely given,
The key—the seal—the passport into heaven.

Part II.

What sudden blaze spreads through the crimson skies,
And still in loftier volumes seems to rise?
What meteor gleams, that from the fiery north,
In savage grandeur fast are bursting forth,
And light your very walls? Tell me, ye Towers—
'Tis Smithfield revelling in his festal hours,
Fed with your captives: shrieks that wildly pierce
The roaring flames now undulating fierce,
And gasping struggles, mingled groans, proclaim
The power of torture o'er the writhing frame.
Dark are your dens, and deep your secret cells,
Whose silent gloom your tale of horrors tells.
Saw ye how Cranmer dared—yet fear'd to die,
Trembling 'mid hopes of immortality?
He stood alone;—a brighter band appears
Unaw'd by threats—impregnable to fears;
Who suffer'd glad the sacred truth to spread,
In mild obedience to its fountain-head.
And when at length our popish James would see
Cold superstition bend th' unhallow'd knee,
The mystic tapers on our altars burn,
And clouds of incense shade the fragrant urn,
Shone England's prelates faithful to their call,
In bonds of truth within thy massive wall.
See grace divine—see Heaven in mercy pour,
The balm of peace on Albion's boasted shore.

Once wrought by captive fingers on thy wall,
The hero's home and prison, grave and pall,
What dark lines meet the startled stranger's gaze,
Thoughts that ennoble—sentiments that raise
The iron'd captive from captivity,
How high above the power of tyranny!—
And ye that wander by the evening tide,
Where mountains swell or mossy streamlets glide;
That on fresh hills can hail morn's orient ray,
And chant with birds your grateful hymns to day;
Or seek at noon, beneath some pleasant shade,
To feel the sunbeams cool'd by leafy glade—
That free as air, morn, noon, and eve, can roam,
Where'er you list, and nature call your home;
Learn from a hopeless prisoner's words and fate,
"Virtue is valour—to be patient, great!"
When traced on prison walls, such words as these
Arrest the eye—appall e'en while they please—
"Ah! hapless he who cannot bear the weight,
With patient heart of a too partial fate,
For adverse times and fortunes do not kill,
But rash impatience of impending ill."

Yes, still they speak to bosoms that are free
Within the girdle of captivity;
Of spirits dauntless, who could spurn the chain
Of human punishment or mortal pain;
That e'en amid these precincts of despair,
Dared free themselves from thraldom's jealous care—
Bound but by ties of faith and virtue, be
Heirs of bright hopes and immortality.
Oh! great mind's proud inscriptions! Who shall tell
What hand engraved those lines within that cell?
What heart yet steadfast while around him stood
Phantoms of death to chill his curdling blood,
Could battle with despair on reason's throne,

And conquer where the fiend would reign alone?
Ah! who can tell what sorrows pierced his breast—
Ran through each vein, usurp'd his hours of rest?
What struggle nerved his trembling hand to trace
With moral courage words he dared to face
With acts that ask'd new efforts while he wrote
To man his soul and fix his every thought!
Tremble, thou tyrant! proud ambition, blush!
Hearts such as these thy power can never crush.
Are they forgotten? no, the rugged stone,
The lap of earth on which they rested lone;
The very implements of torture there—
The axe, the rack, the tyrant's jealous care;
Each mark that meets successive ages' eyes
Speaks, trumpet-tongued, a fame that never dies;
And tells the thoughtful stranger, while the tear
Unbidden starts, that freedom triumph'd here—
Plumed her immortal wings for nobler flight,
And bore her martyr'd brave to realms of light.
Nor false their faith, nor like the fleeting wind,
Their spirits fled! for theirs the unprison'd mind,
No tyrant-chains, no bonds of earth and time,
Could hold from truth and freedom's heights sublime—
From that bright heaven of science, whence they shed
Fresh glory o'er man's cause for which they bled.
Ask what is left? their names forgotten now?
Their birth, their fortune? not a trace to show
Where sleeps their dust? Go, seek the blest abode,
Their mind's pure joy, the bosom of their God!
Then tell if in the dull cold prison's air,
And wasted to a living shadow there,
Earth scarcely knew them! if they were alone
Where they were cast, to pine away unknown?
Friends, had they none? nor beam'd a wish to share
Love, friendship, and to breathe the common air.
Lost, lost to all! like some lone desert flower,
Felt they unseen Time's slow consuming power,
And hail'd each parting day with fond delight,
As the tired pilgrim greets the waning light?

No! glad bright spirits, guardians of the mind,
Were with them; as the demon-powers unbind
And lash their furies on the conscious breast
Of earth's fell tyrants who ne'er dream of rest.
Theirs, too, joy's harbinger, the thoughts aye fed
With brighter objects than of earth, that shed
A light within their narrow home, and gave
A triumph's lustre to the yawning grave.
And in that hour when the proud heart's o'erthrown,
And self all-powerless, self is truly known;
When pride no more could darken the free mind,
But all to God in firm faith was resign'd—
Then drank their souls the stream of love divine,
More richly flowing than the Eastern mine;
Felt heaven expanding in the heart renew'd,
And more than friends in desert solitude.

Peace to thy martyrs! thou art frowning now
With all the array of bold and martial show;
The same thy battlements with trophies dress'd,
Present defiance to the hostile breast;
Around thy walls the soldier keeps his ward,
Scared with war's sights no more thy peaceful guard.
Long may ye stand, the voice of other years,
And ope, in future times, no fount of tears
And sorrows like the past, such as have brought
A mournful gloom and shadow o'er the thought;
And if the eye one pitying drop has shed,
That drop is sacred, it embalms the dead.
What though a thousand years have roll'd away
Since thy dread walls entomb'd their noble prey;
To us they speak, ask the warm tear to flow
For ills now pressing and for present woe;
Bid us to succour fellow-men who haste
Along the thorny road of life, and taste

The bitterness of poverty, endure
All that befalls the too neglected poor;
And with no friend, no bounty to assist,
Steal from the world unwept for and unmiss'd.

What though no dungeon wrap the wasting clay,
Or from the eye exclude the cheering ray;
What though no tortures visibly may tear
The writhing limbs, and leave their signet there;
Has not chill penury a poison'd dart,
Inflicting deeper wounds upon the heart?
All the decrees the sternest fate may bind,
To weigh the courage or display the mind—
All man could bear, with heart unflinching bear,
Did not a dearer part his sufferings share—
Worse than the captive's fate—wife, child, his all,
The husband, and the father's name, appall
His very soul, and bid him thrilling feel
Distraction, as he makes the vain appeal.
Upon his brow, where manhood's hand had seal'd
Its perfect dignity, is now reveal'd
A haggard wanness; from his livid eye
The manly fire has faded; cold and dry,
No more it glistens to the light. His thought,
To the last pitch of frantic memory wrought,
Turns to the partner of his heart and woe,
Who, weigh'd with grief, no lesser love can know;
Despair soon haunts the hope that fills his breast,
And passion's flood in tumult is express'd.

Amid the plains where ample plenty spreads
Her copious stores and decks the yellow meads,
The outcast turns a ghastly look to heaven;
Oh, not for him is Nature's plenty given;
Robb'd of the birthright nature freely gave,
Save that last portion freely left—a grave!
Oh, that another power would rule man's heart,
Uncramp its free-born will in every part;
Mercy more swift, justice more just, more slow,
Grandeur less prone to deal the cruel blow,
To bind men's hands with fetters than with alms,
And spurn the only boon that soothes and calms.

England! thou dearest child of liberty;
Free as thine ocean home for ever be;
Thy commerce thrive; may thy deserted poor
No more the pangs of poverty endure.
Then shall thy Towers, proud monument! display
The thousand trophies of a happier day;
And genial climes, from earth's remotest shore,
Their richest tributes to her genius pour,
With wealth from Ind, with treasures from the West,
Thy homes, thy hamlets—cities still be blest;
Till virtue, truth, and justice, shall combine,
And heavenly hope o'er many a bosom shine;
Auspicious days hail thy fair Sovereign's reign,
And happy subjects throng their golden train.

POEMS AND BALLADS OF GOETHE.

No. III.

Goethe, though fertile in poems of the amatory and contemplative class, was somewhat chary of putting forth his strength in the ballad. We have already selected almost every specimen of this most popular and fascinating description of poetry which is at all worthy of his genius;—at least all of them which we thought likely, after making every allowance for variety of taste, to fulfil the main object of our task—to please and not offend. It would have been quite easy for us to spin out the series by translating the whole section of ballads which relate to the loves of "the Maid of the Mill," the "Gipsy's Song"—which somewhat unaccountably has found favour in the eyes of Mrs Austin—and a few more ditties of a similar nature, all of which we bequeath, with our best wishes, as a legacy to any intrepid *rédacteur* who may wish to follow in our footsteps. For

ourselves, we shall rigidly adhere to the rule with which we set out, and separate the wheat from the chaff, according to the best of our ability.

The first specimen of our present selection is not properly German, nor is it the unsuggested and original product of Goethe's muse. We believe that it is an old ballad of Denmark; a country which possesses, next to Scotland, the richest and most interesting store of ancient ballad poetry in Europe. However, although originally Danish, it has received some touches in passing through the alembic of translation, which may warrant us in giving it a prominent place, and we are sure that no lover of hoar tradition will blame us for its insertion.

THE WATER-MAN.

"Oh, mother! rede me well, I pray;
How shall I woo me yon winsome May?"

She has built him a horse of the water clear,
The saddle and bridle of sea-sand were.

He has donn'd the garb of knight so gay,
And to Mary's Kirk he has ridden away.

He tied his steed to the chancel door,
And he stepp'd round the Kirk three times and four.

He has boune him into the Kirk, and all
Drew near to gaze on him, great and small.

The priest he was standing in the quire;—
"What gay young gallant comes branking here?"

The winsome maid, to herself said she;—
"Oh, were that gay young gallant for me!"

He stepp'd o'er one stool, he stepp'd o'er two;
"Oh, maiden, plight me thy oath so true!"

He stepp'd o'er three stools, he stepp'd o'er four;
"Wilt be mine, sweet May, for evermore?"

She gave him her hand of the drifted snow—
"Here hast thou my troth, and with thee I'll go."

They went from the Kirk with the bridal train,
They danced in glee, and they danced full fain;

They danced them down to the salt-sea strand,
And they left them there with hand in hand.

"Now wait thee, love, with my steed so free,
And the bonniest bark I'll bring for thee."

And when they pass'd to the white, white sand,
The ships came sailing towards the land;

But when they were out in the midst of the sound,
Down went they all in the deep profound!

Long, long on the shore, when the winds were high,
They heard from the waters the maiden's cry.

I rede ye, damsels, as best I can—
Tread not the dance with the Water-Man!

This is strong, pure, rugged Norse, scarcely inferior, we think, in any way, to the pitch of the old Scottish ballads.

Before we forsake the North, let us try "The King in Thule." We are unfortunate in having to follow in the wake of the hundred translators of Faust, some of whom (we may instance Lord Francis Egerton) have already rendered this ballad as perfectly as may be; nevertheless we shall give it, as Shakspeare says, "with a difference."

THE KING IN THULE.

There was a king in Thule,

Was true till death I ween:
A vase he had of the ruddy gold,
The gift of his dying queen.

He never pass'd it from him—
At banquet 'twas his cup;
And still his eyes were fill'd with tears
Whene'er he took it up.

So when his end drew nearer,
He told his cities fair,
And all his wealth, except that cup,
He left unto his heir.

Once more he sate at royal board,
The knights around his knee,
Within the palace of his sires,
Hard by the roaring sea.

Up rose the brave old monarch,
And drank with feeble breath,
Then threw the sacred goblet down
Into the flood beneath.

He watch'd its tip reel round and dip,
Then settle in the main;
His eyes grew dim as it went down—
He never drank again.

We shall now venture on an extravaganza which might have been well illustrated by Hans Holbein. It is in the ultra-Germanic taste, such as in our earlier days, whilst yet the Teutonic alphabet was a mystery, we conceived to be the staple commodity of our neighbours. We shall never quarrel with a wholesome spice of superstition; but, really, Hoffmann, Apel, and their fantastic imitators, have done more to render their national literature ridiculous, than the greatest poets to redeem it. The following poem of Goethe is a strange piece of sarcasm directed against that school, and is none the worse, perhaps, that it somewhat out-herods Herod in its ghostly and grim solemnity. Like many other satires, too, it verges closely upon the serious. We back it against any production of M. G. Lewis.

THE DANCE OF DEATH.

The warder look'd down at the depth of night
On the graves where the dead were sleeping,
And, clearly as day, was the pale moonlight
O'er the quiet churchyard creeping.
One after another the gravestones began
To heave and to open, and woman and man
Rose up in their ghastly apparel!

Ho—ho for the dance!—and the phantoms outsprung
In skeleton roundel advancing,
The rich and the poor, and the old and the young,
But the winding-sheets hinder'd their dancing.
No shame had these revellers wasted and grim,
So they shook off the cerements from body and limb,
And scatter'd them over the hillocks.

They crook'd their thighbones, and they shook their long shanks,
And wild was their reeling and limber;
And each bone as it crosses, it clinks and it clanks
Like the clapping of timber on timber.
The warder he laugh'd, though his laugh was not loud;
And the Fiend whisper'd to him—"Go, steal me the shroud
Of one of these skeleton dancers."

He has done it! and backward with terrified glance
To the sheltering door ran the warder;
As calm as before look'd the moon on the dance,
Which they footed in hideous order.
But one and another seceding at last,
Slipp'd on their white garments and onward they pass'd,
And the deeps of the churchyard were quiet.

Still, one of them stumbles and tumbles along,
   And taps at each tomb that it seizes;
But 'tis none of its mates that has done it this wrong,
   For it scents its grave-clothes in the breezes.

It shakes the tower gate, but *that* drives it away,
For 'twas nail'd o'er with crosses—a goodly array—
   And well was it so for the warder!

It must have its shroud—it must have it betimes—
   The quaint Gothic carving it catches,
And upwards from story to story it climbs
   And scrambles with leaps and with snatches.
Now woe to the warder, poor sinner, betides!
Like a long-legged spider the skeleton strides
   From buttress to buttress, still upward!

The warder he shook, and the warder grew pale,
   And gladly the shroud would have yielded!
The ghost had its clutch on the last iron rail
   Which the top of the watch-turret shielded.
When the moon was obscured by the rush of a cloud,
One! thunder'd the bell, and unswathed by a shroud,
   Down went the gaunt skeleton crashing!

A very pleasant piece of poetry to translate at midnight, as we did it, with merely the assistance of a dying candle!

After this feast of horrors, something more fanciful may not come amiss. Let us pass to a competition of flowers in the golden, or—if you will have it so—the iron age of chivalry. The meditations of a captive knight have been a cherished theme for poets in all ages. Richard the Lion-heart of England, and James I. of Scotland, have left us, in no mean verse, the records of their own experience. We all remember how nobly and how well Felicia Hemans portrayed the agony of the crusader as he saw, from the window of his prison, the bright array of his Christian comrades defiling through the pass below. We shall now take a similar poem of Goethe, but one in a different vein:—

The Fairest Flower.

The Lay of the Captive Earl.

The Earl.—I know a floweret passing fair,
   And for its loss I pain me;
Fain would I hence to seek its lair,
   But for these bonds that chain me.
My woes are aught but light to me,
For when I roam'd unbound and free
   That flower was ever near me.

Adown and round the castle's steep,
   I let my glances wander;
But cannot from the dizzy keep,
   Descry it, there or yonder.
Oh, he who'd bring it to my sight,
Or were he knave or were he knight,
   Should be my friend for ever!

The Rose.—I blossom bright thy lattice near,
   And hear what thou hast spoken;
'Tis me—brave, ill-starr'd cavalier—
   The Rose, thou wouldst betoken!

Thy spirit spurns the base, the low,
And 'tis the queen of flowers, I know,
   That in thy bosom reigneth.

The Earl.—All honour to thy purple cheer,
   From swathes of verdure blowing;
And so art though to maidens dear,
   As gold or jewels glowing.
Thy wreaths adorn the fairest face,
Yet art thou not the flower, whose grace
   In solitude I cherish.

The Lily.—A haughty place usurps the rose,

And haughtier still doth covet;
But where the lily meekly blows,
Some gentle eye will love it.
The heart that beats in faithful breast,
And spotless is as my white vest,
Must value me the highest.

The Earl.—Spotless and true of heart am I,
And free from sinful failing,
Yet must I here a captive lie,
In loneliness bewailing.
I see an image fair in you
Of many maidens pure and true,
Yet know I something dearer.

The Carnation.—That may thy warder's garden show
In me, the bright carnation,
Else would the old man tend me so
With loving adoration?
In perfect round my petals meet,
And lifelong are with scent replete,
And with a burning colour.

The Earl.—None may the sweet carnation slight,
It is the gardener's pleasure,
Now he unfolds it to the light,
Now shields from it his treasure.
But no—the flower for which I pant,
No rare, no brilliant charms can vaunt,
'Tis ever meek and lowly.

The Violet.—Conceal'd and bending I retreat,
Nor willingly had spoken,
Yet that same silence, since 'tis meet,
Shall now by me be broken.
If I be that which fills thy thought
Then must I grieve that I may not
Waft every perfume to thee.

The Earl.—I love the violet, indeed,
So modest in perfection,
So gently sweet—yet more I need
To soothe my heart's dejection.
To thee alone the truth I'll speak,
That not upon this rock so bleak
Is to be found my darling.

In yon far vale, earth's truest wife
Sits where the brooks run playing,
And still must wear a woeful life
Till I with her am straying.
When a blue floweret by that spot
She plucks, and says—FORGET-ME-NOT,
I feel it here in bondage.

Yes, when two truly love, its might
They own and feel in distance,
So I, within this dungeon's night,
Cling ever to existence.
And when my heart is nigh distraught,
If I but say—FORGET-ME-NOT,
Hope burns again within me!

Such is constant love—the light even of the dungeon! Nor, to the glory of human nature be it said, is this a fiction. Witness Picciola—witness those letters, perhaps the most touching that were ever penned, from poor Camille Desmoulins to his wife, while waiting for the summons to the guillotine—witness, above all, that fragment signed Quéret-Démery, which could not get beyond the sullen walls of the Bastile until fifty years after the agonizing request was preferred, when that torture-chamber of cruelty was razed indignantly to the ground—"If, for my consolation, Monseigneur would grant me, for the sake of God and the most blessed Trinity, that I could have news of my dear wife! were it only her name on a card to show that she is yet alive! It were the sweetest consolation I could receive; and I should for ever bless the greatness of

Monseigneur." Poetry has no such eloquence as this.

But we must not digress from our author. Here are a few lines of the deepest feeling and truth, and most appropriate in the hours of wretchedness—

Sorrow without Consolation.

O, wherefore shouldst thou try
The tears of love to dry?
Nay, let them flow!
For didst thou only know,
How barren and how dead
Seems every thing below,
To those who have not tears enough to shed,
Thou'd'st rather bid them *weep*, and seek their comfort so.

The following stanzas, though rather inferior in merit, may be taken as a companion to the above. Their structure reminds us of Cowley.

Comfort in Tears.

How is it that thou art so sad
When others are so gay?
Thou hast been weeping—nay, thou hast!
Thine eyes the truth betray.

"And if I may not choose but weep,
Is not my grief mine own?
No heart was heavier yet for tears—
O leave me, friend, alone!"

Come, join this once the merry band,
They call aloud for thee,
And mourn no more for what is lost,
But let the past go free.

"O, little know ye in your mirth
What wrings my heart so deep!
I have not lost the idol yet
For which I sigh and weep."

Then rouse thee and take heart! thy blood
Is young and full of fire;
Youth should have hope and might to win,
And wear its best desire.

"O, never may I hope to gain
What dwells from me so far;
It stands as high, it looks as bright,
As yonder burning star."

Why, who would seek to woo the stars
Down from their glorious sphere?
Enough it is to worship them,
When nights are calm and clear.

"Oh, I look up and worship too—
My star it shines by day—
Then let me weep the livelong light
The whilst it is away."

A thread from the distaff of Omphale may be stronger than the club of Hercules. Here is an inconstant Romeo escaped from his Juliet, and yet unable to shake off the magnetic spell which must haunt him to his dying day.

To a Golden Heart.

Pledge of departed bliss,
Once gentlest, holiest token!
Art thou more faithful than thy mistress is,
That ever I must wear thee,
And on my bosom bear thee,

Although the bond that knit her soul with mine is broken?
Why shouldest thou prove stronger?
Short are the days of love, and wouldst thou make them longer?

Lili! in vain I shun thee!
Thy spell is still upon me.
In vain I wander through the distant forests strange,
In vain I roam at will
By foreign glade and hill,
For, ah! where'er I range,
Beside my heart, the heart of Lili nestles still!

Like a bird that breaks its twine,
Is this poor heart of mine:
It fain into the summer bowers would fly,
And yet it cannot be
Again so wholly free;
For always it must bear
The token which is there,
To mark it as a thrall of past captivity.

Here, again, is Romeo before his escape. Poor Juliet! may we hope that she still has, and may long possess, the power

"To lure this tassel-gentle back again."

Death, indeed, were a gentler fate than desertion. Truth to say, Goethe would have made but a sorry Romeo, for he wanted the great and leading virtue of constancy; and yet who can tell what Romeo might have become, after six months' exile in Mantua? Juliet, we know, had taken the place of Rosaline. Might not some fairer and newer star have arisen to eclipse the image of the other? We will not credit the heresy. Far better that the curtain should fall upon the dying lovers, before one shadow of doubt or suspicion of infidelity has arisen to perplex the clear bright mirror of their souls!

WELCOME AND DEPARTURE.

To horse!—away o'er hill and steep!
  Into the saddle blithe I sprung;
The eve was cradling earth to sleep,
  And night upon the mountains hung.
With robes of mist around him set,
  The oak like some huge giant stood,
While, with its hundred eyes of jet,
  Peer'd darkness from the tangled wood.

Amidst a bank of clouds, the moon
  A sad and troubled glimmer shed;
The wind its chilly wings unclosed,
  And whistled wildly round my head.
Night framed a thousand phantoms dire,
  Yet did I never droop nor start;
Within my veins what living fire!
  What quenchless glow within my heart!

We met; and from thy glance a tide
  Of stifling joy flow'd into me:
My heart was wholly by thy side,
  My every breath was breathed for thee.
A blush was there, as if thy cheek
  The gentlest hues of spring had caught,
And smiles so kind for me!—Great powers!
  I hoped, yet I deserved them not!

But morning came to end my bliss;
  A long, a sad farewell we took.
What joy—what rapture in thy kiss,
  What depth of anguish in thy look!
I left thee, dear! but after me
  Thine eyes through tears look'd from above;
Yet to be loved—what ecstacy!
  What ecstacy, ye gods, to love!

Here are three small cabinet pictures of exquisite finish. We have laboured hard to do justice to them, for the smallest gems are the most difficult to copy; yet after all we have some doubts of

our success.

EVENING.

Peace breathes along the shade
Of every hill,
The tree-tops of the glade
Are hush'd and still;
All woodland murmurs cease,
The birds to rest within the brake are gone.
Be patient, weary heart—anon,
Thou, too, shalt be at peace!

A CALM AT SEA.

Lies a calm along the deep,
Like a mirror sleeps the ocean,
And the anxious steersman sees
Round him neither stir nor motion.

Not a breath of wind is stirring,
Dread the hush as of the grave—
In the weary waste of waters
Not the lifting of a wave.

THE BREEZE.

The mists they are scatter'd,
The blue sky looks brightly,
And Eolus looses
The wearisome chain!
The winds, how they whistle!
The steersman is busy—
Hillio-ho, hillio-ho!
We dash through the billows—
They flash far behind us—
Land, land, boys, again!

In one of Goethe's little operas, which are far less studied than they deserve, although replete with grace, melody, and humour, we stumbled upon a ballad which we at once recognised as an old acquaintance. Some of our readers may happen to recollect the very witty and popular ditty called "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship," a peculiar favourite amongst the lower orders in Scotland, but not, so far as we knew, transplanted from its native soil. Our surprise, therefore, was great when we discovered Captain Wedderburn dressed out in the garb of a *Junker* of the middle ages, and "bonny Girzie Sinclair," the Laird of Roslin's daughter, masquerading as a German *Fraülein*. The coincidence, if it be not plagiary, is so curious, that we have translated the ballad with a much freer hand than usual, confessing at the same time that the advantage, in point of humour and gallantry, is clearly on the side of the old Mid-Lothian ditty.

THE CAVALIER'S CHOICE.

It was a gallant cavalier
Of honour and renown,
And all to seek a ladye-love
He rode from town to town.
Till at a widow-woman's door
He drew the rein so free;
For at her side the knight espied
Her comely daughters three.

Well might he gaze upon them,
For they were fair and tall;
Ye never have seen fairer
In bower nor yet in hall.
Small marvel if the gallant's heart
Beat quicker in his breast:
'Twas hard to choose, and hard to lose—
How might he wale the best?

"Now, maidens, pretty maidens mine,
Who'll rede me riddles three?
And she who answers best of all
Shall be my own ladye!"

I ween they blush'd as maidens do
When such rare words they hear—
"Now speak thy riddles, if thou wilt,
Thou gay young Cavalier!"

"What's longer than the longest path?
First tell ye that to me;
And tell me what is deeper
Than is the deepest sea?
And tell me what is louder
Than is the loudest horn?
And tell me what is sharper
Than is the sharpest thorn?

"And tell me what is greener
Than greenest grass on hill?
And tell me what is crueller
Than a wicked woman's will?"
The eldest and the second maid,
They sat and thought awhile;
But the youngest she look'd upward,
And spoke with merry smile.

"O, love is surely longer far
Than the longest paths that be;
And hell, they say, is deeper
Than is the deepest sea;
And thunder it is louder
Than is the loudest horn;
And hunger it is sharper
Than is the sharpest thorn;

I know a deadly poison
More green than grass on hill;
And the foul fiend he is crueller
Than any woman's will!"
Scarce had the maiden spoken
When the youth was by her side,
And, all for what she answer'd him,
Has claim'd her as his bride.

The eldest and the second maid,
They ponder'd and were dumb;
And there, perchance, are waiting yet
Till another wooer come.
Then, maidens, take this warning word,
Be neither slow nor shy,
And always, when a lover speaks,
Look kindly and reply.

The following beautiful verses are from Wilhelm Meister. We shall venture to call them

RETRIBUTION.

He that with tears did never eat his bread,
He that hath never lain through night's long hours,
Weeping in bitter anguish on his bed—
He knows ye not, ye dread celestial powers.
Ye lead us onwards into life. Ye leave
The wretch to fall, then yield him up, in woe,
Remorse, and pain, unceasingly to grieve;
For every sin is punished here below.

We shall close this number with a series of poems, in imitation, or rather after the manner of the antique, all of which possess singular beauty. No man understood or appreciated the exquisite delicacy of the Greek Anthology better than our author; and although we may, in several of the versions, have fallen short of the originals, we trust that enough still remains to convince the reader that we have not exaggerated their merit.

POEMS AFTER THE MANNER OF THE ANTIQUE.

The Husbandman.

Lightly doth the furrow fold the golden grain within its breast,
Deeper shroud, old man, shall cover in thy limbs when laid at rest.
Blithely plough and sow as blithely! Here are springs of mortal cheer,
And when e'en the grave is closing, Hope is ever standing near.

Anacreon's Grave.

Where the rose is fresh and blooming—where the vine and myrtle spring—
Where the turtle-dove is cooing—where the gay cicalas sing—
Whose may be the grave surrounded with such store of comely grace,
Like a God-created garden? 'Tis Anacreon's resting-place.
Spring and summer and the autumn pour'd their gifts around the bard,
And, ere winter came to chill him, slept he safe beneath the sward.

The Brothers.

Slumber, Sleep—they were two brothers, servants to the Gods above;
Kind Prometheus lured them downwards, ever fill'd with earthly love;
But what Gods could bear so lightly, press'd too hard on men beneath;
Slumber did his brother's duty—Sleep was deepen'd into Death.

Love's Hour-glass.

Eros! wherefore do I see thee, with the glass in either hand?
Fickle God! with double measure wouldst thou count the shifting sand?
"*This* one flows for parted lovers—slowly drops each tiny bead—
That is for the days of dalliance, and it melts with golden speed."

Warning.

Do not touch him—do not wake him! Fast asleep is Amor lying;
   Go—fulfil thy work appointed—do thy labour of the day.
Thus the wise and careful mother uses every moment flying,
   Whilst her child is in the cradle—Slumbers pass too soon away.

Solitude.

Grant, O ye healing Nymphs, that have your haunts
By rock and stream and lonely forest glade,
The boon which, in their bosoms' silent depths,
Your votaries crave! Unto the sad of heart
Give comfort—knowledge unto him that doubts—
Possession to the lover, and its joy.
For unto you the Gods have given, what they
Denied to man—to aid and to console
All those soe'er who put their trust in you.

Perfect Bliss.

All the divine perfections, which, while ere
Nature in thrift doled out 'mongst many a fair,
   She shower'd with open hand, thou peerless one, on thee!
And she that was so wond'rously endow'd,
To whom a throng of noble knees were bow'd,
   Gave all—Love's perfect gift—her glorious self, to me!

The Chosen Rock.

Here, in the hush and stillness of mid-noon,
The lover lay and thought upon his love;
With blithesome voice he spoke to me: "Be thou
My witness, stone!—Yet, therefore, vaunt thee not,
For thou hast many partners of my joy—
To every rock that crowns this grassy dell,
And looks on me and my felicity;
To every forest-stem that I embrace
In my entrancement as I roam along,
Stand thou for a memorial of my bliss!
All mingle with my rapture, and to all
I lift a consecrating cry of joy.

Yet do I lend a voice to thee alone,
As culls the Muse some favourite from the crowd,
And, with a kiss, inspires for evermore."

THE DEATH TRANCE.

Weep, maiden, here by Cupid's grave! He fell,
Some nothing kill'd him—what I cannot tell.
But is he really dead?—I swear not that, in sooth;
A trifle—nothing—oft revives the youth.

PHILOMELA.

Surely, surely, Amor nursed thee, songstress of the plaintive note,
  And, in fond and childish fancy, fed thee from his pointed dart.
So, sweet Philomel, the poison sunk into thy guileless throat,
  Till, with all love's weight of passion, strike its notes to every heart.

SACRED GROUND.

A place to mark the Graces, when they come
Down from Olympus, still and secretly,
To join the Oreads in their festival,
Beneath the light of the benignant moon.
There lies the poet, watching them unseen,
The whilst they chant the sweetest songs of heaven,
Or, floating o'er the sward without a sound,
Lead on the mystic wonder of the dance.
All that is great in heaven, or fair on earth,
Unveils its glories to the dreamer's eye,
And all he tells the Muses. They again,
Knowing that Gods are jealous of their own,
Teach him, through all the passion of his verse,
To utter these high secrets reverently.

THE PARK.

How beautiful! A garden fair as heaven,
Flowers of all hues, and smiling in the sun,
Where all was waste and wilderness before.
Well do ye imitate, ye gods of earth,
The great Creator. Rock, and lake, and glade,
Birds, fishes, and untamed beasts are here.
Your work were all an Eden, but for this—
Here is no man unconscious of a pang,
No perfect Sabbath of unbroken rest.

THE TEACHERS.

What time Diogenes, unmoved and still,
Lay in his tub, and bask'd him in the sun—
What time Calanus clomb, with lightsome step
And smiling cheek, up to his fiery tomb—
What rare examples there for Philip's son
To curb his overmastering lust of sway,
But that the Lord of the majestic world
Was all too great for lessons even like these!

MARRIAGE UNEQUAL.

Alas, that even in a heavenly marriage,
  The fairest lots should ne'er be reconciled!
Psyche wax'd old, and prudent in her carriage,
  Whilst Cupid evermore remains the child.

HOLY FAMILY.

O child of beauty rare—
O mother chaste and fair—
How happy seem they both, so far beyond compare!
She, in her infant blest,
And he in conscious rest,

Nestling within the soft warm cradle of her breast!
What joy that sight might bear
To him who sees them there,
If, with a pure and guilt-untroubled eye,
He looked upon the twain, like Joseph standing by.

EXCULPATION.

Wilt thou dare to blame the woman for her seeming sudden changes,
Swaying east and swaying westward, as the breezes shake the tree?
Fool! thy selfish thought misguides thee—find the *man* that never ranges;
Woman wavers but to seek him—Is not then the fault in thee?

THE MUSE'S MIRROR.

To deck herself, the Muse, at early morn,
Wander'd a-down a wimpling brook, to find
Some glassy pool more quiet than the rest.
On sped the stream, and ever as it ran
It swept away her image, which did change
With every bend and dimple of the wave.
In wrath the Goddess turn'd her from the spot,
Yet after her the brook, with taunting tongue,
Did call—"'Tis plain thou wilt not see the truth
All purely though my mirror shows it thee!"
But she, meanwhile, stood with indifferent ear,
By a far corner of the crystal lake,
Delightedly surveying her fair form,
And settling flowerets in her golden hair.

PHŒBUS AND HERMES.

The deep-brow'd lord of Delos once, and Maia's nimble-witted son,
Contended eagerly by whom the prize of glory should be won;
Hermes long'd to grasp the lyre,—the lyre Apollo hoped to gain,
And both their hearts were full of hope, and yet the hopes of both were vain.

For Ares, to decide the strife, between them rudely dash'd in ire,
And waving high his falchion keen, he cleft in twain the golden lyre.
Loud Hermes laugh'd maliciously, but at the direful deed did fall
The deepest grief upon the heart of Phœbus and the Muses all.

A NEW LOVE.

Love, not the simple youth that whilome wound
Himself about young Psyche's heart, look'd round
Olympus with a cold and roving eye,
That had accustom'd been to victory.
It rested on a Goddess, noblest far
Of all that noble throng—a glorious star—
Venus Urania. And from that hour
He loved her. Ah! to his resistless power

Even she, the holy one, did yield at last,
And in his daring arms he held her fast.
A new and beauteous Love from that embrace
Had birth; that to the mother owed his grace
And purity of soul; whilst from his sire
He borrow'd all his passion, all his fire.
Him ever where the gracious Muses be
Thou'lt surely find. Such sweet society
Is his delight, and his sharp-pointed dart
Doth rouse within men's breasts the love of ART.

THE WREATHS.

Our German Klopstock, if he had his will,
Would bar us from the skirts of Pindus old.
No more the classic laurel should be prized,
But the rough leaflets of our native oak
Alone should glisten in the poet's hair;
Yet did himself, with spirit unreclaim'd
From first allegiance to those early Gods,

Lead up to Golgotha's most awful height
With more than epic pomp the new Crusade.
But let him range the bright angelic host
On either hill—no matter. By his grave
All gentle hearts should bow them down and weep.
For where a hero and a saint have died,
Or where a poet sang prophetical,
Dying as greatly as they greatly lived,
To give memorial to all after times,
Of lofty worth and courage undismay'd;
There, in mute reverence, all devoutly kneel,
In homage of the thorn and laurel wreath,
That were at once their glory and their pang!

The Swiss Alp.

Yesterday thy head was brown, as are the flowing locks of love,
In the bright blue sky I watch'd thee towering, giant-like, above.
Now thy summit, white and hoary, glitters all with silver snow,
Which the stormy night hath shaken from its robes upon thy brow;
And I know that youth and age are bound with such mysterious meaning,
As the days are link'd together, one short dream but intervening.

SPAIN AS IT IS.

There exists in this country a numerous class of persons who, if they were given their choice of an overland journey to India and back, or a ramble through Spain, occupying the same space of time, would prefer the former, as likely to be less inconvenient, and decidedly far less perilous. The wars and rumours of wars, revolutions, rebellions, skirmishes, and *pronunciamentos*, that newspapers have recorded during the last ten or twelve years, with an occasional particularly bloody and barbarous execution by way of interlude, have certainly not been calculated to reassure timid travellers; nor can we well wonder that, at the mere mention of an excursion beyond the Pyrenees, tourists are seized with a vertigo; and that visions, not only of rancid *gaspachos* and vermin-haunted couches, but of chocolate-complexioned ruffians with sugar-loaf hats, button-bedecked jackets, fierce mustaches, and lengthy *escopetas*, peering out of the gloomy recesses of a cork wood, or from among the silvery foliage of an olive grove, pass before the eyes of their imagination. Dangers often appear greater at a distance than upon close examination; many a phantom of ghastly aspect proves upon inspection to be but a turnip-faced goblin after all: and we suspect that if some of the timorous would adventure themselves upon Spanish soil, they might find their precious persons far safer than they had anticipated; and discover that they were in the hands neither of Caffres nor cannibals, but amongst a courteous and generous people, who, if occasionally a little too disposed to slit each other's weasands, on the other hand are very rarely forgetful of the laws of hospitality, or of the kindness and protection to which travellers in a foreign land have a fair claim. We do not mean to recommend Spain as a desirable travelling ground for those adventurous English dames, whom we have occasionally met journeying by coachfuls in France, Germany, and other peaceable lands, unsquired and unescorted save by their waiting-maids: to them the encounter of *rateros*, *salteadores*, or other varieties of Spanish banditti, might be in various respects disagreeable; but for men, who, without leaving Europe, may wish to visit other scenes than those in which every Cockney tourist has wandered, we know of few expeditions more interesting than one into the interior of Spain. Fine scenery, interesting monuments, associations historic, classic, and poetical, and—which to our thinking is still preferable—a people who, in spite of Gallo and Anglo manias, still possess great originality of character and customs, are there to be met with. We cannot do better than refer those persons who would like additional evidence on the subject, to the volumes named at foot[2], in which they will see how a man possessed of prudence, good sense, and good temper, may visit some of the wildest and least frequented parts of the Peninsula, not only without injury or annoyance, but with considerable pleasure and profit.

Captain Widdrington's journey to Spain, in the Spring of 1843, had, as he tells us, a twofold object. He was desirous of observing the effects of the numerous changes that have taken place in that country since the death of Ferdinand; and he, at the same time, thought that his assistance and previous knowledge of the country and people, would be useful to a scientific friend, Dr Daubeny, who had been commissioned by the Agricultural Society to examine the formation of phosphorite in Estremadura. This mineral, it was imagined, might be advantageously substituted for bones as manure.

The travellers had sketched out their route beforehand, and seem to have adhered very closely to the plan they had laid down. Proceeding from Bayonne to Madrid, after a short stay in that capital they struck into Estremadura; visited the vein of phosphorite, and explored several interesting districts, into which few travellers penetrate; thence to the quicksilver mines at Almaden, and to various iron mines and founderies, through Seville, Ronda, Malaga, and Granada, and back to Madrid. Here Captain Widdrington separates from his companion, and

continues his peregrinations alone, through the kingdom of Leon, the Asturias, and Galicia. In his narrative of this somewhat extensive ramble, the gallant captain displays a very respectable degree of knowledge on a considerable variety of subjects. Agriculture, geology, natural history, the resources of Spain, and the best mode of applying them, political intrigues and changes, the strange and apparently inexplicable ups and downs of public men, are all touched upon in turn: and if the earlier portion of his work is worthy of a member of the learned societies to which he belongs, the latter part is no less creditable to his habits of observation, and to the soundness of his judgment.

One of the first things that appear to have struck Captain Widdrington on arriving at Madrid, was the great activity in the building department—an activity arising chiefly from the sequestration of the church property. Convents were being pulled down, or at least altered so as to render them suitable to other purposes. The ground on which one had stood had been converted into a public walk—a chapel had been replaced by a covered market. The large convent of St Thomas was the headquarters of the national guard; while that of the Trinity had been appropriated to the reception of works of art, the spoils of the other convents. One had been sold to a private speculator, who let it out in chambers; another was the refuge of military invalids; a third, the convent of St Catalina—which was set fire to while the Duke of Angouleme was attending, in the year 1823, a mass celebrated in honour of his successful campaign—had been demolished, and a building for the senate and deputies was erecting on its site. The names of many of the streets had been altered to those of various heroes of Spanish liberty; such as Porlier, Lacy, the Empecinado, and others. The street of the Alcala had been rebaptized after the Duque de la Victoria; but no doubt, as the Captain observes, by this time *on a changé tout cela*.

Of the Countess of Mina, who was then *aya*, or governess, to the queen, some interesting details are given by Captain Widdrington, who had known her and her husband when they were living in exile at Plymouth subsequently to the affairs of 1823. Madame Mina appears to be a person of very superior powers of mind, far better qualified to superintend the female department of a Spanish queen's education, than the bigoted and *afrancesada* dowager-marchioness who preceded her in the office, and in the selection of whom Maria Christina, with her usual selfishness, had probably thought more of the political principles and opinions in which she wished Isabella to be brought up, than of her daughter's future welfare and happiness. The universal complaint of the *Spanish* or national party in the time of Christina was, that the queen's education was neglected, or, it should rather be said, misconducted. The queen-dowager's French tendencies were more than suspected. Of course, when the popular party became in the ascendant, and Madame Mina received the appointment, alike unsolicited and unexpected, of governess to the queen, the *afrancesados* set up a yell of horror and consternation. Her husband's humble birth, her character, even her piety, and the mourning habit she had worn ever since her husband's death, were made matters of reproach to her. But though Mina had been born a tiller of the earth, he had died a grandee of Spain, ennobled yet more by his patriotism and great qualities than he could be by the tinsel of a title; the character of the countess was that of a high-minded and virtuous woman; and as to the accusation of being a *santarona*, or affectedly pious, it was no less unjust than malicious. Here is Captain Widdrington's portrait of her:—

> "Her stature is rather below the middle size, and her person stout, with an abundance of the blackest hair simply dressed; eyes very large, dark and fuller than usual, even in this classic land of them, and beaming with intelligence. Her forehead, and the lower part of her face, are remarkable for their development, and an admirable study for the phrenologists, who would pronounce them models, as indicating firmness of character. Her constant costume is the deepest black, which completely covers her person; and when she accepted her appointment, it was stipulated that she should never be required to lay it aside. The only ornament she wore was a simple but rather massive gold chain and cross, which had a singularly good effect in relieving the mass of deep black; and her manner, noble and serious, bordering on the severe at first sight, made her the *beau-idéal* of a lady abbess."

During the celebrated attack upon the palace at Madrid, on the 7th of October 1841, the countess gave proof of energy, courage, and presence of mind, worthy of Mina's widow, and of one who supplied the place of mother to the queen and infanta of Spain. A most interesting account of the transactions of that eventful night is to be found in the third chapter of Captain Widdrington's book; and as he is indebted for the details to Madame Mina herself, it is no doubt the most accurate that has appeared before the public. The *alabarderos*, or halberdiers, who formed the body-guard of the queen, and whose post was in the avenues leading to the royal apartments, consisted of two hundred sergeants, picked from the whole army, and placed under the command of a colonel and lieutenant-colonel, who had the rank of lieutenant and sergeant in this sacred band. "By the regulations, one-third of this little corps ought always to have been on duty; but, 'Cosas de Espana,' when the disturbance broke out, there were only the two officers and seventeen privates present! The rest were in the town, at supper, or various other engagements." And on this handful of men devolved the duty of defending the queen against the attack of as many companies as they numbered muskets. The first alarm was given by *vivas* and other noises in the quadrangle of the palace. Colonel Dulce, the commander of the halberdiers, descended the stairs to enquire the cause of the uproar, and was met on the landing-place by a detachment of the Princesa regiment marching up. He ordered them to halt; they opened fire in reply. Colonel Dulce retreated to the guard-room, and the skirmish began. A double flight of

steps leads up from one of the principal entrances of the palace to this guard-room, of which the door is of considerable size, and covered by a *mampara* or moveable stuffed screen, similar to those used in churches abroad. The alabarderos left the mampara in its place, opening the door no more than was absolutely necessary to fire through. The assailants took up their station at the bottom of the stairs, and blazed away, vigorously replied to from the *sala de armas*. The sides of the doorway and the mampara were riddled, but the assailants could only fire at a guess, their opponents being completely concealed behind the screen; and on the other hand, a stone balustrade at the top of the staircase between the two flights and the angle of the floor, protected the insurgents. The latter, no doubt, thought the whole guard was at its post, so steady and incessant was the fire the alabarderos kept up. To approach the guard-room door was certain death. General Concha, the same who the other night danced the third quadrille with Isabel at a court ball, taking the *pas* of the Spanish grandees there assembled, was present at this treasonable attack, at the head of the Princesa regiment, in plain clothes, but with a drawn sword. About midnight (the firing had begun at half-past seven—what were the authorities about all that time?) Diego Leon, the scapegoat of the affair, made his appearance in his usual dashing attire, a showy hussar uniform, braided, belted, and befrogged, and took command of the proceedings. "According to his own account, he went to the foot of the great staircase, and called to the alabarderos to discontinue firing, lest they should alarm the queen!" but the noise of the musketry was such, that he could not make himself heard, even with the aid of a trumpet! Things, however, had not gone as the conspirators wished; the gallant defence of the halbardiers, which they had not reckoned upon, had caused them to lose much time, and after a short consultation Concha and Leon took to flight. Concha hid himself under the dry arch of a bridge, and afterwards took refuge at the Danish embassy, where he passed a few days, and was then conveyed from another embassy (French, of course) to headquarters at Paris. His caution in wearing plain clothes saved him; while poor Leon, who thought, as he afterwards said, that uniform was the proper costume for the occasion, was taken at Colmenar, a few leagues from Madrid. Captain Widdrington says, with much truth, that nothing could be more characteristic of the two men than their different mode of acting in this trifling particular.

In the whole affair, Concha was the real director and manager, although he sheltered himself behind the Count of Belascoain, who was put forward as being a popular man, especially with the army. A braver or more dashing cavalry officer than Leon could hardly be found, but he was of the wrong stuff for a conspirator; his brains, as the Spaniards used to say in rather a coarse proverb, were in the wrong place. But who that had ever known or even seen him, could help regretting him, the chivalrous, the high-hearted soldier, as much loved by his friends as he was dreaded by his foes! His death was, doubtless, necessary as an example, and should not be laid at the door of the Spanish government of the day, but at that of the unprincipled and selfish faction that made a tool of him. We are surprised to find, by Captain Widdrington's book, that the petitions for his pardon, sent for signature to the national guard of Madrid, were torn across and returned, the only name affixed to them being that of Captain Guardia, who was then dying of wounds received on the night of the insurrection. This speaks plainly as to the general feeling in Madrid concerning the necessity of Leon's sentence being put into execution, the national guard consisting of ten thousand men, who represent every shade of political opinion.

While the fighting was going on, the Countess of Mina was doing her best to shield the queen and her sister from the bullets of the insurgents, who surrounded the royal apartments on three sides, and seem to have been tolerably careless where they sent their lead. A shot came into the room where the queen and her sister lay in bed. They were frightened, and got up, and the attendants placed mattresses on the floor, in the angle of an alcove, upon which the children lay down, and after some time fell asleep. "The poor children were hungry, and asked for supper, but there was nothing to give them; and from two in the afternoon of the 7th, till eight in the morning of the 8th, they did not taste food." What a curious picture is this! Isabel de Borbon, queen of Spain and the Indies, lying on a mattress upon the floor, terrified and a-hungered, her governess, the widow of an ex-peasant and guerilla, keeping watch beside her; nineteen intrepid soldiers defending her against troops sent by her own mother to attack her palace and carry off herself!

Nor was this all. There was a private staircase leading from the *entresol* of the palace to the royal apartments; and although it had been blocked up some time previously, the rebels were aware of its existence, and were heard sawing at the barrier that closed it. "At this time, the countess told me, she felt it her duty to rouse the queen and prepare her for the worst, dictating to her the manner in which those who should enter were to be addressed. The intention was, when they should arrive at the inner door, to open it for fear of greater violence, and admit them." If the conspirators could have got possession of the queen's person, their plan was to wrap her in a cloak and mount her behind one Fulgosio, who had been a colonel in the Carlist service, but was included in the convention of Bergara. In this Tartar fashion she was to have been carried off to the north of Spain.

Captain Widdrington evidently considers that this daring attempt on the part of Christina's faction, as well as subsequent almost equally strange events that have occurred in Spain, were in great measure concerted and organized in France, the money proceeding partly from the French treasury and partly from the coffers of Christina—coffers which she had taken excellent care to fill during the period of her regency. We have been rather amused at the diplomatic caution displayed by the Captain when alluding to French intrigues. The French are always "our neighbours," and Louis Philippe "a certain personage." His meaning, however, is plain enough, and we fully agree with him, that French gold and French counsels and influence have been at the bottom of most of the disturbances that have taken place in Spain since the year 1840. But

enough, for the present, of plots and plotters; we shall perhaps find more of them before we bid our author farewell in Vigo Bay. At present we will follow him to the mines of Almaden, whither he betakes himself after rambling through a considerable portion of Estremadura, one of the most fertile, but neglected and thinly peopled, of Spanish provinces. "Nothing," he says, "is wanted but a good government to assist the bounteous hand with which the gifts of Providence have been showered on this beautiful region." But, alas! instead of a thriving peasantry and well-tilled soil, what does he meet with? *Despoblados*, or deserts, with here and there some wretched villages, few and far between, and from time to time a *cortijo*, or farm-house, with its cultivated patch; but the general face of the country is *zaral*, ground covered with the cistus, numerous varieties of that beautiful plant abounding in the province. Captain Widdrington mentions four sorts he found in flower—the gum cistus, a large white species without spots, a smaller white, and the purple kind common in English gardens. Furze, then just breaking into flower, and *retama*, or brooms, vary the collection; interesting enough, no doubt, to the botanist, but a melancholy sight when one reflects on the far better purpose to which this fertile territory might be applied.

The roads through these districts are, as might be expected, execrable, intersected by large open ditches to carry off the water; and subsequently to each journey the diligence requires extensive repairs. After Truxillo, however, public conveyances are no longer to be found, and mules supply their place. On these the travellers reach Logrosan, where is situate the vein of phosphorite that it was one of the objects of their journey to visit. Four mule-loads of the mineral are taken as a sample, and forwarded to Seville; and this done, an excursion is made to the famous sanctuary of Guadelupe, in the sacristy at which place are some of the finest paintings of Zurbaran. Not the least agreeable portions of Captain Widdrington's book are his descriptions of the churches and other edifices he visits, and of the pictures and carvings they contain. Details of that kind are often apt to be dry and wearisome; but these are done *con amore*, and varied by reflections and criticisms, of which many are very interesting.

It had been a matter of deliberation with Captain Widdrington, upon commencing his wanderings in the Peninsula, whether it were advisable to be armed or not. The usual advice one gets upon this subject on entering Spain, is to take neither arms nor money, or at least no more of the latter than is absolutely necessary for the journey. By being unarmed, the traveller is said to avoid risk of ill treatment at the hands of any banditti he may chance to encounter, and who, if they see him with weapons, are apt either to give him a volley from some ambuscade, or to murder him for having thought of resistance. Captain Widdrington's theory is different. He calculates that, as the majority of Spanish robbers are *rateros*, or ignoble and dastardly cut-purses, who prowl about by twos and threes, it is just as well to be provided with a few fire-arms, the mere sight of which may make all the difference between being robbed or not. He has accordingly armed himself, his companion, and attendant with muskets; and between Logrosan and Almaden he finds the [Pg 186] advantage of having done so. While passing through a wild and broken country, with no road, and scarcely any visible track, he perceives three suspicious-looking customers descending through a field to the further side of a thicket which he is about to traverse. He calls up his companions, who are a little in the rear—they look to their arms, and prepare for a brush. If the three men that have been seen are alone, the travellers are a match for them; but they may be only the van or rearguard of a larger force.

"After waiting a little time in silence, there was no appearance of their emerging from the thicket, which was very close; and, as it would have been imprudent to enter it, we called out to them to advance. They were still invisible, but a voice answered—'Come on, we shall not meddle with you.' We then rode through, and found them on the banks of a pretty stream that flowed through the ravine, preparing to breakfast; some beautiful bread, far better than any we could find in the villages, being part of their intended repast. The man who had answered was nearest to the ford, and the others a little higher up. Of course we passed them at the 'recover,' and the simple salutation of *Vaya* v^{d}*. con Dios!* was interchanged. Had we omitted exchanging this compliment, even with the people we were now dealing with, we should have risked being thought unpolished."

There is something characteristic and Gil Blas-like about this—Spanish all over. Pass we on to the Almaden mines, of which there is a detailed and very interesting account.

The quicksilver mines of Almaden are one of the sure cards of the Spanish finance minister, and during the late war, especially, were often a great resource to the poverty-stricken government. When other sources of revenue failed, there were always to be found speculators willing to treat for the quicksilver contract; and these mines, like the tobacco and other monopolies, and the Havanna revenue, have helped many a Spanish minister in his moment of greatest need. Of course, as the usual demand was money down, the bargains were frequently made at great disadvantage to the seller; and, once made, the consumer is entirely at the mercy of the contractor—the Almaden mines producing a very large portion of all the quicksilver known to exist in the world. Madame Calderon de la Barca, in her *Life in Mexico*, alludes to this when speaking of the unsuccessful mining speculations in that country, where "heaps of silver lie abandoned, because the expense of acquiring quicksilver renders it wholly unprofitable to extract it." That lady further observes, that quicksilver has been paid for at one hundred and fifty dollars per quintal in real cash, when the same quantity was given at credit by the Spanish government for fifty dollars. Madame Calderon is good authority; but we suspect that the cause of such a vast difference between the price given and demanded by the contractor, must have been the cash advances required by the Spanish government. "The contract once made," says Captain

Widdrington, "it is clear that, excepting any qualms of conscience the lessee may be influenced by, there is no check upon his cupidity. The temptation to charge exorbitant prices is increased by the habit of the government requiring large sums to be paid down. This practice, which was unavoidable during the civil war, when it frequently produced the only ready money they could lay their hands on, has continued, and must still do so, unless a financial change take place."

Owing to this state of things, the profit to the government is only about £75,000 per annum; although we are told that the price has been raised, in a few years, from thirty-four to eighty-four dollars the quintal—the price paid to the government we presume. The contract was taken in 1843 by those great *accapareurs* of good things, the Rothschilds. Of course, as long as the civil war lasted, if the contractors had to give money in advance, the risk they ran entitled them to a large rate of profit. Had Don Carlos got the upper hand before they had reimbursed themselves, their lien upon the mines would have been so much waste paper; or even, without that, they might have been exposed to considerable loss and delay had Messrs Cabrera, Balmaseda, Palillos, or others of the same kidney, chosen to take a turn in that direction, carry off the workmen, destroy or damage the works, or drown out the mines. Gomez did pay Almaden a visit when he made the tour of Spain with his expeditionary corps. He burned a part of the town and plundered all he could; but did no harm to the mine—which was either very foolish or very considerate of him.

There is room for much curious speculation as to the effect which the increased and increasing value of quicksilver may have upon the monetary system of Europe, especially in France and other countries where silver is the legal currency, and gold very little used on account of the premium on it. It has been seen above, that, in Mexico, silver is not worth refining, owing to the dearness of the mineral required for the purpose. Unless something be discovered as a substitute for quicksilver, the same result will, in all probability, ensue in other mining districts; and the natural consequence will be the diminished use of silver as a circulating medium, and the increased employment of gold, the more so as the supply of the latter metal has of late years been greatly augmented—a great deal now coming from Asiatic Russia—while its wear and tear are very small. This change would not arise from a scarcity of quicksilver, the quantity and quality of which, at Almaden at least, improve as the miners get deeper into the vein; and, moreover, the portion extracted is limited to 20,000 quintals, or weights of 105 pounds English. "All the works are executed in a truly royal manner; and so capacious and enlarged are the views carried out in the management, that they only take away about one-half of the mineral, leaving the other as a legacy to the future possessors of it, and to provide a supply in case of unforeseen accidents in the workings." There are other uses besides the refining of silver to which quicksilver is applied; and should the contractors continue to raise the price of the latter, the consequence must necessarily be an increase in the value of the former, and a diminution in its consumption.

There are five thousand men employed at the Almaden establishment, and most of those who work in the mines suffer, as may be supposed, in their health, from the unwholesome exhalations. In the summer, when they are most liable to be affected in that way, work is suspended, the labourers retire to their respective provinces to recruit, and generally return in the autumn, restored by their native air. Temperance, cleanliness, and a milk-diet appear to be the best preservatives from the pernicious effects of the mercury-infected atmosphere.

Captain Widdrington does not visit Catalonia, which we regret; for we should like to have had the result of his observations on that turbulent and troublesome province, to which he once or twice alludes. It must truly be a difficult thing to legislate for a country split into so many conflicting interests—fancied interests many of them—as Spain is. The Catalonians, for instance, have got a notion that they are cotton-manufacturers—a notion which their northern neighbours do all in their power to nourish and encourage. Of course, the French would be much annoyed to see Spanish ports opened to cotton goods at a reasonable duty, until such time (if it ever arrives) as they can compete successfully with English manufacturers. It suits their book much better to have a prohibition, or what amounts to such, imposed on all foreign cottons. The Pyrenees are high, but it is a long line of frontier from Port Vendres to Bayonne, and the deuce is in it if they cannot manage to smuggle more French calicoes and *percales*, and suchlike commodities into Spain, than would ever be taken by the Spaniards were those articles admitted at a reasonable duty, which would put a stop to smuggling by rendering it unprofitable. At present there is a regular tariff of smugglers' charges for passing goods, so much per cent on the value, according to the bulk and nature of the articles; and the agents of this traffic abound in Bayonne, Oleron, Perpignan, and all the frontier towns. The idea prevailing in Spain, that Espartero intended entering into a treaty of commerce with England, made him enemies of the Catalonians, and indeed of the majority of the mercantile classes, most of the members of which are more or less mad about the importance of Spanish manufactures, or, at any rate, they seem to be nearly unanimous in their wish to prohibit foreign goods. It is impossible to persuade them, so pigheaded are they, that it would be better to admit foreign manufactures at a fair duty, than to have their markets deluged with smuggled ones that pay no duty at all. "To these miserable manufactures, only capable of producing about one-half of what is required for the consumption of the kingdom," (and that half, be it observed, of inferior quality, and at vastly higher prices than the same merchandise could be imported for,) "is the interest of the landed proprietors and commercial class, as well as that of the entire community, sacrificed."

These manufacturing madmen, the Catalonians, are the plague-spot of the Peninsula. Obstinate, fiery, and selfish, they think only of themselves, and of what they consider their interests, petty

and miserable as the latter are compared to those of the rest of Spain. The real interests of the country are obvious to any but prejudiced understandings. It is a land flowing with milk and honey, or, what is far better, with wine and oil; abounding in valuable products, of which the export might be vastly increased by admitting the manufactures of countries possessing, perhaps, a less-favoured soil and climate, but a more industrious population. Instead of making bad calicoes at a high price, let the Spaniards set to work to clear and plant their *despoblados*—let them improve their system of agriculture, their mode of producing oil; let them cut canals and make roads, and get something like decent communications between towns and provinces. The irrigation of the soil in Spain is also a matter of great importance, and which, in many parts of the country, is at present sadly neglected. There are vast districts that remain uninhabited and barren, solely because people will not build or live where they are beyond a certain distance from water; districts where every thing is parched and dry for the greater part of the year, and where the land, although rich in its nature, becomes worthless from excessive drought. The system of Artesian wells might, we are persuaded, be introduced to great advantage in Spain; and for such, as well as for canals, railways, and similar improvements, abundance of foreign capital would be forthcoming, if—and here is the sticking point—Spaniards would only show a disposition to remain quiet, and turn their attention to the arts of peace, instead of ruining their country, wasting their blood, and degrading the national character, by all these unmeaning and unprofitable *pronunciamentos* and skirmishings. It is probably not very important at this moment who rules over the Spaniards, provided the government have power and energy enough to keep them from cutting each others' throats, and to prevent their getting into a confirmed habit of revolutions and rebellions. "In all the larger towns of Spain," we quote Captain Widdrington, "there is a crowd of idlers, characters with little or no occupation, frequenters of theatres and *cafés*, great readers of journals, and considerable politicians, pretenders to small places, excessively ignorant, and ready to join in any movement provided it be attended with little personal risk to themselves. A large portion of this class took a very active part in opposing the government, and were delighted to figure in *juntas*, or fill other analogous situations, giving them a momentary importance, and possibly a few dollars at the public expense." And this is one of the great causes of the unsettled state of Spain, the immense number of idlers. Wars and revolutions, producing an unflourishing state of trade and agriculture, have discouraged Spaniards, during the last thirty or forty years, from putting their children to trades or professions. "There is no knowing how long this war may last," they used to say during the Carlist contest; "and as long as it lasts, there is no good to be done in Spain." So, instead of bringing up their sons to work, they just let them live on from day to day, gossiping and smoking; and at the present moment there are many hundred thousand young and middle-aged men of the lower and middle classes, especially the latter, who are idlers by profession, and exactly correspond to Captain Widdrington's description. These gentry have nothing particular to lose by any political rumpus, and they flatter themselves they may gain; besides, they cannot be always playing *monté* or taking the *siesta*; and even if they could, a change is sometimes agreeable. Now and then, too, they get tired of hearing Aristides called the Just—that is a very common thing with Spaniards—some mischievous political agent comes amongst them, they are soon excited, get hold of an old musket or rusty fowling-piece, chuck up their *sombreros*, cry *viva la Libertad!* and rush about the town uttering *gritos*; and in a few hours, and before they have any clear idea of what they have been doing, they are told that they are heroes and patriots, that "*Spaniards* never shall be slaves," and all the rest of the humbug and claptrap that revolutionary agitators always have upon their tongue's tip. The poor idiots, fizzing and boiling over with their fire-new enthusiasm, aimless and causeless as it is, are in ecstasies for about a week, or until they discover, what is pretty often the case, that instead of being better off, they have exchanged King Log for King Stork. The fact is, Spaniards are not at present fit for a mild and constitutional government. Espartero, who had got the country into something like a state of respectability, fell into the error of imagining that they were; and such was in great measure the cause of his overthrow. The iron and remorseless rule of a Narvaez will perhaps suit them better, and of a certainty it is what a large portion of them richly deserve.

To those persons who wish to understand what many have doubtless found rather incomprehensible; namely, the causes, immediate and remote, that led to the deposition of the Duque de la Victoria and the triumph of the Moderado party—we recommend the attentive perusal of Captain Widdrington's book, especially the chapter entitled, "On the Pronunciamentos and Fall of the Regency." That chapter is a very complete manual of the Spanish politics of the day, in a lucid and simple form; and we were much pleased to find our own theories and opinions on the subject confirmed by an eyewitness, and by so shrewd an observer as Captain Widdrington. He traces the share that each party and class in Spain took in the recent changes; and proves satisfactorily enough, what every one who is acquainted with Spanish character and feelings must have already been pretty certain of, that the revolution in question was not a national one, but the result of intrigue, bribery, and delusion—the work of a faction, aided by foreign gold. The ill-judged selection of Lopez for minister, and the still more injudicious act of agreeing to a *programme* which he was afterwards compelled to repudiate, were the fatal mistakes made by Espartero, who was placed in a situation of extreme difficulty by his wish to govern constitutionally. "It is impossible not to respect and admire the firmness with which, to the very last, he carried through the principle, sacrificing his station and rank to it; but, as far as the interests of his country were concerned, no greater mistake was ever made in government than the selection of Lopez." It is customary in Spain for a new minister to make public his programme, or plan of campaign—but this is considered a mere matter of form. In that of Lopez, however, amidst the usual commonplaces, one article of vital importance had insinuated itself; it was that of the amnesty, "which was so speciously made out as completely to answer the purpose

for which it was intended, that of paving the way for bringing back the *afrancesado* leaders who were engaged in the attempt to carry off the Queen, in October 1841." It was not deemed sufficient to recall the regent's mortal enemies; an attempt was made to isolate him, by dismissing his most faithful friends, even to the distinguished officer who acted as his private secretary, and who now bears him company in his exile. Espartero naturally kicked at this—as who would not in his place?—dismissed Lopez, and dissolved the Chamber. But the people, especially those troublesome fellows the Andalusians and Valencians, had got the fraternizing fit strong upon them, and were mad after the programme. Juntas were formed—pronunciamentos [Pg 190] made—and misrule was again the order of the day.

As to the conduct of the army towards Espartero, it was unquestionably most disgraceful; but it must be borne in mind that a large proportion of the officers were his personal enemies, especially those of the regiments of guards, which had been broken up after the war, when many of the officers passed into line regiments. Others were partisans of Leon, of Narvaez, or Christina; and another large section were won over by the profuse promotion given by the juntas, who, as soon as the pronunciamentos began, assumed the functions of government, and scattered epaulets in absurd profusion. Truly, as Captain Widdrington observes, one has heard of bloody wars and sickly seasons, and rapid advancement consequent thereon, but nothing ever equalled the promotion that was now given; and this system Espartero was also obliged to adopt, in order not to be deserted by the lukewarm among his adherents, or by those whom the prospect of a step of rank might have influenced to leave him. There can be little doubt, too, that bribery was largely employed by the Moderados. Witness the instance of Colonel Echalecu, which is no case of suspicion, but an official and publicly known fact. He was offered four millions of reals (forty thousand pounds sterling) to surrender the fort of Montjuich, and a French steamer was put at his disposal to convey him away. To the immortal honour of this gallant Basque soldier be it said, he was proof against the temptation; true to his colours, to his general, and to the established constitution of his country, he held out the fort to the very last, and only gave it up when every hope was lost, and the new order of things completely victorious. The Moderados had the good sense to continue so faithful an officer in his command; but, at the time of Amettler's revolt, he refused to bombard Barcelona, and of course resigned. His, however, was a solitary instance of virtue; far less brilliant baits were found irresistible by the mass of officers, who used their influence to bring over the soldiery, a credulous and ignorant class in Spain. The men, there is no question, were disposed to stand by the regent, and some even held out against their officers till compelled to give in; but at last all followed in the stream, led away partly by habits of obedience, partly by the hopes held out to them of more regular pay and better rations, and still more by the prospect of obtaining their discharge previous to the legal expiration of their term of service—the latter being the strongest argument that can be urged to Spanish soldiers.

The peasantry, with the exception, perhaps, of those around certain towns, had neither voice nor part in the change; the nobility, sunk in sloth and smothered by incapacity, looked on as idle spectators; and a vast many of the restless and excitable spirits who got up the revolution, were mere instruments in the hands of a faction, and knew not what they did. Hear Captain Widdrington—

> "The parties who began the pronunciamentos had neither the intention nor the slightest idea, that the result of their proceedings would be the fall of the regency. This I can most positively assert to be fact."

The Spaniards, especially those of the south, had got a sort of Utopian notion into their very ill-furnished heads, that all parties were to "kiss and be friends." The projected amnesty which Espartero so unfortunately agreed to, was the cause of this idea getting ground. It took them upon their weak side, carried them entirely off their legs; and, acting under the influence of this frothy enthusiasm, they ran a-muck, as the saying is, and only awakened from their day-dream to curse the changes that their own folly had so largely contributed to bring about.

As to any body attempting to divine what will be the next move upon the Spanish chessboard, it is out of the question, and nobody who knows the character of the people will attempt to do it. Unquestionably there is no such country in the world for anomalies of all kinds. *Cosas de Espana!* as Captain Widdrington amusingly enough says, when he meets with some huge piece of inconsistency that astonishes even him, accustomed though he be to the most contradictory [Pg 191] vagaries on the part of his Iberian friends. And it is exactly what intelligent Spaniards themselves say, when similar absurdities on the part of their countrymen are pointed out or reproached to them. "*Que quiere* v^d *hombre*," cry they with a shrug, "*son cosas de Espana*." What can we say to you? They are Spanish doings.

At Almaden the Captain finds a magnificent road leading to the town, which had been commenced at great expense by a former governor. For some distance it is fit for an approach to the largest capital, but on a sudden it terminates—in a mule-track! *Cosas de Espana*. "I entered Corunna just before nightfall, and although a regular fortress, seaport, and chief place of the province—*Cosas de Espana*—not a sentinel was mounted on the works!" Guards desert their post —witness the attack on the palace, when seventeen men were present out of sixty-five; a governor is absent from his province at the very time when he is most wanted there; an official is sent for by one of his superiors, and returns for answer that he can certainly come if necessary, but hopes he shall be excused, as it would occasion him the trouble of dressing himself—this in the middle of the day. The creature was no doubt lying on a mattress, half naked, with a cigar in his mouth. These are instances of "*Cosas de Espana*," always odd and sometimes unintelligible, but usually to be explained by the system of laxity and inattention to the duties of their respective

posts and stations that seems to extend to nearly all classes in Spain.

Captain Widdrington professes the strictest impartiality in the accounts and opinions he gives; and if we venture to point out an instance where we think he has deviated a little from the straight line he drew for himself at starting, it is only because his having done so in the particular we refer to, is rather creditable to him than otherwise, and is exactly the error that most warm-hearted men who passed any length of time in the very agreeable society of Spaniards, would be apt to fall into. But we cannot help thinking, that in some respects he takes too favourable a view of the Spanish character; that he is led away by his love for the nation. The following passages are rather remarkable—

"No people in existence," he says, "are so little anarchical in their habits, or live, unless under immediate excitement, in a more orderly and peaceable manner, or are so easily governed. The presiding genius of the country is tranquillity, and quiet, inoffensive demeanour, in every class of society, and in every part of the kingdom; nor is there any necessity, unless where domination, or unpopular and false principles are the object, for the application of force to coerce them at any time. What they want, by their universal consent, is a steady, progressive, and intelligent government, that will lead the way in the changes and improvements which every class, at least the far greater majority, are desirous of seeing carried out, but which their indolence and easy habits prevent originating with themselves alone."

"*Aide toi, et Dieu t'aidera*," says the French proverb. It is really a pity that a proper dry-nurse cannot be procured for these quiet and inoffensive people, who have been slaughtering each other, with small intermission, for the last ten years, to say nothing of previous instances of mansuetude. Unfortunately, however, they are as jealous of being helped as, according to Captain Widdrington's own admission, they are incompetent to help themselves. "*Es una lastima*," as they would say; but really at this rate there seems no chance of their ever getting their country into a prosperous, or even a decent, state. We fully agree with Captain Widdrington in liking the Spanish character as a whole, in appreciating its fine qualities, in rendering ample justice to that courtesy of feeling and manner so agreeable to those who have intercourse with Spaniards, and that may truly be called national, seeing that it is found as commonly under the coarse *manta* of the muleteer as beneath the velvet-lined *capa* of the high-born hidalgo; but we have some small experience of Spain, and a more considerable one of Spaniards, and we cannot for the life of us think them so tractable and easy to guide into the right path, or so exceedingly averse to bloodshed. "The truth is, that, excepting in cases of deadly feud, which sometimes happen, in no country in the world is life more secure."—(Vol. ii. p. 358.) We will not contradict the Captain, but it has always appeared to us that human life is rated at a much lower value in Spain than in any other civilized country we are acquainted with, and that the natural consequence of that low valuation is the cool indifference with which blood is there so frequently and abundantly poured out upon the most trifling and insufficient grounds.

At the end of a chapter on the church in Spain, we find a notice of Mr Borrow's proceedings for the propagation of the Scriptures in the Peninsula—proceedings which seem to have resulted in perfect failure. "As to the object of the undertaking, it was not only a most complete and entire failure, but of such a nature as entirely to defeat any future attempt of the same kind." The meaning of this is clear, although the sentence is of a curious turn. Further on, the Captain says —"It is impossible not to regret, that the very large sums annually sent out of the country, from the most pure and really religious and conscientious motives, on this and other undertakings, producing equally little result, were not devoted to the building or endowing of churches and chapels in our own manufacturing districts, where they are so very much needed."

How can Captain Widdrington make such an observation as this latter one? Surely he must be aware how much more interesting it is to provide for the spiritual wants of people at a distance than for those of people in our country. What missionary society, worthy of the name, would undertake a church-building crusade into Lancashire or Yorkshire? It is too near home, too commonplace. But let them discover some region at the antipodes, inhabited by copper-coloured gentry with feathers upon their heads and curtain rings through their noses, and *there* is a worthy field for the labours of the pious. In like manner, poor Spain, which really might be allowed to set its temporal house a little in order, before being expected to a depart from the faith that has been universal in it since the expulsion of the Saracen, was deemed sufficiently distant and dangerous to be interesting, and "the great London Caloro" girded up his loins and departed thither. Of the peril he encountered, the acquaintances he made, of how he galloped through the country on silver-grey *burras—Anglicé*, female donkeys—and dropped tracts in public walks and concealed Testaments in ruins and other queer places, where robbers *might* go, *might* find them, and *might* be improved by their perusal, has he not written a most marvellous and amusing account for the benefit of generations present and to come? Notwithstanding, however, his missionary avocations and Munchausenish tendencies, we have a sneaking kindness for friend Borrow, having collected from his writings that he is a fellow of considerable pluck and energy, of adventurous spirit, with a sharp eye for a good horse, and who would, no doubt, have made an excellent dragoon, had it pleased God to call him to that way of life. But we must say, that his manner of spreading the Scriptures in Spain, puts us considerably in mind of those peripatetic advertisers, whose handbills, thrust *nolens volens* into the fist of the passer-by, are for the most part cast unread into the gutter. It would be curious to calculate the proportion borne by those Testaments that Mr Borrow succeeded in getting really circulated and read in Spain, to the very large number which he acknowledges to have been confiscated, burnt, stolen on the road, or otherwise lost. The expense of the mission must have been very considerable, and

the same funds might have been employed in this country with tenfold advantage both to humanity and the Christian religion.

There is a certain class of writers, some of whom ought to know better, who have lately taken up the cudgels upon the pseudo-philanthropic side of the question, and have expended a vast deal of uncalled-for indignation and maudlin sympathy upon the rich and poor of this country—the former of whom they would make out to be the most selfish and hard-hearted of created beings, and the latter the most amiable and ill-treated. According to these writers, it would appear as if no man, with less than seven children to provide for, and more than ten shillings a-week to do it with, could be possessed of any one of the Christian virtues. Charity and kindness of heart exist, they would have us to believe, in an inverse ratio to income, and the *warmest* men, in city parlance, are invariably those of the coldest feelings. The sickly cant of this style of writing in a country where charity, both public and private, is so extensive and practical; and its probable ill effects in rendering the poorer classes discontented, are too evident for it to be necessary to dwell upon them. It would be far better if the writers who go to such large expense of sympathetic ink, would change the direction of their virtuous indignation, and try if they have sufficient influence to put an end to this foreign tract and testament mongering, whether its scene be in Spain or at a greater distance.

Before concluding, Captain Widdrington alludes to a growing shyness towards English travellers in some of the large southern towns, owing to the indiscretions, exaggerations, and absurdities of certain tour-writers. It is a lamentable fact that, now-a-days, every booby who gets on board a steamer, and leaves England for a few weeks or months, thinks himself entitled to perpetrate a book about what he sees and hears. We would fain whisper to such persons, that mere locomotion never qualified any body to write a book, even of travels; that some powers of observation, and a certain correctness of judgment, and even some previous acquaintance with the history and character of the nation they visit, are also necessary; and if, after that, they still persisted in their designs, we would beg of them to remember that light words are apt to travel both far and fast; that some part of their lucubrations may possibly reach the countries they refer to—perhaps through the instrumentality of the trunkmakers; and that in any case they should avoid giving unfavourable details, even if true, of the private life and habits of people who have shown them kindness and hospitality—details, the data of which, if investigated, would be found, in most instances, to be absurd and ridiculously insufficient. Some travelling bagman, or half-fledged subaltern on his way to the Mediterranean, gets ashore at Cadiz or Gibraltar, takes a run through three or four of the principal Andalusian cities, perhaps has a letter of introduction, or else meets at a *fonda* with some good-natured Spaniard, who compassionates his "goose look" and evident helplessness, invites him to his house, and introduces him at a tertulia or two. The gosling picks up a few Spanish sentences, hears a few anecdotes from some lying valet-de-place, who has attached himself to the Señor Ingles, and leaves the country after a few weeks', perhaps days', residence, considerably bewildered by all the novelties he has seen, but without the slightest real addition to his previous knowledge of Spanish character and customs. Six months afterwards, the new work on Spain by Ensign Epaulet or Tedious Twaddle, Esquire, issues forth, borne on a mighty blast of puffery, from the laboratory of some fashionable publisher.

> "Nothing can be more harmless," says Captain Widdrington, "than this mode of making a livelihood, provided their effusions are kept within the bounds of moderation and charity, as well as confined to such views as a rapid transit enables any one unacquainted with the language and the people to make during a few hours' sojourn in the place. This rule, however, has been broken in upon; and as it unluckily happens that the females are generally a favourite subject for the tirades of that class of writers, their random assertions on subjects they had no means of investigating, and most assuredly did not speak of from their own knowledge and experience, have made both the Gaditanas and Malaguanas, and their relations and countrymen, extremely irate."

And with good reason, too, say we. It is not the first time we have heard this sort of thing complained of. The practice is one that cannot be too severely reprehended and we shall look out for such offenders in future.

There are a number of anecdotes and pleasant bits scattered through Captain Widdrington's work, which is a happy blending of the amusing and instructive, neither predominating to the injury of the other; and we take leave both of the book and its accomplished author, with much respect and gratitude. Before doing so, however, and having said much in commendation, Captain Widdrington will perhaps permit us to offer him a slight and well-intended hint in the contrary sense. When next the truant-fit comes over him, and he favours us with the result of his researches and observations in Spain or any other country—and we hope it will not be long before he does thus favour us—may he be able to devote rather more time to the mere authorship part of the work, to the correction and chastening of his style. His sentences are often terribly piled up and intricate, and some are really illogical in their construction, to the extent of being difficult of comprehension. That kind of negligence in an author, considerably diminishes the reader's enjoyment even of the most interesting book. Captain Widdrington should bear in mind, that however sterling his matter may be, some attention to manner is also expected, and that the appearance, at least, of the most valuable gems is deteriorated by an inelegant setting. Nevertheless, in this book-making age, it may be considered highly creditable to an author when faults of form and not of substance are the greatest with which he can be reproached.

THE SUPERFLUITIES OF LIFE.

A Tale abridged from Tieck.

Chapter I.

In the month of February, at the close of an exceedingly severe winter, a singular tumult took place in the town of ——, the origin, progress, and final pacification of which, gave rise to the most strange and contradictory reports. Where every one *will* relate, and no one knows any thing of the matter, it is natural that the simplest circumstance should become invested with an air of the marvellous.

It was in one of the narrowest streets of the populous suburbs of the town that this mysterious event took place. According to some, a traitor or desperate rebel had been discovered and captured by the police; others said that an atheist, who had secretly conspired with others to tear up Christianity by the roots, had, after an obstinate resistance, surrendered himself to the authorities, and was now lying in prison, there to learn better principles. All agreed that the criminal had defended himself in the most desperate manner. One man, who was a profound politician and an execrable shoemaker, laboured to convince his neighbours that the prisoner was at the head of a hundred secret societies, which had their ramifications over France, Germany, Spain, Italy, and the far East; and that, in fact, a monstrous insurrection was on the very point of breaking out in the furthest parts of India, which, like the cholera, would spread over Europe, and set in flame all its combustible material.

Thus much was certain, that a tumult had arisen in a small house in the suburbs; that the police had been called in; that the populace had made an uproar; that some eminent personage was seen amongst the crowd; and that, after a little time, all became still again, without any body being the wiser. In the house itself certain devastations had undoubtedly been made, which some explained one way, some another, according to their humours: the carpenters and joiners were busy in repairing them.

In this house had lived a man of whom no one in the neighbourhood knew any thing. Whether he was a poet or a politician, a native or a foreigner, no one could divine. The wisest were at fault. This only was certain, that the unknown lived in a most quiet and retired manner; he was seen on none of the promenades, nor in any public place; he was young, was pronounced to be handsome, and his newly married bride, who shared his solitude with him, was described as being miraculously beautiful.

It was about Christmas time when this young couple were sitting together over the stove in their little apartment. "Of a truth," said the young man, "how all this is to end is a riddle. All our resources seem now exhausted."

"Alas! yes, Henry," answered the beautiful Clara, to whom this was addressed; "but whilst you, dearest, are still cheerful, I cannot feel myself unfortunate."

"Fortunate and unfortunate," replied Henry, "shall be with us but empty words. The day when you quitted your father's house, and for my sake abandoned all other considerations, decided our fortune for all our lifetime to come. To live and to love, this is our watchword; in what manner exactly we live shall be indifferent."

"Indeed we are deprived of almost every thing," said the young wife, "except each other. But I knew you were not rich, and you knew when I left my father's house I could bring nothing with me; so love and poverty came to us hand in hand. And now this little chamber, which we never quit, and the talking together, and the looking into the eyes we love—this is all our life."

"Right! right!" said Henry, and springing up from his seat, he embraced his charming companion with renewed fondness. "Here are we like Adam and Eve in their paradise; and I think," he added, looking round the apartment as he spoke, "no angel will come down from heaven for the express purpose of driving us out of it."

"If it were not," said Clara, a little dejected, "that the wood begins to fail—and this winter is certainly the severest I ever knew"——

"Certainly," said Henry; "some fuel must somewhere be found. It is inconceivable that we should be allowed to freeze from without, with all this warm love within us. Quite impossible! I cannot help laughing amidst it all, with a sense of ridiculous embarrassment, at the idea that so simple a thing as a little coin cannot be procured."

Clara smiled. "If only," said she, "we had some superfluous furniture, any brass pans or copper kettles."

"Ah! if only we were millionaires!" interrupted Henry gaily; "then we could get wood in abundance, and perhaps," he added, looking slyly over to the stove where some bread-soup was in preparation for their very temperate repast, "some better fare for dinner. But," he continued in a tone of humorous banter, which he frequently adopted, and pushing back his chair a few paces as he spoke, "while you superintend the household concerns, and give the necessary orders to the cook, I will withdraw into my study. Now, what would I not write if only pen, paper, and ink, were to be got at; and how studiously would I read if but a book could be procured."

"You must *think*, dearest," said Clara waggishly; "the stock of thoughts, it is to be hoped, is not quite so low as our wood."

"Dearest wife," he replied, "the cares of our establishment demand all your attention; let me proceed undisturbed with my studies. I will read," he continued, speaking as if to himself, "the journal I formerly kept in our palmy days of stationery. And it strikes me that it would be particularly profitable to study it backwards; to begin at the end, and so lay a proper foundation for a full comprehension of the beginning. All true wisdom goes in a circle, and is typified by a serpent biting at its own tail. We will begin this time at the tail."

Opening his journal at the last page, he began to read in the same subdued tone—"They tell a tale of a raving criminal, who, being condemned to death by starvation, ate himself gradually up. This is, in fact, the story of life, and of all of us. In some there remains nothing but the stomach and the mouth. With us there is left the soul, which is expressly said to be inconsumable. So far as externals are concerned, I have certainly flayed and devoured myself. That I should, up to this day, have retained a certain dress-coat—I, who never go out—was perfectly ridiculous. Mem.—Next birthday of my wife to appear before her in a waist-coat and shirt sleeves, as it would be highly indecorous to present myself to a person of her rank in a frock-coat somewhat overworn." [Pg 196]

Here he came to the end both of the page and the book. Turning back, he commenced at the page immediately preceding—"One can live very well without napkins. And now I think of it, what are these miserable napkins but a niggardly expedient for saving the table-cloth? Nay, what is this table-cloth itself but a base economy for sparing the table! I pronounce them both to be mere superfluities; both shall be sold, that we may eat off the table in the manner of the patriarchs. We will live in the fashion of our magnanimous ancestors. It is in no cynical, Diogenes-humour that I banish them from the house, but from a resolution not to follow the example of this poor-spirited age, which encumbers itself with extravagant superfluities out of a sordid economy."

"Exactly so," said Clara laughing. "Meanwhile, on the proceeds of those and other superfluities, I invite you to a repast which, at all events, shall not savour of extravagance."

So saying, they sat down to their bread-soup. He who had seen them, whatever he might have thought of the dinner, would have envied those who partook of it, so cheerful were they, so joyful, so full of freaks and frolics, over their simple provender. When the bread-soup was dispatched, Clara slyly brought from the stove a covered plate, and set before her astonished husband—a reserve of potatoes! "Long live thou second Sir Walter Raleigh!" cried Henry. Whereupon they drank to each other out of the pure element, and *hob-nobbed* with such glee, that Clara looked anxiously the next moment at the glasses, to see that they had not cracked them in their enthusiasm.

The dinner concluded, they drew their chairs, by way of variety, up to the solitary window of their apartment, and amused themselves with looking at the fantastic filigree work with which the frost had decorated the inside of the glass.

"My aunt used to maintain," said Clara, "that the room was warmer with this ice on the window than when the glass was clear."

"Possibly!" replied Henry. "But on the strength of this faith I would not dispense with the fire."

"How wonderfully various," said Clara, "are these ice-flowers! Is it not strange, one seems to have seen them all in reality, yet cannot give a name to a single one of them? And look how one grows over the other, and how the noble leaves seem to expand, even as we speak of them."

"It is your sweet breath, my dear, that is calling up these ghosts and spirits of departed flowers," said Henry. "I imagine that some invisible genius is reading all thy gentle and loving fancies, and pictures them forth, as they arise, in these flower-phantoms; so that, by looking at this glass, I know, even while you are silent, that your thoughts are full of love—that they are dwelling upon me."

A fond kiss was the answer and the reward of this pretty speech.

Henry took up his journal, and beginning at the ante-penultimate page, read aloud:—"To-day—Sold to that old miser of a bookseller, my rare copy of Chaucer, the costly edition of Caxton. My friend, the dear, noble Andreas Vandelmeer, made me a present of it on my birthday, when we were at the university together. He had written to London for it himself: paid an enormous price for it; and then had it bound, after his own taste, in rich Gothic style. The old hunks of a bookseller will, no doubt, send it back to London, and will get for it tenfold what he has given me. I ought, at least, to have cut out the leaf where the circumstance of this gift is recorded; and here I have written some lamentable lines, signed with my present name and address. This is vexatious. Parting with this book almost persuades me that something like want is pressing on us; for, without doubt, it was the most precious thing I possessed, and the memorial of my dearest and my only friend. Oh, Andreas Vandelmeer! art thou still living? Where art thou? And dost thou still think of me?" [Pg 197]

"I saw your pain," said Clara, as he concluded, "when you sold that book; but this friend of your youth—you have never described him to me."

"He was in person," replied Henry, "somewhat resembling myself—rather older and more staid. We knew each other as boys at school. I might say he almost persecuted me with his love, so passionately did he press it on me. He was ever complaining that my friendship was too cold.

Rich as he was, and tenderly as he had been brought up, no indulgence had made him selfish. On leaving the university, he determined on going to India, that distant land of wonder having fascinated his ardent imagination. There was then quite a storm of entreaties and supplications that I should accompany him. He assured me that I should make my fortune there, as his own forefathers had in fact done. But my mother died about this time, and my friends, moreover, procured for me a position in the diplomatic body. He persuaded me, at least, to entrust to him the small fortune I had inherited from my mother, that he might employ it advantageously for me; a request which I have always suspected was made in order that he might have, some future time, a pretext and disguise for his generosity. We took leave of each other, and I repaired, in the suite of my ambassador, to the town where your father resided—and where"——

"The history becomes tolerably well known to us both. But this noble Andreas—did you never hear of him again?"

"I received two letters," answered Henry, "from that remote quarter of the world. After which I heard, but through no authentic source, that he died of the cholera. So far as fortune was concerned, I was left as you see, entirely dependent on myself. Still, I enjoyed the favour of my ambassador—was not unpopular at my court—could reckon on some powerful friends;—but all this has disappeared."

"All this, alas!" said Clara, "you have sacrificed for me. And I also am a fugitive from home."

"Then love must supply all. And so it has, and so it will. Has not our honeymoon, as they vulgarly call it, lasted nearly a year?"

"It shall last for ever!" said Clara. Then after a pause, which was filled up as lovers' pauses usually are, she added. "But the worst blow of all was the loss of your own book;—that dear poetry you had written. If we had but kept a copy of it, we might have passed many hours of these winter evenings in reading it. But then," she added, with a smile and a sigh at the same time, "we should have wanted a candle."

"We talk—we gossip," said Henry, "which is much better. I hear the sweet tones of your voice; you sing me a song, or you break suddenly out into that heavenly laugh of yours. What is there not in that musical, jubilee laugh? When I hear it, angel mine, I am not only delighted, I muse, I meditate, I am rapt. How much of character is there in a laugh! You know no man till you have heard him laugh—till you know when and how he will laugh. There are occasions—there are humours when a man with whom we have been long familiar, shall quite startle and repel us, by breaking out into a laugh which comes manifestly right from his heart, and which yet we had never heard before. Even in fair ladies with whom I have been much pleased, I have remarked the same thing. As in many a heart a sweet angel slumbers unseen till some happy moment awakens it, so there sleeps often in gracious and amiable characters, deep in the background, a quite vulgar spirit, which starts into life when something rudely comical penetrates into the less frequented chambers of the mind. Our instinct teaches us that in that being there lies something we must take heed of.

"As to that young and thoughtless publisher," continued Henry, "who became bankrupt and ran off with my glorious manuscript, he, no doubt, did us good service; for how easily might my intercourse with him, while the book was being printed, have led to our discovery? Your father has not yet, be assured, relinquished his pursuit of us—my passport would have been examined again with severer scrutiny—something, no doubt, would have led to the suspicion that the name I bear is assumed. We should have been separated. So, angel mine, we are happy as we are—most happy!"

It had now grown dark, and the fire was burned out; a candle to talk by would have been certainly superfluous: so they retired early to their sleeping apartment. Here they could continue their chat in the dark, quite heedless of the heavy fall of snow that was encumbering their windows.

Chapter II.

Next morning, at approach of dawn, Clara hastened up to run to the stove, to awake the sparks in the ashes. Henry soon came to her assistance, and they laughed like children, as, with all their efforts, the flame would *not* come. At last, with much puffing and blowing, the shavings kindled, and slips of wood were most artistically laid on so as to heat the little stove without any waste of the precious store. "You see, Henry dear," said Clara, "there is hardly enough for to-morrow, and then"——

"A fresh supply must be had," said her husband, in a tone as if this matter of supply was the simplest thing in the world; whereas he well knew, that whatever stock of money remained to them, must be reserved for the still more essential article of food. After breakfast, he again took up his journal. "How I long to come to that page which records how you and I, dearest, ran away with one another."

"O Heaven!" cried Clara, "how strange, how unexpected as that eventful moment! For some days my father had shown a certain ill-humour towards me, and had spoken in a quite unusual manner. He had before expressed his surprise at your frequent visits; now he did not name you, but talked *at* you, and spoke continually of young men who refused to know their own position. If I was silent on these occasions he was angry; and if I spoke it was still worse: he grew more and

more bitter. One morning, just as I was going out in the carriage to pay some visits, my faithful maid ran down the steps after me, and, under pretence of adjusting my dress, whispered into my ear that all was discovered—that my desk had been broken open, and your letters found—and that, in a few hours, I was to be sent off a prisoner to an aunt in a distant part of the country. How sudden was my resolution! I had not ridden far before I alighted from the carriage, under pretence of buying something at a trinket-shop. I sent the coachman and servant away, bidding them return for me in at hour, and then"——

"And then," interrupted Henry, "how delighted was I, how almost terrified with joy, to see you suddenly enter my apartments! I had just returned from my ambassador, and had by good chance some blank passports with me; I filled one up with the first name that occurred; and then, without further preparation, we entered a hired carriage, crossed the borders, were married, and were happy."

This animated dialogue was interrupted by the entrance of an old woman, by name Christina, who had formerly been Clara's nurse. In their flight they had entered into her little cottage as a place where they could safely stop to rest themselves, and the faithful old dame had entreated them to take her with them. She now lived in a small room below, in the same house, and entirely supported herself by going out to work amongst the neighbors. She entered the room at present to mention that she should not sleep that night in her own apartment below; but that, nevertheless, she should return next morning early enough to make their usual daily purchases for them. Clara followed her out of the room to speak with her apart. Henry, in her absence, as if relieved from the necessity of supporting his spirits, or deprived of the power which sustained them, sunk his head upon the table, and burst into tears.

"Why cannot I," he muttered to himself, "work with my hands as this poor woman does? I have still health and strength. But no—I dare not—she would then, for the first time, feel the misery of our position; she would torture herself to work also; besides, we should be discovered and separated—and, come what may, while we can yet live, we are happy."

Clara returned in excellent spirits. They sat down to their frugal and cheerful meal, to which some additions had been made by the obstinate kindness of old Christina. "I could not have the heart to refuse her," said Clara. "Now, if only wood were not wanting, all would be well."

The next morning Clara slept longer than usual. She was surprised, on waking, to see that the day had dawned, and still more to find that her husband had left her side. Her astonishment was further increased when she heard, in the next room, a crashing and grating noise, as of one sawing through an obstinate piece of timber. She got up as speedily as possible, to ascertain the cause of these unusual events.

"Henry," she cried, as she entered the room, "what are you about there?"

"Sawing wood, my dear," he replied, as he looked up panting from his labours.

"But how in the world did you come by that saw, and this famous piece of wood?"

"I remembered," answered Henry, "having seen in the loft above us, soon after we came here, in one of my voyages of discovery, a saw and a hatchet, belonging, I suppose, to some previous tenant of our apartment, or perhaps to our old landlord. So much for these brave tools. As to this noble piece of wood, it was till this morning the banister to our staircase. Observe what solid, substantial men our ancestors were! What a broad, magnificent piece of oak! This will make a quite different sort of fire from your deal shavings and slips of fir."

"But," cried Clara, "the damage to the house!"

"No one comes to see us," said Henry. "We know these steps, and indeed seldom or never go down them. The old Christina is the only person who will miss it, and I will say to her very gravely—Look you, old lady, do you think that a noble oak of the forest is to be hewn down, and then planed and polished by carpenters and joiners, merely that you may come up and down these steps a little more easily? No, no, such a magnificent banister is a most palpable superfluity."

"Since it is done," said Clara, "I will at least take my share in this new species of woodcraft."

So they laid the beam, which filled the apartment, on two chairs, and first they sawed with united efforts at the middle to make it the more manageable. It was hard work, for the oak was tough, and the saw was old, and the workmen were more willing than skilful; but at length it came in two with a crash.

"Well," said Clara, as she looked up, and threw her ringlets aside, her face glowing with the unwonted exercise, "this work has one advantage at least; we want no fire this morning to warm us."

After sawing off several square blocks, Henry set to work with his hatchet to cleave them into pieces fit for the stove. It was fortunate that, during this operation, which made the walls of their little dwelling re-echo, their landlord was absent. Nor were the neighbours likely to be much surprised at the noise, as many handicraftsmen inhabited that locality.

On this eventful day breakfast had been forgotten; dinner and breakfast were consolidated into one meal. This being dispatched with their usual cheerfulness, they retired to their seat by the

window. To-day there was no frost upon the glass; and the sky—all that could be seen of it—was clear as crystal. It was a curiously simple prospect which this window presented. Underneath them, over the ground-floor of the house, had been constructed—for what reason it would not be easy to say—a tiled roof, which projected in such a manner as completely to hide the narrow street from their view. In front stretched the long low roof of a building, which seemed to be used as a warehouse; and on both sides they were hemmed in by the blank projecting walls and the tall chimneys of larger houses—so that certain masses of brickwork, a long roof, and a fragment of the open sky, was all that the eye could possibly command. This complete isolation suited the lovers very well; for, besides that it effectually concealed them from the discovery of their pursuers, it permitted them to stand at the window, and talk and caress, without the restraint occasioned by envious spectators. When they first occupied the apartment, if they heard an unusual noise out of doors, they naturally ran to the window to look down into the street; and it was not till after many fruitless experiments that they learned to sit quiet on such occasions. It was quite an event if a cat was seen stealthily making its way over the long sloping roof in front of them. In the summer, when the sparrows built their nests in the tall chimneys on either side, and were perpetually flying to and fro, twittering, caressing, quarrelling—this was quite a society. When a chimney-sweeper once thrust out his black face from one of these chimneys, and shouted aloud to testify the accomplishment of his ascent, it was an event that brought a shriek of surprise from Clara.

Thus passed the days, and the pair were happy as kings, though they were living very like beggars. Very singular was their power of abstraction from the future, their entire satisfaction with the present. Clara, it is true, cast some anxious thoughts after the wood; but Henry brought in every morning the necessary supply: there was no symptoms of failure. She thought indeed, of late, that the grain of the wood seemed altered; but it burned as well as ever.

"Where," said Clara, one morning, "where is our faithful Christina? I have not seen her for many a day. You rise in the morning before I can get up—you take in the bread and the water-jug—I never see her. Why does she not come up? Is she ill?"

"No," said Henry, with a slight embarrassment of manner, which his wife did not fail to detect.

"Ah! you conceal something from me" she cried. "I will go down directly and see what is the matter with her."

"It is so long since you descended these steps, and there is no banister—you will fall."

"No, no, I know the steps—I could find them in the dark."

"Those steps," said Henry, with a mock solemnity of manner—"those steps will you never tread again!"

"Oh, there is something you conceal from me!" exclaimed Clara. "Say what you will, I will go down and see Christina."

She turned quickly round and opened the door, but Henry clasped her as quickly in his arms.

"My dear," cried he, "will you break your neck?"

The secret was at once disclosed. They stepped together to the landing-place. There were no longer any stairs to be seen. Clara clasped her little hands as she looked first down into the dark precipice below, and then at her husband, who maintained the most comical gravity in the world. She then ran back to the stove, snatched up one of the pieces of wood, and, looking at it closely, said—"Ah, now I see why the grain was so different! So, then, we have burned up the stairs?"

"So it seems," answered Henry, quite calmly. "I hardly know why I kept this secret from you—perhaps that you might not be distressed by any superfluous scruples. Now that you know it, I am sure you will find it quite reasonable."

"But Christina?"

"Oh, she is quite well! In the morning I let her down a cord, to which she fastens her little basket. This I draw up, and afterwards the water-jug. Our housekeeping proceeds in the most orderly fashion in the world. When the banister was at an end, it struck me that one half at least of the steps of our staircase might be dispensed with; it was but to step a little higher, as one is forced to do in many houses. With the help of Christina, who entered into this philosophical view of the matter, I broke off the first, third, fifth, and so forth. When one half of the steps was consumed, the other half was also condemned as superfluous—for what do we want with stairs, we who never go out?"

"But the landlord?"

"He will not return till Easter. Meanwhile the weather will be getting milder, and there are still some old doors and planks up above, which I shall pronounce altogether superfluous. Therefore warm thee, dearest Clara, without any care for the future."

Things, however, did not quite fall out as expected. On the afternoon of that very same day, a carriage was heard to drive up to the little house. They heard the rattling of the wheels, the stopping of the vehicle, the descent of the passengers. It was in vain to put their heads out of window, they could see nothing there. But they heard the sound of unpacking, then the greeting of neighbours—it was evident, beyond a doubt, that their dreaded landlord had returned home

much sooner than he ought. The heavy tread of the gouty gentleman now resounded in the passage—the crisis was at hand. Henry stood at the half-open door, listening. Clara sat within, regarding him with a questioning look.

"I must go up," the landlord was now heard to say; "I must go up, and see after my lodgers. I hope they are as cheerful as ever, and the young wife as pretty."

There was a pause. The old man was groping about in the dark.

"How is this?" he muttered to himself. "Don't know my own house! Not here—not there! Ulric! Ulric! help here!"

Ulric, his servant and factotum, came to his assistance.

"Help me up these stairs," said the landlord. "I am blinded—bewitched! I cannot find the steps, and yet they were broad enough!"

"Herr Emmerich," said the old and somewhat surly domestic, "you are a little giddy from travelling."

"An hypothesis," whispered Henry, turning to his wife, "which unhappily will not hold."

"Zounds!" cried Ulric, who had run his head against the wall, "I have lost my wits too!"

"I am groping right and left," said the landlord, "and all round, and up above. I think the devil has taken the stairs!"

"Another hypothesis," whispered Henry, "and a very bold one."

Meanwhile the more sensible domestic had at once run for a light. This he now returned with, and, holding it up in his sturdy fist, he illuminated the quite empty space.

"Ten thousand devils!" exclaimed the landlord, as he gazed around and above him with astonishment. "This is the strangest business! Herr Brand! Herr Brand! Is any one up there?"

It was of no use to deny himself. Henry stepped out, bent over the landing, and saw, by the uncertain flicker of the light, the portly form of his landlord.

"Ah, my worthy friend, Herr Emmerich!" he called out in the blandest manner imaginable, "you are most welcome. It speaks well for the gout that you have returned so much earlier than your appointed time. I am delighted to see you looking so well."

"Your obedient servant," answered the other; "but that is not the question. What has become of my stairs?"

"Stairs! were there any stairs here?" said Henry. "Indeed, my friend, I go out so seldom, or rather not at all, that I take no notice of any thing out of my own chamber. I study, I work—I concern myself about little else."

"Herr Brand," said the landlord, half choking with rage, "we must speak about this in another tone! You are the only lodger. You shall give an account before a court of justice"—

"Be not overwroth," replied Henry. "If you really contemplate legal proceedings, I think I can be of use to you; for, now I think of it, I perfectly remember that there *were* stairs here, and have a vivid recollection of having, in your absence, used them."

"Used them!" cried the old man, stamping with his feet; "and how used them? You have destroyed them—you have destroyed the house."

"Nay, do not exaggerate, Herr Emmerich. I cannot ask you to walk up-stairs, or you might see that these rooms we inhabit are in a perfect state of preservation. As to this ladder, which was but an asses' bridge for tedious visitors and bad men, I removed it with great difficulty, as being superfluous."

"But these steps," cried Emmerich, "with their noble banister, these two-and-twenty broad, strong oaken steps, were an integral part of my house. Old as I am, I never heard of a lodger who dealt as he pleased with the stairs of a house."

"Be patient," said Henry, "and you shall hear the real connexion of events. The post failed in bringing our necessary remittances; the winter was unusually severe; all ordinary means of procuring fuel were wanting; I had recourse to this sort of forced loan. At the same time I did not think, respected sir, that you would return before the warm summer weather."

"Nonsense!" said the landlord. "Summer weather! Do you think that these my stairs will sprout out again, like asparagus, when the summer comes?"

"Really," said Henry, "I am not sufficiently acquainted with the growth and habits of the stair-plant to determine."

"Ulric!" cried the wrathful landlord, "run for the police. You shall find this no jesting matter."

The police arrived. The inspector was scandalized at the outrage which had been committed, and summoned the delinquent to surrender.

"Never!" said Henry. "An Englishman says well that his house is his castle; and mine is a castle

with the drawbridge up."

"There is an easy remedy for that," said the officer, who thereupon called for a ladder, and gave command to his men to mount, to bind the criminal with cords, and bring him down to his condign punishment.

The house was now filled with the people of the neighbourhood. Men, women, and children had been attracted to the spot, and a crowd of curious spectators, assembled in the street, made their comments upon the business. Clara had seated herself near the window, not a little embarrassed; but as she saw that her husband still retained his accustomed cheerfulness, she also kept her self-possession—not, however, without much wondering how it would all end. Henry came in for a moment to hearten her, and also to fetch something from the room.

"We are shut up, my dear," said he, "like our famous Götz in his Taxthausen. This obstinate trumpeter has summoned me to surrender at mercy, and I will now answer him in the manner of our great model."

Clara smiled.

"Your fate is my fate," she said, and added to herself in a low voice: "I think, if my father saw us now, he would forgive all."

Henry again stepped out upon the landing, and seeing they were verily bringing in a ladder, called to them in a solemn tone—"Gentlemen, bethink you what you do. I have been prepared, weeks ago, for every thing—for the very worst that can happen. I will not be taken prisoner, but intend to defend myself to the last drop of my blood. Here do I bring two blunderbusses loaded with ball, and this old cannon, a fearful piece of ordnance, full to the throat with every destructive ingredient. I have in this chamber powder and ball, cartridges, lead, all things necessary to sustain the war; whilst my brave wife, who has been accustomed to fire-arms, will load the pieces as I fire them. Advance, therefore, if you wish blood to flow."

Henry had laid two sticks and an old boot upon the floor.

The leader of the police, who could distinguish nothing in the dark, beckoned to his men to stand back.

"Better," said he to Herr Emmerich, "that we starve out this formidable rebel."

"Starve, indeed!" said Henry: "we are provided for months to come with all sorts of dried fruits—plums, pears, apples, biscuits. The winter is nearly passed, but should fuel fail us, there is still in the roof above much superfluous timber."

"Oh, hear the heathen!" cried Emmerich in agony. "First he breaks to pieces the bottom of my house, and then he threatens to unroof it."

"It is beyond all example," said the officer.

Many of the spectators, however, were secretly pleased at the distress of the avaricious landlord. Some suggested the calling in of the military, with their guns.

"For Heaven's sake, no!" cried Emmerich; "the house will then be utterly destroyed."

"You are quite right," said Henry. "And have you forgotten what for many years every newspaper has been repeating to us, that the first cannon-shot, let it fall where it may, will set all Europe in blaze?"

"He is a demagogue, a carbonaro," said the officer. "Who knows what confederates he may have even in this crowd which surrounds us?"

The alarm of the officer seemed, for a moment, to be justified, for a shout was now heard from some of the populace who were collected in the street. Emmerich and the officer turned round to enquire into the meaning of this new demonstration. Henry took the opportunity to whisper a word to his young wife.

"Be of good cheer," he said; "we gain time. We shall be able to capitulate. Perhaps even a Sickingen may come to our rescue."

The shout of the mob had been occasioned by the appearance of a brilliant equipage, which made its way slowly through the thronged and narrow street. The footmen were clad in splendid livery, and a coachman, covered with lace, drove four prancing steeds. The mob might be excused for shouting "The king! The king!" The carriage stopped before the door of the house which was now become the great point of attraction, and a nobleman descended, elegantly attired and decorated with orders and crosses.

"Does a certain Herr Brand live here?" enquired the illustrious stranger; "and what means all this uproar?"

Hereupon fifty different voices made answer with as many different accounts. The landlord, stepping forward, pointed to the dilapidated condition of the house, and explained the real state of affairs. The stranger continued to advance into the hall, and called with a loud voice, "Does Herr Brand live here?"

"Yes," replied Henry from above; "but who is this that asks?"

"The ladder here!" cried the stranger.

"No one ascends to this place!" said Henry.

"Not if he brings back the Chaucer, the edition of Caxton?"

"O Heaven! the good angel may ascend!" and immediately ran back to Clara to communicate the joyful news. "Our Sickingen is verily come!" he exclaimed. Tears of joy were starting to his eyes.

A few words from the stranger, addressed to the landlord and the officer, produced a sudden calm. The ladder was raised, and Henry, in a moment, was in the arms of his old friend Andreas Vandelmeer! All was now joy and congratulation in the little apartment, as Henry introduced to his friend his dear and beautiful wife. The first greetings passed, Vandelmeer informed them that the small fortune which Henry had entrusted to his care had increased and multiplied itself, and that he might now consider himself a rich man. Vandelmeer, on his return from India, had landed at the port of London. There it had occurred to him to procure some antiquarian present for his friend, like that which he had formerly given him. Entering the bookseller's where his previous purchase had been made, he saw a Chaucer, which attracted his attention from its similarity to the one he had procured for his friend. It was, in fact, the same. It had found its way back to its original owner. On opening it, he found some melancholy lines written on the fly-leaf, and signed with his present name and address. He immediately repurchased the book, and hastened to the discovery, and, as it proved, the rescue of his friend.

To complete the happiness of all parties, he was able to inform them that the father of Clara had laid aside his anger, and was desirous of discovering his daughter only that he might receive and forgive her. What need to say more? Even the landlord was content, and had reason to congratulate himself on the devastation committed on his staircase.

THE OVERLAND PASSAGE.

Our intercourse with India has become so important within these few years, and the rapid transit by the isthmus of Suez has become so favourite a passage, that the public naturally feel an extreme curiosity relative to every circumstance of the route. The whole is a splendid novelty, sufficiently strange to retain some portion of the old wonder which belongs to all things Arabian; sufficiently wild to supply us with the scenes and adventures of barbarism; and yet sufficiently brought within the sphere of European interests, to combine with the romance of the wilderness, at once Oriental pomp and the powers and utilities of civilized and Christian society. The contrast is of the most exciting kind:—we have the Bedouin, with his lance and desert home, hovering round the European carriage, but now guarding what his fathers would have plundered; the caravan with all its camels, turbaned merchants, and dashing cavalry, moving along the river's bank, on whose waters the steam-boat is rushing; the many-coloured and many-named tribes of the South, meeting the men of every European nation in the streets where the haughty Osmanli was once master. The buildings offer scarcely a less singular contrast:—the lofty, prison-like, close casemented fronts of the huge Mahometan dwellings, frowning in grim repose upon the spruce shops and glittering hotels of the French and Italian trader and tavern-keeper; and though last, most memorable of all—the old Pasha, the only man in existence who has given a new being to a people; the true regenerator of his country, or rather the creator of a nation out of one of the most abject, exhausted, and helpless races of mankind. Egypt, the slave of the stranger for a thousand years, trampled on by Saracen, Turk, Mameluke, and Frenchman; but by the enterprise and intelligence of this extraordinary individual, suddenly raised to an independent rank, and actually possessing a most influential interest in the eyes of Europe and Asia.

The route of the travellers begins with Ceylon. Ceylon is a fine picturesque island, very fertile, strikingly placed for commerce, and containing a tolerably intelligent population. Yet we do not seem to have made much of its advantages hitherto; Singapore and even Hong-Kong are likely to throw it into eclipse; and the chief benefit of its possession is in keeping away foreign powers from too near an inspection of our settlements in India. But its shores have the richness of vegetation which belongs to the tropics, and the variety of aspect which is so often found in the Asiatic islands. The Major and his wife embarked on board the steamer "The India," in May 1844. The view from the Point de Galle is striking. The town is shaded by trees, which give it the look of richness and freshness that contributes such a charm to the Oriental landscape. On the left of the bay is a headland clothed with tropic vegetation. In front are two islands, giving variety to the bay. Behind is the esplanade, shut in by hills covered with cocoa-nut trees. At the foot of those hills is the native town and bridge, also shaded by trees. Crowds of canoes, of various shapes and colours, moored along the shore, complete the scene.

The passengers were discontented with the India. They never saw any thing like the dirt of the ship. The coal-dust penetrated into every thing. It was in vain to sigh for a clean face and hands, for they were unattainable. This must be true; yet it passes our comprehension. We cannot understand why coal-dust should make its appearance at all for the affliction of the passengers. It certainly blackens no one in our European steamers. Its business is in the engine-room, and we never heard of its making its *entrée* into either the saloon or the cabin. The India is complained of as being very ill adapted for the service, as unwieldy, and inadequate to face the south-west monsoon. Yet the vessel was handsomely decorated: the saloon was profusely ornamented with

gilding, cornices, and mirrors; the tables were richly veneered, and the furniture was of morocco leather. All this exhibits no want of liberality on the part of the proprietors; but a much heavier charge is laid on the carelessness which allowed this handsome vessel to be infested with disgusting vermin. "The swarms of cock-roaches," says Mrs Darby Griffiths, "almost drove me out of my senses. The other day sixty were killed in our cabin, and we might have killed as many more. They are very large, about two inches and a half long, and run about my pillows and sheets in the most disgusting manner. Rats are also very numerous." Now, all this we can as little comprehend as the coal-dust. If such things were, they must have arisen from the most extraordinary negligence; and we hope the proprietors, enlightened by Mrs Darby Griffith's book, will have the vessel cleansed out before her next voyage.

The monsoon was now direct against them, and the probability was, that instead of getting to Aden in its teeth, their coal-dust would fail, and they would be driven back to Bombay for more. But the commander of one of the Oriental Company's ships, who was fortunately a passenger, advised the captain to go south, for the purpose of meeting winds which would afterwards blow him to the north-west. The advice was as fortunately taken. They steamed till within two degrees of the line, and then met with a south wind. This, however, though it drove them on their course, made them roll terribly. The India was not prepared for this rough treatment. There was not a swing-table in the ship. The consequence was, that bottles of wine were rolling in every direction; geese, turkeys, and curry were precipitated into the laps of the unfortunate people on the lee-side; while those on the weather-side were thrown forward with their faces on their plates. This was treatment which probably John Bull would not like; but being a philosopher, and besides a native of an island, he would endure it as one of the necessities of nature. But there were four French passengers on board who took it in a different way, and probably conceiving that a vessel at sea was something in the nature of a stage-coach, and the Indian ocean a high-road, they felt themselves peculiarly ill-used by this tossing; and at every instance of having a bottle of wine emptied into their drapery, they regarded it as a national insult, and complained bitterly to the captain. The French are a belligerent people, and we are surprised that this series of aggressions by the billows has not been taken up by Mons. Thiers and his friends, as an additional evidence of the malice of England to the *grande nation*. Sea-sickness, starvation, and the loss of their claret, were acts worthy, indeed, of *perfide Albion*. The captain himself was one of the victims to the "movement." The fair tourist thus draws his portrait—whether the captain will admire either the sketch or the limner, is another question. He is described as "an immensely fat, punchy man, resembling a huge ball, with great fat red cheeks which almost conceal his eyes, and a small turned-up nose." He was, of course, always seated at the head of the table, and, she supposed, considered it beneath his dignity to have his chair tied; but this world is all made up of compromises and compensations—if the captain preserved his dignity, he lost his balance. A surge came, "his fixity of tenure was gone in a moment, and this solid dignitary was shot forth, chair and all, and rolled against the bulkhead. Every body was in roars of laughter."

But though all this was toil and trouble for the miserable lords and ladies of the creation, it was delight for the masters and mistresses of the mighty element around them. The inhabitants of the ocean were in full sport; whales were seen rushing through the brine, porpoises were sporting with their sleek skins in the highest enjoyment through the billows, and shoals of dolphins filled the waves with their splendid pea-green and azure. It was an ocean fête, a *bal-paré* of the finny tribe, a gala-day of nature; while miserable men and women were shrinking, and shivering, and sinking in heart, in the midst of the animation, enjoyment, and magnificence of the world of waters. On the third night of their sailing, the wind became higher, and the swell from the south stronger than ever. They pitched about in the most dreadful manner, and during the night two sails were carried away, and the fore-topmast. They were now in peril; but they had the steam in reserve, and steered for their port. On the 9th of June they were in smooth water, running up between the coasts of Arabia and Africa. The weather now suddenly changed; the sun became intensely hot, and though forty miles from the shore, they were visited by numerous butterflies, dragon-flies, and moths. In two days after, they sailed through an orange-coloured sea, filled with a shoal of animalculæ fifteen miles long. On the next day they came in sight of the harbour of Aden. This whole track was the voyage from which the Arabian story-tellers have fabricated such wonders. One of the voyages of the celebrated Sinbad the sailor, the most picturesque of all voyagers, was over this very ocean. The orange-coloured waters, the strong effluvium of the waves intoxicating the brain, the wild headlands of Africa—each the dwelling of a necromancer—the Maldives, filled with mermaids and sea-monsters, the volcanic blaze that guarded the entrance to the Red Sea, the fiery mountains of Aden, the Hadramant, or region of Death, the Babelmandeb, or Gate of Tears, the Isle of Perim, and the Cape of Burials, wild, black, and terrific—fill the Arab imagination with wonders that throw all modern invention to an immeasurable distance.

The town of Aden is not seen from the sea; it lies behind the mountains, which are first visible. To look at the coast from this spot, nothing but a sandy desert presents itself. The peninsula is joined to the mainland, Arabia Felix, by a narrow sandy isthmus, nearly level with the ocean. It is only 14,000 feet wide. There are three rocky islands in the bay, one of which, commanding the isthmus, is fortified. The passengers of the India were disturbed during the whole day by the yells of the Arabs who were bringing the coals on board. They look more like demons than human beings. "The coal-dust, of which we had lost sight for some time, now began once more to turn every thing into its own colour. The coolies employed in this service come from the coast of Zanzibar. They keep up a continual yell during their work, and perform a kind of dance all the time." They must be very well paid, and this is the true secret of making men work. The African is no more lazy than other men, when he can get value for his labour. This is the true secret for

abolishing the slave trade. Those men come hundreds or thousand of miles to cover themselves with coal-dust, in an atmosphere where the thermometer sometimes rises to 120° in the shade, and work "day and night until they have finished their task," roaring and dancing all the time, besides—and all this for the stimulant of wages. It is to be presumed that their performance is "piece-work," the only work which brings out the true effort of the labourer. Their zeal was said to be so great, that every hundred tons of coal embarked cost the life of a man. But the Africans have learned to drink grog; an accomplishment which we should have thought they would not be long in acquiring, and since that period, they live longer. This, we must acknowledge, is a new merit in grog; it is the first time that we have heard of it as a promoter of longevity.

The Arabs on the coast form two classes, perfectly distinct, at least in their conduct to the English. The class of warriors, being robbers by profession, are extremely anxious to rob us, and still more indignant at our preventing their robbery of others. Their piracies have suffered grievously from the vigilance of our gun-boats, and they have once or twice actually attempted to storm our fortifications. The consequence is, that they have been soundly beaten, the majority have left their carcasses behind them, and the survivors have been taught a "moral lesson," which has kept them at a respectful distance. But the Arab cultivators are decent and industrious men, and form the servants of the town. Whether we shall ever make a great southern colony of the country adjoining the peninsula, must be a question of the future. But it is said that a very fine and healthy country extends to the north, and that the mountains visible from Aden enclose valleys of singular productiveness and beauty. [Pg 207]

Taste in personal decoration differs a good deal in the south from that of the north. The Arab, with a face as black as ink, thinks an enormous shock of red hair the perfection of taste; he accordingly dyes his hair with lime, and thus makes himself, unconsciously, the regular demon of the stage.

The entrance to the new British settlement is through masses of the boldest and wildest rocks. After passing a defile between two mountains, we come to the only access on this side, the "lofty mountains forming an impregnable fortification." This entrance is cut through the solid rock. A strong guard of sepoys is posted there. The passage is so high and narrow, that "one might almost compare it to the eye in a darning needle." This is a female comparison, but an expressive one. Issuing from the pass, the whole valley of Aden lay like a map beneath, bounded on three sides by precipitous mountains, rising up straight and barren like a mighty wall, while on the fourth was the sea; but even there the view was bounded by the island rock of Sera, thus completing the fortification of this Eastern Gibraltar.

Here the travellers were welcomed by a hospitable garrison surgeon and his wife, found a dinner, an apartment, great civility, and a romantic view of the Arab landscape by moonlight. They heard the drums and pipes of one of the regiments, and were "startled by the loud report of a cannon, which shook the frail tenement, and resounded with a lengthened echo through the hills. It was the eight o'clock gun, which stood only a stone's throw from the house, and on the same rock." The lady, as a soldier's wife, ought to have been less alarmed; but she was in a land where every thing was strange. "We were literally sleeping out in the open air; as there were no doors, windows, or venetians to close, and every breath of wind agitated the frail walls of bamboo and matting, I was awoke in the night by the musquitto curtains blowing up; the wind had risen, and came every now and then with sudden gusts; but its breath was so soft, warm, and dry, that I, who had never ventured to bear a night-blast in Ceylon, felt that it was harmless."

Aden, in earlier times, formed one of the thirteen states of Yemen; and prodigious tales are told of its opulence, its mosques and minarets, its baths of jasper, and its crescents and colonnades. But Arabia is proverbially a land of fable, and the glories of Aden exhibit Arabian imagination in its highest stage. Possibly, while it continued a port for the Indian trade, it may have shared the wealth which India has always lavished on commerce. But a spot without a tree, without a mine, and without a manufacture, could never have possessed solid wealth under the languid industry and wild rapine of an Arab population. When we recollect, too, how long the Turks were masters of this corner of Arabia, we may well be sceptical of the opulence of periods when the sword was the law. No memorials of its prosperity remain; no ruined temples or broken columns attest the magnificence or the taste of an earlier generation. Its only hope of opulence must be dated from its first possession by the British. But the barrenness of the soil forbids substantial wealth; and though the native merchants, relying on the honour of British laws and the security of British arms, are flocking into it by hundreds, and will soon flock into it by thousands, it must be at best but a warehouse and a fortress, though both will, in all probability, be of the most magnificent description. The population is of the miscellaneous order which is to be found in all the Eastern ports. The Parsees, the handsome and industrious race who are to be seen every where in India; the Jews, keen and indefatigable, who are to be seen in every part of the world; and the Arabs, whose glance and gesture seem to despise both, are already crowding this half camp, half capital. [Pg 208] From eighty to a hundred camels, every morning, supply the markets of Aden. They bring in baskets of fine fruit, grapes, melons, dates, and peaches. The greater number bring also poultry, grass, and straw. Troops of donkeys carry water in skins to every part of the town; and there is no want of the necessaries of life, though of course they are dear. Aden is excessively hot, but regarded as healthy. The air is pure, dry, and elastic. The engineers are building works on the different commanding positions; and Aden, within a few years, will probably be the strongest fortification, as it is already one of the finest ports, east of the Mediterranean. But we look to nobler prospects; the inland country is perhaps one of the finest regions in the world. Almost within view of Aden lies a country as picturesque as Switzerland, and as fertile as the valleys of

the tropics. It is singularly salubrious; and, in point of extent, may be regarded as unlimited. We see no possible reason why Aden should not, in the course of a few years, be made the capital of a great Arabian colony. Conquest must not be the means, but purchase might not be difficult; and civilization and Christianity might be spread together through immense territories, formed in the bounty of nature, and only waiting to be filled with a free and vigorous population. It is only the centre and north of Arabia that is desert. The coast, and especially the southern extremity, are fertile. Without the ambition of empire, or the desire of encroachment, British enterprize might here find a superb field, and the Arabian peninsula might, for the first time in history, be added to the civilized world.

The travellers now ran up the Red Sea. The navigation has greatly improved within these few years, in consequence of the intercourse between England and India. Surveys have been made, and charts have been formed, which almost divest the passage of peril. But the navigation is still intricate, in consequence of the coral rocks and numerous shoals, which, however, may be escaped by due vigilance, and the experienced mariner has nothing to fear. The aspect of the coast, of both Africa and Arabia, is wild and repulsive; but some compensation for the monotony of the shores is to be found in the sea itself. When calm, the transparency of the water exhibits the bottom to the depth of thirty fathoms. "And what a new world is discovered through this vale of waters! what treasures for the naturalist!" The sands are overspread with forests of coral plants of every colour, shells of remarkable beauty; and, in the midst of this sub-aqueous landscape, fish of brilliant hues sporting in all directions. At length they reached the gulf of Suez, with the blue peaks of Sinai in the distance, and continued running up the gulf, which was one hundred and sixty miles long, until Suez came in sight. Here all is dreary: deserts and sand-banks form the whole landscape. Arab boats came alongside, and conveyed the passengers from the steamer. The town looked dismal; its walls and fortifications were in decay; the landing-place was crowded by sickly-looking creatures, the evident victims of malaria, and the chief ornament of the place was a large white-washed tomb. This condition of things was not much improved when the party found themselves in the hotel of Messrs Hill and Co. Musquittoes, and every species of frightful insect, made war against sleep; and when their reign had passed away, and the travellers rose, crowds of flies continued the persecution. The travellers made a bad bargain in paying their passage-money at once from Suez to Alexandria; and it is described as the wiser mode to pay only to Cairo, and then take the choice of the several conveyances which are sure to be found there. The Arab drivers and carriers seem to have fully acquired those arts of extortion, which flourish in such abundance wherever English money is to be found. They cheat, and lie, and cajole, with extraordinary assiduity; and the majority of the passengers on this occasion seem to have been detained unnecessarily on the road, and treated badly at the station houses. The first part of the desert is rather rocky than sandy, and the road seems to have been formed chiefly by the carriage wheels. It is covered with great pieces of stone and rock, which sorely [Pg 209] tried the patience of the travellers. Hundreds of carcasses of camels lie in the way; the flesh is soon eaten by the wolves and rats, while the bones bleach in the sun. Little troops of Arabs were met from time to time, sometimes on camels and sometimes on horses. They were armed to the teeth, as black as negroes, and looked ferocious enough to make any party of pacific travellers tremble for their goods and chattels. But they were the patrols of Mohammed Ali, and guardians of the goods which in other days they would have delighted to plunder. There are eight stations on this road through the desert, all built by that man of wonders, the Pasha. Of these, four are only stables; but four are houses for the reception of travellers. They are generally from twelve to sixteen miles apart. The station No. 6, though by no means possessing the comforts of an English hotel, must be a miracle to the old travellers of the desert. It consists of two chambers, a kitchen, and servants' room, with a large public saloon occupying the whole of one end, and completing a little centre court. Three sides of the saloon were furnished with divans. There was a long table in the centre, with several chairs, and a glass window at each end of the room. But this was unluckily the season of flies, and they were the torment of the travellers; table, wall, ceiling, and floors swarmed with them. They flew into the face, the eyes, and the mouth. Thousands of musquittoes were also buzzing round and biting every thing. The breakfast was no sooner laid on the table than it was blackened with flies. The beds were hiving, and intolerable. No. 4, the halfway-house, was rather better. It is the largest of them all, and has a long row of bedrooms, and two public saloons. It has a large courtyard, in which were turkeys, geese, sheep, and goats, for the use of travellers. The Arab coachman here tried a trick of the road. He sent up a message that he had observed the lady looked very much tired, and that he therefore advised them to get to the end of their journey as quickly as possible; that they had better start in two hours, as the moon was very bright, and that he would take them into Cairo by breakfast-time in the morning. But it was suspected that this haste was in order that the passengers waiting at Cairo to go by the India steamer should be conveyed across the desert by himself, so they declined his offer, and enjoyed their night's rest. On rising in the morning, they felt that they had reason to congratulate themselves on their refusal of the night's journey; for they found even the morning air bitter, and the atmosphere a wet fog. The aspect of the country had now changed. Chains of hills disappeared, and all was level sand. On the way they saw the mirage, sometimes assuming the appearance of a distant harbour, at others, of an inland lake reflecting the surrounding objects on its surface; and they met one of the picturesque displays of Arabia, a wealthy Bey going on a pilgrimage to Mecca. He had a train of twenty or thirty camels. Those carrying himself and his harem had superb trappings. The women were seated in large open boxes, hanging on each side as paniers. There were red silk embroidered curtains hung round, like those on a bedstead, and an awning over all. The bey was smoking his splendid pipe, and behind came a crowd of slaves with provisions. The road on approaching Cairo grew rougher than ever; it was often over ridges of rock just appearing above the sand. The Pasha's "commissioners of paving" seem to have

slumbered on their posts as much as if they had been metropolitan. At last a "silvery stream" was seen winding in the horizon—the "glorious Nile!" The country now grew picturesque; a forest of domes and minarets arose in the distance; and the Pyramids became visible. The road then ran through a sort of suburb, where the Bedouins take up their quarters on their visits to buy grain, they being not suffered within the walls. It then passed between walled gardens filled with flowers, shrubs, orange and olive trees; most of the walls were also surmounted with a row of pillars, interlaced with vines—a species of ornament new to us, but which, we should conceive, must add much to the beauty, external and internal, of a garden. Cairo was entered at last; and its lofty houses, and the general architecture of this noblest specimen of a Mahometan capital, delighted the eyes which had so long seen nothing but the sea, the rocky shore, and the desert. Cairo is, like all the rest of the world, growing European, and even English. It has its hotels; and the traveller, except that he hears more Arabic, and inhales more tobacco smoke, will soon begin to imagine himself in Regent street. The "Eastern Hotel" is a good house, where Englishmen get beefsteaks, port wine, and brown stout; read the London papers; have waiters who at least do their best to entertain them in their own tongue; and want nothing but operas and omnibuses. But the dress still makes a distinction, and it is wholly in favour of the Mussulman. All modern European dresses are mean; the Oriental is the only man whose dress adds dignity to the human form. When Sultan Mahmoud stripped off the turban, and turned the noble dress of his people into the caricature of the European costume, he struck a heavier blow at his sovereignty than ever was inflicted by the Russian sabre or the Greek dagger. He smote the spirit of his nation. The Egyptian officials wear the fez, or red nightcap—the fitting emblem of an empire gone to sleep. But the general population of Egypt wear the ancient turban, the finest ornament of the head ever invented by man; that of the Egyptian Mahometan is white muslin; that of the Shereefs, or line of Mahomet, is green; that of the Jews and Copts is black. The remaining portions of the costume are such as, perhaps, we shall soon see only upon the stage. The embroidered caftan, the flowing gown, the full trouser of scarlet or violet-coloured cloth, the yellow morocco boot, the jewelled dagger, and velvet-sheathed cimeter—all the perfection of magnificence and taste in costume. The ample beard gives completeness to the majesty of the countenance, and finishes the true character of the "lord of the creation."

The citadel of Cairo has a melancholy and memorable name, from the horrid massacre of the Mamelukes in 1811, when four hundred and seventy of those showy soldiers were murdered, and but one escaped by leaping his horse from the battlements. The horse was killed; the man is now a bey in the Pasha's service. The citadel stands on a hill, and contains the Pasha's palace, a harem, a council-hall, police-offices, and a large square, where the massacre was perpetrated. The view from the windows of the palace is superb. Cairo is seen immediately beneath, skirted by gardens on the right. Beyond those the mosques of the caliphs, and as far as the eye can reach, the Arabian desert. In front is the Nile, a silver stream, covered with sails of every description, till it is lost in the groves of the Delta. The ports of Boulac and old Cairo, with numerous villages, stud its banks, and from its bosom rise verdant islands. To the left, the Nile is still visible, and beyond are seen the Pyramids, which, though twelve miles off, appear quite close, from the transparency of the air. In the citadel is also a mosque, now building by the order of the Pasha. It is constructed of Oriental alabaster, is of great size, already exhibits fine taste, and promises to be one of the most beautiful structures in Egypt. But the Pasha has not yet attained the European improvement of lamps in the streets. After nightfall, the only light is from the shops, which, when they close, leave the street in utter darkness. However, most of the pedestrians carry lamps with them. How does it happen that no gas company has taken pity upon this Egyptian darkness, and saved the Cairans from the chance of having their throats cut, or at least their bones broken; for during the summer a considerable portion of the poorer population sleep in the streets? Still the Pasha is a man of taste, fond of living in gardens, and sensible enough to have the garden of his favourite palace at Shoobra laid out by a Scotch gardener. He used to reside a great deal there, but now chiefly lives, when at Cairo, in the house of his daughter, a widow, where his apartments are in the European style. Nothing surprises a European traveller more than the people themselves; and no problem can seem more mysterious than the means by which they are enabled to supply so much expensive costume. The Egyptian gentleman seems to want for nothing, wherever they find the money to pay for it. Fine houses, fine furniture, fine horses, and fine clothes, seem to be constantly at the command of a crowd who have nothing to do, who produce nothing, and yet seem to have every thing. The Egyptian or Turkish lady is an absolute bale of costly clothing—the more breadths of silk they carry about them the better. Before leaving her home, she puts over her house costume a large loose robe called a *tob*, made of silk or satin, and always of some gay colour, pink, yellow, red, or violet. She next puts on her face veil, a long strip of the finest white muslin, often exquisitely embroidered. It is fastened just between the eyes, conceals all the other features, and reaches to the feet. She next envelopes herself in large cloak of rich black silk, tied round the head by a piece of narrow riband. Her costume is completed by trousers of silk gauze, and yellow morocco boots, which reach a considerable way up the legs. How any human being can bear such a heap of clothing, especially under the fiery sun and hot winds of Egypt, is to us inconceivable. It must melt all vigour out of the body, and all life out of the soul; but it is the fashion, and fashion works its wonders in Egypt as well as elsewhere. The veil across the mouth, in a climate where every breath of fresh air is precious, must be but a slower kind of strangulation. But the preparative for a public appearance is not yet complete. Women of condition never walk. They ride upon a donkey handsomely caparisoned, sitting astride upon a high and broad saddle, covered with a rich Turkey carpet. They ride with stirrups, but they never hold the reins; their hands are busy in keeping down their cloaks. A servant leads the donkey by the bridle. Their figures, when thus in motion, are the most preposterous things imaginable. Huge as they are, the wind, which has no respect for persons,

gets under their cloaks, and blows them up to three times their natural size. Those are the ladies of Egypt; the lower orders imitate this absurdity and extravagance as far as they can, and with their face veils, the most frightful things possible, shuffle through the streets like strings of spectres. Poverty and labour may by possibility keep the lower ranks in health; but how the higher among the females can retain health, between their want of exercise, their full feeding, their hot baths, and this perpetual hot bath of clothing, defies all rational conjecture. The Egyptians of all ranks are terribly afraid of what they call the evil eye, and stifle themselves and children in all kinds of rags to avoid being bewitched. The peasants are a fine-looking, strong-bodied race of men; but many of them are met blind of an eye. This is attributed to the reluctance to be soldiers for the glory of the Pasha. But Mohammed Ali was not to be thus tricked, and he raised a regiment of one-eyed men. In other instances they are said to have knocked out the fore-teeth to avoid biting a cartridge, or to have cut off a joint of the first finger to prevent their drawing a trigger. Even thus they are not able to escape the cunning Pasha. But this shows the natural horror of the conscription; and we are not surprised that men should adopt any expedient to escape so great a curse and scandal to society. It is extraordinary that in this 19th century, even of the Christian world, such an abomination should be suffered to exist in Europe. It is equally extraordinary that it exists in every country but England, and she can have no prouder distinction. The habeas-corpus and her free enlistment, are two privileges without which no real liberty can ever exist, and which, in any country, it would be well worth a revolution, or ten revolutions, to obtain. Hers is the only army into which no man can be forced, and in which every man is a volunteer. And yet she has never wanted soldiers, and her soldiers have never fought the worse. It is true, that when she has a militia they are drawn by ballot from the population; but no militiaman is ever sent out of the country; and as to those who are drawn, if they feel disinclined to serve in this force, which acts merely as a national guard, ten shillings will find a substitute at any time. It is also true that England has impressment for the navy; but the man who makes the sea his livelihood, adopts his profession voluntarily, and with the knowledge that at some time or other he may be called upon to serve in the royal navy. And even impressment is never adopted but on those extreme emergencies which can seldom happen, and which may never happen again in the life of man. But on the Continent, every man except the clergy, and those in the employment of the state, is liable to be dragged to the field, let his prospects or his propensities be what they may. In every instance of war, parents look to their children with terror as they grow up to the military age. The army is a national curse, and parental feelings are a perpetual source of affliction. If the great body of the people in Europe, instead of clamouring for imaginary rights, and talking nonsense about constitutions, which they have neither the skill to construct, nor would find worth the possession if they had them, would concentrate their claims in a demand for the habeas-corpus, and the abolition of the conscription, they would relieve themselves from the two heaviest burdens of despotism, and obtain for themselves the two highest advantages of genuine liberty.

One of the curiosities of Cairo is the hair-oil bazar. The Egyptian women are prodigious hairdressers and the variety of perfumes which they lavish upon their hair and persons, exceed all European custom and calculation. This bazar is all scents, oil, and gold braids for the hair. It is nearly half a mile long. The odour, or the mixture of odours, may well be presumed to be overpowering, when every other shop is devoted to scented bottles—the intervening ones, containing perfumed head-dresses, formed of braids of ribands and gold lace, which descend to the ground. A warehouse of Turkish tables exhibited the luxurious ingenuity of the workers in mother-of-pearl. They were richly wrought in gold and silver ornaments. Within seven miles of Cairo, there still exists a wonder of the old time, which must have made a great figure in the Arab legends—a petrified forest lying in the desert, and which, to complete the wonder, it is evident must have been petrified while still standing. The trees are now lying on the ground, many of the trunks forty feet long, with their branches beside them, all of stone, and evidently shattered by the fall. Cairo, too, has its hospital for lunatics; but this is a terrible scene. The unfortunate inmates are chained and caged, and look like wild beasts, with just enough of the human aspect left to make the scene terrible. A reform here would be well worth the interference of European humanity. We wish that the Hanwell Asylum would send a deputation with Dr Connolly at its head to the Pasha. No man is more open to reason than Mohammed Ali, and the European treatment of lunatics, transferred to an Egyptian dungeon, would be one of the best triumphs of active humanity.

The travellers at length left Cairo, and embarked on board Mills and Company's steam-boat, named the Jack o' Lantern. It seemed to be merely one of the common boats that ply on the river, with the addition of a boiler and paddles, and is probably the smallest steamer extant. However, when they entered the cabin upon the deck, they found every thing nicely arranged and began to think better of their little vessel. They had another advantage in its smallness, as the Nile was now so low that numbers of vessels lay aground, and a large steamer would probably have been unable to make the passage. The river seemed quite alive with many-formed and many-coloured boats. Their picturesque sails, crossing each other, made them at a distance look almost like butterflies skimming over the water. The little steamer drew only two feet and a half of water. She is jestingly described as of two and a half Cairo donkey power. About six miles from Boulac, they passed under the walls of Shoobra palace and gardens. Its groves form a striking object, and its interior, cultivated by Greek gardeners, is an earthly Mahometan paradise. It has bower-covered walks, gardens carpeted with flowers, ever-flowing fountains, and a lake on which the luxurious Pasha is rowed by the ladies of his harem. The Nile winds in the most extraordinary manner across the tongues of land; boats and sails are seen close, which are in reality a mile further down the stream. The banks were high above the boat, through the present shallowness

of the river. They were chiefly of brown clay, and were frequently cut into chasms for the purposes of irrigation. As they shot along, they saw large tracts covered with cotton, wheat, Indian corn, and other crops. Date-trees in abundance, the leaves large and like those of the cocoa, the fruit hanging in large clusters, when ripe of a bright red. Water-melons cultivated every where, often on the sandy banks of the river itself, three or four times the size of a man's head, and absolutely loading the beds. Numbers of the Egyptian villages were seen in the navigation of the river. The houses are huddled together, are of unbaked clay, and look like so many bee-hives. Every village has its date-trees, and every hut has pigeons. The peasants in general seem intolerably indolent, and groups of them are every where lying under the trees. Herds of fine buffaloes, twice the size of those in Ceylon, were seen along the shore, and sometimes swimming the river. Groups of magnificent cattle, larger and finer than even our best English breed, were driven occasionally to water at the river side. The Egyptian boats come to an anchor every night; but the Jack o' Lantern dashed on, and by daybreak reached the entrance of the Mahoudiah Canal, on which a track-boat carries passengers to Alexandria. A high mound of earth here separates the canal from the Nile, which flows on towards Rosetta. This embankment is about forty feet wide. Some of Mrs Griffith's observations are at least sufficiently expressive; for example:—"All the children, and some past the age of what are usually styled little children, were running about entirely devoid of clothing. We observed a great deal of this in Egypt. *Men* are often seen in the same condition; and the women of the lower orders, having concealed their heads and faces, appear to think they have done *all that is necessary*." This is certainly telling a good deal; nothing more explicit could be required. The track-boats are odious conveyances, long and narrow, and the present one very dirty, and swarming with cockroaches. They were towed by three horses, ridden by three men. In England one would have answered the purpose. The Canal itself is an extraordinary work, worthy of the country of the Pyramids, and one of the prodigies which despotism sometimes exhibits when the iron sceptre is combined with a vigorous intellect. It is ninety feet wide and forty-eight miles long, and yet was completed in six weeks. But it took the labour of 250,000 men, who worked, if the story be true, night and day. Along the canal were seen several large encampments of troops, rather rough instruments, it is true, for polishing African savagery into usefulness, but perhaps the only means by which great things could have been done in so short a period as the reign of Mohammed Ali. An Italian fellow-passenger, who had resided in Egypt twenty-five years, gave it as the result of his experience, that without the strong hand of power, the population would do nothing. Bread and onions being their food, when those were obtained they had got all that they asked for. They would leave their fruitful land to barrenness, and would prefer sleeping under their trees, to the simplest operation of agriculture in a soil that never requires the plough. Yet they are singularly tenacious of their money, and often bury it, keeping their secret to the last. The Italian told them that he was once witness to a scene exactly in point. He accompanied the tax-gatherer to a miserable village, where they entered one of the most miserable huts. The tax-gatherer demanded his due, the Egyptian fell at his feet, protesting that his family were starving, and that he had not a single coin to buy bread. The tax-gatherer, finding him impracticable, ordered some of his followers to give him a certain number of stripes. The peasant writhed under the stripes, but continued his tale. The beating was renewed on two days more, when the Italian interfered and implored mercy. But the officer said that he must continue to flog, as he was certain that the money would come forth at last. After six days' castigation, the peasant's patience could hold out no longer. He dug a hole in the floor of his hut, and exhibited gold and silver to a large amount.

All this may be true; but it would be an injustice to human nature to suppose that man, in any country, would prefer dirt, poverty, and idleness, to comfort, activity, and employment, where he could be sure of possessing the fruits of his labours. But where the unfortunate peasant is liable to see his whole crop carried off the land at the pleasure of one of the public officers, or the land itself torn from him, or himself or his son carried off by the conscription, how can we be surprised if he should think it not worth the while to trouble his head or his hands about any thing? Give him security, and he will work; give him property, and he will keep it; and give him the power of enjoying his gains in defiance of the tax-gatherer, and he will exhibit the manliness and perseverance which Providence has given to all. Whether even the famous Pasha is not still too much of a Turk to venture on an experiment which was never heard of in the land of a Mahometan before, must be a matter more for the prophet than the politician; but Egypt, so long the most abject of nations, and the perpetual slave of a stranger, seems rapidly approaching to European civilization, and by her association with Englishmen, and her English alliance, may yet be prepared to take a high place among the regenerated governments of the world.

The road from the termination of the canal to Alexandria, about two miles long, leads through a desert track. At last the Mediterranean bursts upon the eye. In front rise Pompey's stately and well-known pillar, and Cleopatra's needle. High sand-banks still intercept the view of Alexandria. At length the gates are passed, a dusty avenue is traversed, the great square is reached, and the English hotel receives the travellers. Mahometanism is now left behind, for Alexandria is comparatively an European capital. All the houses surrounding the great square, including the dwellings of the consuls, have been built within the last ten years by Ibrahim Pasha, who, prince and heir to the throne as he is, here performs the part of a speculative builder, and lets out his houses to Europeans. These houses are built as regularly as those in Park Crescent, and are two stories high above the Porte Cochère. They all have French windows with green Venetian shutters, and the whole appearance is completely European. The likeness is sustained by carriages of every description, filled with smartly dressed women, driving through all the streets—a sight never seen at Cairo, for the generality of the streets are scarcely wide enough for the passage of donkeys. But the population is still motley and Asiatic. Turbans, caps, and the scarlet

fez, loose gowns, and embroidered trousers, make the streets picturesque. On the other hand, crowds of Europeans, tourists, merchants, and tailors, are to be seen mingling with the Asiatics; and the effect is singularly varied and animated.

The pageant of the French consul-general going to pay his respects to the Viceroy, exhibited one of the shows of the place. First came a number of officers of state, in embroidered jackets of black cachmere, ornamented gaiters, and red morocco shoes. Each wore a cimeter, an essential part of official costume. Next followed a fine brass band; after them came a large body of infantry in three divisions, the whole in heavy marching order. Their discipline and general appearance were striking; they wore the summer dress, consisting of a white cotton jacket and trousers, with red cloth skull-caps, and carried their cartouche-boxes, cross-belts, and fire-locks in the European manner. The next feature, and the prettiest, consisted of the Pasha's led horses, in number about eighteen, all beautiful little Arabs, caparisoned with crimson and black velvet, and cloth of gold. We repeat the description of one, for the sake of tantalizing our European readers with the Egyptian taste in housings. "The animal was a chestnut horse, of perfect form and action. His saddle was of crimson velvet, thickly ribbed by gold embroidery. His saddle-cloth was entirely of cloth of gold, embossed with bullion, and studded with large gems; jewelled pistols were seen in the holsters; the head-piece was variegated red, green, and blue; embroidered and golden tassels hung from every part." But the European portion of the scene by no means corresponded to the Oriental display. The French consul followed in a barouche and pair, with his *attachés* and attendants in carriages; but the whole were mean-looking. The French court-dress, or any court-dress, must appear contemptible in its contrast with the stateliness of this people of silks and shawls, jewelled weapons, and cloth of gold.

Mohammed Ali is, after all, the true wonder of Egypt. A Turk without a single prejudice of the Turk—an Oriental eager for the adoption of all the knowledge, the arts, and the comforts of Europe—a Mahometan allowing perfect religious toleration, and a despot moderating his despotism by the manliest zeal for the prosperity of his country; he has already raised himself to a reputation far beyond the rank of his sovereignty, and will live in the memories of men, whenever they quote the names of those who, rising above all the difficulties of their original position, have proved their title to the mastery of nations.

The Pasha affected nothing of the usual privacy, or even of the usual pomp, of rajahs and sultans. He was constantly seen driving through Alexandria, in a low berlin with four horses. The berlin was lined with crimson silk, and there, squatting on one of the low broad seats, sat the Viceroy. Two of his officers generally sat opposite to him, and by his side his grandson—a handsome child between eight and nine years old, of whom he seems remarkably fond. Like so many other eminent men, his stature is below the middle size. His countenance is singularly intelligent, his nose aquiline, and his eye quick and penetrating. He does not take the trouble to dye his beard, as is the custom among Orientalists. He wears it long and thick, and in all its snows. Years have so little affected him, that he is regarded as a better life than his son Ibrahim—his general, and confessedly a man of ability. But his second son, Said Pasha, the half brother of Ibrahim, is regarded as especially inheriting the talents of his father. He is an accomplished man, speaks English and French fluently, seems to enter into his father's views with great intelligence, and exhibits a manliness and ardour of character which augur well for his country. But the appearance of the Pasha is not without its attendant state. In front of his berlin ride a number of attendants, caracoling in all directions. Behind the carriage rides his express, mounted on a dromedary, in readiness to start with despatches. The express is followed by his pipe-bearer; the pipe-bearer followed by a servant mounted on a mule, and carrying the light for the Pasha's pipe. The cavalcade is closed by a troop of the officers in waiting, mounted on showy horses.

At length the day of parting arrived, and the travellers embarked on board the Tagus steamer. The view of Alexandria from the sea is stately. A forest of masts, a quay of handsome houses, and the viceroyal palace forming one side of the harbour, tell the stranger that he is approaching the seat of sovereignty. The sea was rough, but of the bright blue of the Mediterranean, and the steamer cut swiftly through the waves. The vessel was clean and well arranged, the weather was fine, and the travellers began to feel the freshness and elasticity of European air. At length they arrived at Malta, and heard for the first time for years, the striking of clocks and the ringing of church-bells. They were at length in Europe. But there is one penalty on the return from the East, which always puts the stranger in ill-humour. They were compelled to perform quarantine. This was intolerably tedious, expensive, and wearisome; yet all things come to an end at last, and, after about a fortnight, they were set at liberty.

Malta, in its soil and climate, belongs to Africa—in its population, perhaps to Italy—in its garrison and commerce, to Europe—and in its manners and habits, to the East. It is a medley of the three quarters of the Old World; and, for the time, a medley of the most curious description. The native carriages, peasant dresses, shops, furniture of the houses, and even the houses themselves, are wholly unlike any thing that has before met the English eye. Malta, in point of religious observances, is like what St Paul said of Athens—it is overwhelmingly pious. The church-bells are tolling all day long. Wherever it is possible, the cultivation of the ground exhibits the industry of the people. Every spot where earth can be found, is covered with some species of produce. Large tracts are employed in the cultivation of the cotton plant—fruit-trees fill the soil—the fig-tree is luxuriant—pomegranate, peach, apple, and plum, are singularly productive. Vines cover the walls, and the Maltese oranges have a European reputation. The British possession of Malta originated in one of those singular events by which short-sightedness and rapine are often made their own punishers. The importance of Malta, as a naval station, had long been obvious to

England; and when, in the revolutionary war, the chief hostilities of the war were transferred to the Mediterranean, its value as a harbour for the English fleets became incalculable. Yet it was still in possession of the knights; and, so far as England was concerned, it might have remained in their hands for ever. A national sense of justice would have prevented the seizure of the island, however inadequate to defend itself against the navy of England. But Napoleon had no such scruples. In his expedition to Egypt, he threw a body of troops on shore at Malta; and, having either frightened or bribed its masters, or perhaps both, plundered the churches of their plate, turned out the knights, and left the island in possession of a French garrison. Nothing could be less sagacious and less statesmanlike than this act; for, by extinguishing the neutrality of the island, he exposed it to an immediate blockade by the English. The result was exactly what he ought to have foreseen. An English squadron was immediately dispatched to summon the island; it eventually fell into the hands of the English, and now seems destined to remain in English hands so long as we have a ship in the Mediterranean. Malta is a prodigiously pious place, according to the Maltese conception of piety. Masses are going on without intermission—they fast twice a-week—religious processions are constantly passing—priests are continually seen in the streets, carrying the Host to the sick or dying. When the ceremonial is performed within the house, some of the choristers generally remain kneeling outside, and are joined by the passers-by. Thus crowds of people are often to be seen kneeling in the streets. The Virgin, of course, is the chief object of worship; for, nothing can be more true than the expression, that for one prayer to the Deity there are ten to the Virgin; and confession, at once the most childish and the most perilous of all practices, is regarded as so essential, that those who cannot produce a certificate from the priest of their having confessed, at least once in the year, are excluded from the sacrament by an act of the severest spiritual tyranny; and, if they should die thus excluded, their funeral service will not be performed by the priest—an act which implies a punishment beyond the grave. And yet the morals of the Maltese certainly derive no superiority from either the priestly influence or the personal mortification.

The travellers now embarked on board the Neapolitan steamer, Ercolano—bade adieu to Malta, and swept along the shore of Sicily. Syracuse still exhibits, in the beauty of its landscape, and the commanding nature of its situation, the taste of the Greeks in selecting the sites of their cities. The land is still covered with noble ruins, and the antiquarian might find a boundless field of interest and knowledge. Catania, which was destroyed about two centuries ago, at once by an earthquake and an eruption, is seated in a country of still more striking beauty. The appearance of the city from the sea is of the most picturesque order. It looks almost encircled by the lava which once wrought such formidable devastation. But the plain is bounded by verdant mountains, looking down on a lovely extent of orange and olive groves, vineyards, and cornfields. But the grand feature of the landscape, and the world has nothing nobler, is the colossal Etna; its lower circle covered with vegetation—its centre belted with forests—its summit covered with snow—and, above all, a crown of cloud, which so often turns into a cloud of flame. The travellers were fortunate in seeing this showy city under its most showy aspect. It was a gala-day in Catania; flags were flying on all sides—fireworks and illuminations were preparing—an altar was erected on the Cave, and all the world were in their holiday costume. As the evening approached the scene became still more brilliant, for the fireworks and illuminations then began to have their effect. The evening was soft and Italian, the air pure, and the sky without a cloud. From the water, the scene was fantastically beautiful; the huge altar erected on the shore, was now a blaze of light; the range of buildings, as they ascended from the shore, glittered like diamonds in the distance. Fireworks, in great abundance and variety, flashed about; and instrumental bands filled the night air with harmony. The equipages which filled the streets were in general elegant, and lined with silk; the dresses of the principal inhabitants were in the highest fashion, and all looked perfectly at their ease, and some looked even splendid. A remark is made, that this display of wealth is surprising in what must be regarded as a provincial town. But this remark may be extended to the whole south of Italy. It is a matter of real difficulty to conceive how the Italians contrive to keep up any thing approaching to the appearance which they make, in their Corsos, and on their feast-days. Without mines to support them, as the Spaniards were once supported; without colonies to bring them wealth; without manufactures, and without commerce, how they contrive to sustain a life of utter indolence, yet, at the same time, of considerable display, is a curious problem. It is true, that many of them have places at court, and flourish on sinecures; it is equally true, that their manner of living at home is generally penurious in the extreme; it is also true that gaming, and other arts not an atom more respectable, are customary to supply this yawning life. Yet still, how the majority can exist at all, is a natural question which it must require a deep insight into the mysteries of Italian existence to solve. Whatever may be the secret, the less Englishmen know on these subjects the better; communion with foreign habits only deteriorates the integrity and purity of our own. On the Continent, vice is systematized—virtue is scarcely more than a name; and no worse intelligence has long reached us than the calculation just published in the foreign newspapers, that there were 40,000 English now residing in France, and 4000 English families in that especial sink of superstition and profligacy, Italy.

The sail from the Sicilian straits to Naples is picturesque. The Liparis, with their volcanic summits, on one side—the Calabrian highlands, on the other—a succession of rich mountains, clothed with all kinds of verdure, and of the finest forms; and around, the perpetual beauty of the Mediterranean. The travellers hove to at Pizza, in the gulf of Euphania, the shore memorable for the gallant engagement in which the English troops under Stuart, utterly routed the French under Regnier—a battle which made the name of Maida immortal. Pizza has obtained a melancholy notoriety by the death of Murat, who was shot by order of a court-martial, as an

invader and rebel, in October 1815. Murat's personal intrepidity, and even his *fanfaronade*, excited an interest for him in Europe. But he was a wild, rash, and reckless instrument of Napoleon's furious and remorseless policy; the commandant of the French army in Spain in 1808 could not complain of military vengeance; and his death by the hands of the royal troops only relieved Europe of the boldest disturber among the fallen followers of the great usurper.

The finest view of Naples is the one which the mob of tourists see the last. Its approaches by land are all imperfect—the city is to be seen only from the bay. Floating on the waters which form the most lovely of all foregrounds, a vast sheet of crystal, a boundless mirror, a tissue of purple, or any other of the fanciful names which the various hues and aspects of the hour give to this renowned bay, the view comprehends the city, the surrounding country, Posilipo on the left, Vesuvius on the right, and between them a region of vineyards and vegetation, as poetic and luxuriant as poet or painter could desire.

The wonders of Pompeii are no longer wonders, and people go to see them with something of the same spirit in which the citizens of London saunter to Primrose hill. It was a beggarly little place from the beginning; and the true wonder is, how it could ever have found inhabitants, or how the inhabitants could ever have found room to eat, drink, and sleep in. But Herculaneum is of a higher rank. If the Neapolitan Government had any spirit, it would demolish the miserable villages above it, and lay open this fine old monument of the cleverest, though the most corrupt people of the earth, to the light of day. In all probability we should learn from it more of the real state of the arts, the manners, and the feelings of the Greek, partially modified by his Italian colonization, than by any other record or memorial in existence. In those vaults which still remain closed, owing to the indolence or stupidity of the existing generation, eaten up as it is by monkery, and spending more upon a *fête* to the Madonna, or the liquifying of St Januarius's blood, than would lay open half the city, there is every probability that some of the most important literature of antiquity still lies buried. Why will not some English company, tired of railroad speculations and American stock, turn its discharge on Herculaneum, pour its gold over the ground, exfoliate the city of the dead, recover its statues, bronzes, frescoes, and mosaics, transplant them to Tower Stairs, and sell them by the hands of George Robins, for the benefit of the rising generation? This seems their only chance of revisiting the light of day; for the money of all foreign sovereigns goes in fêtes and fireworks, new patterns of soldiers' caps, and new costumes for the maids of honour.

We have now glanced over the general features of these volumes. They are light and lively, and do credit to the writer's powers of observation. The result of his details, however, is to impress on our minds, that the "overland passage" is not yet fit for any female who is not inclined to "rough it" in an extraordinary degree. To any woman it offers great hardships; but to a woman of delicacy, the whole must be singularly repulsive. Something is said of the decorations of the work proceeding from the pencil of the lady's husband. Whether the lithographer has done injustice to them, we know not; but they seem to us the very reverse of decoration. The adoption, too, of new modes of spelling the Oriental names, is wholly unnecessary. Harem, turned into Hharéem—Dervish into Derwéesh—Mameluke into Memlook, give no new ideas, and only add perplexity to our knowledge of the name. These words, with a crowd of others, have already been fixed in English orthography by their natural pronunciation; and the attempt to change them always renders their pronunciation—which is, after all, the only important point—less true to the original. On the whole, the "overland passage" seems to require immense improvements. But we live in hope; English sagacity and English perseverance will do much any where; and in Egypt they have for their field one of the most important regions of the world.

MESMERISM.

> "They say miracles are past, and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless."—*All's Well that Ends Well, Act II., Scene 3.*

From the many crude, illiterate, and unphilosophical speculations on the subject of mesmerism which the present unwholesome activity of the printing-press has ushered into the world, there is one book which stands out in prominent and ornamental relief—a book written by a member of the Church of England, a scholar and a gentleman; and the influence of which, either for good or for harm, is not likely to be ephemeral. Few, even of the most incredulous, can read with attention the first half of "Facts in Mesmerism, by the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend," of which a second edition has recently appeared, without being staggered. The author leads the reader up a gentle slope, from facts abnormal, it is true, but not contradictory to received notions, to others deviating a little more from ordinary experience; and thence, by a course of calm narrative, to still more anomalous incidents; until at length, almost unconsciously, the incredible seems credible, impossibilities and possibilities are confounded, and miracles are no longer miraculous.

There is much difficulty in dealing with such a book; gentlemanly courtesy, which should grant what it would demand, and an unavoidable faith in the purity of the author's intentions, entirely prevent our treating it as the work of an empiric. It is evident that the author believes what he writes, that the facts in mesmerism are facts to him; to those unprepared by previous experience for the fallacies which the enthusiastic temperament is led into, the book would be irresistible; to

those, however, accustomed to physical or phsycological investigation, the last half of the work does much to unravel the web which the first half has been engaged in weaving. When the author departs from the narrative of facts, and endeavours to render those facts consistent with reason and experience, we see the one-sided bias of his mind—we see that he is not a judge but an advocate; and the faith which we should repose on the circumstantial narrative of a gentleman, becomes changed into the courtesy with which we listen to an honourable but deceived enthusiast.

If the utilitarian school has done harm by its hasty attempts to reduce every thing to rule and to the dominion of human reason, no stronger proof than this book need be given of the evils to which the opposite extreme of transcendental philosophy has given rise. As an instance of the fallacies to which one-sided philosophic views may lead, Mr Townshend says, that if asked of what use is the eye if we can see without it, he might answer, "To show us how to make a camera obscura." The case is put illustratively, and we are far from wishing to take it literally to the author's disadvantage; but, in setting at nought the ordinary and sufficient reasoning on this subject, the author himself is obliged to adopt a similar but weaker line of argument. Unfortunate it is, that even in philosophy the judicial character is so rare; it is vainly imagined that error may be counteracted by antagonist error; and because neutrality is too often the companion of impotence, impartiality is supposed to be synonymous with neutrality.

It will be seen from the above, that Mr Townshend has failed to convince us that all the "facts in mesmerism" are facts; and certainly if he has failed, the herd of peripatetic lecturers[3] on the so-called science are not likely to have succeeded; but, although unconvinced of the marvellous, we are by no means indisposed to believe some of the abnormal phenomena of mesmerism. We have witnessed several mesmeric exhibitions—we have never seen any effect produced which was contradictory to the possible of human experience, in which collusion or delusion was fairly negatived. We insist on our right to doubt, to disbelieve. The more startling the proposition, the more rigorous should be the proof; we have never seen the tests which are applied to the most trifling novelty in physical science applied to mesmeric *clairvoyance*, and withstood. The advocates of it challenge enquiry in print, but they shrink from, or sink under, experiment.

In endeavouring to analyse the work before us, and to examine generally the phenomena of mesmerism, we shall do our utmost to avoid the vices of partial advocacy which we censure; we moreover agree with Mr Townshend, that ridicule is not the weapon to be used. Satire, when on the side of the majority, is persecution; it is striking from a vantage ground—fair, perhaps, when the individual contends with the mass, as when an author writes to expose the fallacies of social fashion; but unfair, and very frequently unsuccessful, when directed against partially developed truths, or even against such phenomena as we believe mesmerism presents, viz. novel and curious psychical truths, o'erclouded with the dense errors of sometimes enthusiasm, sometimes knavery. We shall soberly examine the subject, because we think that much good may be done by its investigation. The really skilful and judicious steer clear of it from a fear of compromising their credit for commonsense; and while the caution necessarily attendant upon habitual scientific studies, dissuades the best men from meddling with that which may blight their hardly-earned laurels, the public is left to be swayed to and fro by an under-current of fallacious half-truths, far more seductive and dangerous than absolute falsehoods. We cannot undertake to say, thus far is true, and thus far false;—to mark out the actual limits of true mesmeric phenomena, demands the very difficult and detailed enquiries which, for the reasons just mentioned, have been hitherto withheld;—but we think we shall be able to succeed in showing, that, though there be much error, there is some truth, and truth of sufficient importance to merit a calm and careful investigation.

We may class the phenomena of mesmerism, as asserted by its professors, as follows:—

> 1st. Sleep, or coma, induced by external agency, (partly mental, partly physical.)
>
> 2d. Somnambulism, or, as called by Mr Townshend, sleep-waking; *i.e.* certain faculties rendered torpid while others are sensitive.
>
> 3d. Insensibility to pain and other external *stimuli*.
>
> 4th. Physical attraction to the mesmeriser, and repulsion from others; community of sensation with the mesmeriser.
>
> 5th. Clairvoyance, or the power of perception without the use of the usual organs; and second-sight, or the power of prediction respecting the mesmeric state and remedial agencies.
>
> 6th. Phreno-mesmerism, or the connexion between phrenology and mesmerism.
>
> 7th. Curative effects.

We believe these categories will include all the leading phenomena of mesmerism. We purpose to give instances of these, partly derived from our own experience, and partly from the book of Mr Townshend, or other the best sources to which we can have recourse; to state fearlessly what we believe may be true, and what we entirely disbelieve; and then to examine the arguments by which the reason of the public has been assailed, and in many cases rendered captive.

First, then, as to the power of induced coma, we will relate an instance which came under our own observation, and which serves to demonstrate that a power may be exercised by one human

being over another which will produce a comatose or cataleptic state. In the Christmas week of the year 1842, we dined at a friend's house with a party of eight, (numeric perfection for a dinner-party, according to the ingenious author of the *Original*.) In the evening, Mackay's book on popular delusions being on the drawing-room table, some one asked if the author had treated of mesmerism. Upon this, one of the party who had recently returned from London—a man who had led a studious life, and of a highly nervous temperament—said he had recently witnessed a mesmeric exhibition, and would undertake to mesmerise any one present. Upon this, two or three ladies volunteered as patients; and he commenced experimenting upon a lady of some twenty-five years old, whom he had known intimately from childhood, clever, and well read, but rather imaginative. To make the thing more ridiculous, he knelt on both knees, and commenced making passes with both hands slowly before her eyes, telling her, whenever she took her eyes off, to look fixedly at him, and keeping a perfectly grave face when every body around was laughing unreservedly. After this had endured for some three minutes, the lady's eyes gradually closed, she fell forwards, and was only prevented from farther falling by being caught by the mesmeriser. He shook her, and, in rather a rough manner, brought her to her senses; then, suspicious lest she had been purposely deceiving him, questioned her seriously as to whether her sleep were feigned or real. She assured him that it was not simulated, that the sensation was irresistible, different from that of ordinary sleep, and by no means unpleasant; but that the only disagreeable part was the being roused. Upon this, the gentleman declared that he knew nothing of mesmerism, and that, had he believed there was any thing in it, he would not have attempted the joke. Another lady present, married, and having a family, was now most anxious to have the experiment repeated upon her. She said she had before sat to an experienced mesmeriser, who had failed, and she was still incredulous, and believed that M—— had merely given way to an imaginative temperament. It required considerable persuasion to induce the gentleman who had before operated to try any more experiments. He protested that he knew nothing about it, that he had once seen a person said to be in the mesmeric state; but that, if he succeeded again in inducing coma, he knew not at all how to awake the patient. Curiously enough, he was instructed in the manipulation by the sceptical patient, who had previously seen public mesmeric exhibitions. After some further persuasion, and with the permission of the lady's husband, who was present, he commenced again the same passes as with the former patient, the only difference being, that he was in this case sitting instead of kneeling. The patient kept constantly bursting into fits of laughter, and as constantly apologising, telling him that his gravity of face was irresistible. Of the other persons present, some laughed, others were too much terrified to laugh, but they kept up a constant running fire of comment, satirical and serious, upon the mesmeriser and mesmerisee. In four or five minutes, the fits of laughter of the latter assumed a rather unnatural character. It was evident she forced herself to laugh in spite of the strongest disinclination, and in a minute or two more she fixed into a state of ghastly catalepsy, the eyes wide open, but the lids fixed, the features all rigid, (except the lower lip, which was convulsed,) and pale as a corpse. The bystanders, now much frightened, interfered, and laid hold of the mesmeriser. After some time, water being given her to drink, she came to herself, and appeared not to have suffered from the experiment.

Notwithstanding the external difference of the case from the first, she described her sensations as the same; viz. a sleep differing from ordinary sleep, pleasing and irresistible, but the rousing very disagreeable. The lady's husband now insisted on being operated on himself. This was done, and entirely without success. Another lady was also experimented on with no success; at least she said she felt sleepy, but nothing more, which was not extraordinary, as it was now getting late. When questioned as to what means he had used, the mesmeriser said he had done nothing but stare steadily at the patients, making them also look fixedly at him, and move his hands slowly and in uniform directions, his instructor in these manœuvres having been Tyrone Power in the farce of *His Last Legs*. He stated that soon after the commencement of the experiment, he felt an almost irresistible tendency to go on with it; but whether this resulted from a conviction that he was exercising some unknown influence, or from mere experimental curiosity, he would not undertake to say—"this only was the witchcraft he had used."

The result was to all present conclusive as to the production of some effect inexplicable upon received theories. The second case defied simulation, and we believe it was equally removed from hysteria. The patient was a strong-minded person, of a temperament neither nervous nor hysterical, to all appearance perfectly calm, except when overcome by a sense of the ridiculous, and before the experiment obstinately incredulous. It was certainly a strong case. Any hypothesis to account for it would be hasty; but one point suggests itself to us as arising from the remark made by the mesmeriser, viz. that the only influence he was conscious of using was that of a fixed determined stare. This may possibly afford some key to a more philosophical examination of these curious phenomena.

The fabled effects of the basilisk, the serpent, and the evil eye, have probably all some facts for their foundation. The effect of the human eye in arresting the attacks of savage animals is better authenticated, and its influence upon domestic animals may be more easily made the subject of experimental proof. Let any one gaze steadily at a dog half dozing at the fireside—the animal will, after a short time, become restless, and if the stare be continued, will quit his resting-place, and either shrink into a corner, or come forward and caress the person staring. How much of this may be due to the habitual fixed look of stern command with which censure or punishment is accompanied, it may be difficult to say; but the fact undoubtedly is, that some influence, either innate or induced, is exercised. Again, those who, in society, habitually converse with an averted glance, we generally consider wanting in moral force. We doubt the man who doubts himself. On the other hand, if, in conversation, the ordinary look of awakened interest be prolonged, and the

eyes are kept fixed for a longer period than usual, an embarrassed and somewhat painful feeling is the result; an indistinct impulse makes it difficult to avert the eye, and at the same time a consciousness of that impulse is an inducement to avert it. We lay no undue stress upon these phenomena; but they are phenomena, and fair subjects for scientific investigation. An explanation of mesmerism has been sought in the physical effect of the stare alone; thus it is said that, if a party look intently at a prominent object fixed to his forehead, he will in time be thrown into mesmeric coma. There is more in it, we think, than this; there is an influence exerted by that nearest approach to the intercourse of soul—"the gaze into each other's eyes"—the extent and *normæ* of which are unknown. The schoolboy's experiment of staring out of countenance, is not so bad a test of moral power as it would at first sight be deemed to be.

The second case we shall relate is also one at which we were personally present, but one in which both mesmeriser and mesmerisee were, if we may use the term, adepts—the former a gentleman of fortune and education; the latter a half-educated young man, who had been in service as a footman. We shall designate them as Mr M—— and G——.

At this "*soirée magnétique*" G. was brought in in the sleep-waking state, walking, or rather staggering, and holding the arm of Mr M., his eyes to all appearance perfectly closed, and his gait and gestures those of a drunken man. After some little time he was detached from the mesmeriser, and followed him to different parts of the room. When in proximity Mr M. raised his hand, the patient's hands followed it, his legs the same, while they receded from the hands and legs of any other of the party present. Some of these effects were certainly curious, and not easy of explanation. The mesmeriser would walk or stand behind the patient, and, waving his hands somewhat after the manner of the cachuca dancer, the hands of the patient followed his with tolerable but not unerring precision. We determined to bear in mind these effects when some other phenomena were exhibiting, and try whether similar results would ensue when the attention of the parties was devoted to other subjects. When the attention of every body present was intently strained upon some experiments which we shall presently mention, we approached, as though watching the experiment, very near to G., and frequently without his at all flinching; at other times we were told by Mr M. not to come too near, and once in particular we observed, that having had one knee and toe in close juxtaposition, almost in contact, with the patient's, we retained it so for several seconds before he withdrew his leg. These facts, which would probably be explained by mesmerists on the ground of the whole power of sensation being concentrated upon one object, rendered, however, the experiments upon mesmeric attraction inconclusive. Passing over several experiments, such as the mesmerisation of water, showing community of taste, in which, after some hesitation, the patient selected from three or four glasses of water one which had been tasted by the mesmeriser, we come to the most important point, viz. the clairvoyance. One of the party stood behind the patient, and he was asked how the former was dressed; his reply, after some hesitation was, "not over nice—he has a queerish waist-coat on," (it was a plain white.) A book was then taken off the table—one of the annuals. Mr M. held his hands tightly over the eyes of G., and the title-page was presented open opposite the covered eyes of the latter; after struggling and moving his head about for some time, just as if endeavouring to catch a glimpse of the book, he mentioned the place of publication, and afterwards the title. Other experiments were proposed, such as holding a book behind the party, or to different parts of his body; but of these some did not succeed, others were not tried. To obviate the doubt of the book having been previously seen, we were requested to write, in large letters, a word on a card, such as a slightly educated person could read, and to present it, looking at the same time as closely as we wished at the eyes of G., the lids of which were, as before, apparently tightly held down by Mr M. We did so: the word was *Peru*; and, after some struggles, the word was read certainly without an exposure of any part of the eye to us. We now proposed, as likely to be more satisfactory, to write another word on a similar card, and, instead of the hands of the mesmeriser being held over the eyes, to place a piece of thin paper over the card. This, it was said, was useless and would not succeed, as the influence would not be transmitted through the person of the mesmeriser; we then proposed that he (the mesmeriser) should place his hand over the card; in short, that the card should be blinded and not the eye. Our reason will be obvious. According to the known laws of vision, viz. the convergence of all the rays of light to a focus in the eye, were the least part of this exposed, vision, though imperfect, of every object within the visual angle, would follow; but, were the object covered, a partial opening would assist vision but little, and only *quoad* the part exposed. The experiment thus performed would have been optically conclusive; and we cannot see, according to any of the mesmeric hypotheses, any mesmeric reason why it should not have succeeded: it was, however, declined. We are obliged to omit many other points in this evening's proceedings to avoid prolixity. Though many facts were curious, and certainly not easy of explanation by ordinary means, there was nothing which defied it; every *experimentum crucis* failed, and we, of course, remained unconvinced.

The third case which we shall instance, was one at which we were also personally present. Having been invited to view the mesmeric experiments of Dr B., we arrived at his house, with a friend, at about ten in the morning, and having been duly introduced to the Doctor in one room, were instantly ushered into another, when a scene presented itself certainly one of the most extraordinary we have ever witnessed. There were seven females in the room, and not one man. On a sofa near the fire-place, a young girl sat upright, supported by cushions, her eyes were fixed, and opposite her stood a middle-aged woman, slowly moving her hands before the eyes of the patient. On the hearth-rug near this lay a woman covered with a coarse blanket. She appeared sound asleep, was breathing heavily, and looked deadly pale. A third patient was seated on a chair, also undergoing the mesmeric passes from another woman; and on the opposite side of the room from the fire-place, two others were seated on chairs, with their heads hanging on

their shoulders, and eyes closed. Description cannot convey the mystic and fearful appearance of this room and its inmates to the first glance of the unexpectant spectator. Not a word was spoken; the solemn silence, the immobility and deathlike pallor of the objects, was awful—they were as breathing corpses. The clay-cold nuns evoked from their tombs, presented not a more unearthly spectacle to Robert of Normandy. The free-and-easy expressions of Dr B., however, which first broke the silence, instantly dissolved the spell. "That woman," he said, pointing to her on the floor, "has a disease of the liver, and her left lung is somewhat affected. I think we shall do her good. She is now getting into the clairvoyant state. She can see into the next room." He then stooped over her, and said, "How are you, Mary?" She replied, "I have the pain in my side very bad." He approached his hand to the part affected, and again withdrew it several times, opening the fingers as it neared, and closing them as it receded, as though he would gently extract the pain. He again asked her how she felt; she said better. He then pointed to the girl on the sofa, and said, "She is deaf and dumb. We cannot get her asleep." He subsequently pointed out other of the patients, and mentioned their ailments. These, and the sombre darkness of the room, accounted to us for the unnatural paleness of the patients. Dr B. next asked one of two sleeping patients to follow him into another room. We accompanied him, and his experiments upon the female, whom we shall call S., commenced. First of all, he placed her hands with the palms together, and making with his fingers motions the converse of those made in the former case, asked us to endeavour to separate them. We did, and *instantly succeeded*, with no more effort than would be expected were any woman of average strength purposely to hold her hands together. "Ah!" said the Doctor, "not an easy matter, is it?" We made no reply. He then walked, having on a pair of loudly-creaking boots, to the other end of the room, and looked sternly at the patient. She, after a second or two, followed him, and sat on the same chair. He then said, "I willed her to come to me."

He next asked our friend to hold the patient's hands, and ask her a question *mentally*, without expressing it.

After some little time she frowned, and endeavoured to withdraw her hands.

Dr. "Ah, she does not like your question! Ask her another."

After some time she burst out into a fit of laughter.

Dr. "Ah, you have tickled her fancy now!"

What the question asked by our friend was, did not transpire. This experiment having been so successful, we were asked to do the same. Not without a feeling of shame we complied; and, taking hold of the patient's hands, we mentally asked her the question—"Are you single or married?" which question did not appear to us to involve any metaphysical subtilty. However, after struggling and frowning for some time, she said, with a sort of hysteric gasp, "He's a funny man!"

Dr B. "Ah, she can't make you out!"

We are not aware to what feature in our character the epithet *funny* will apply; but probably our self-esteem will not permit us justly to appreciate the appositeness of this somewhat ambiguous epithet. So much, however, for the power of divination, with which the mesmeriser seemed perfectly satisfied. Dr B. now showed us a camomile flower, put it in his mouth, and chewed it. The patient made a face as if tasting something disagreeable, and, in answer to his questions, said it was bitter. He then did the same with a lozenge; and after some time, required, according to the doctor, for the removal of the bitter taste, she said she tasted *lozenges*.

Dr B. "There you see the community of taste." Dr B. now touched her forehead a little above and outside of the eyebrows; she burst out laughing.

Dr B. "I touched the organ of gaiety." He then did the same with the organs of music; she set up an old English ditty. Then touching these organs with one hand, and placing the other on the top of her head, she instantly changed the ballad to a doleful psalm-tune. Affection, philo-progenitiveness, were in turn touched, the doctor stating aloud beforehand what organ he was going to excite. We should weary our readers with a detail of the platitudes which ensued.

She was asked what was going on in the next room, and said, "Ah, Sophy may try, but cannot get the girl asleep!" A few other experiments, such as suspending chairs on her arms, &c., followed, and we returned to the next room, where the deaf and dumb girl was found *fast asleep*. Upon being asked how long she had been so, the female mesmeriser replied, "Just after you left the room." No comment was made upon the answer of the clairvoyante patient above given, which appeared to have been forgotten by all but ourselves.

Had we been anxious to give a factitious interest to our narrative, we should certainly have avoided a description of the above cases, which could not at the same time be made to possess graphic interest, and to relate accurately the real facts as presented; but we have selected them as having happened to ourselves, and as being shown not by public exhibitors, but by parties both holding a highly respectable station in life, and being, as we believe, among the best examples to be found of English mesmerisers. Although invited as sceptical spectators, and the experiments being in nowise confidential, we feel that the exhibition not being public, we have no right to mention the names of the parties.

It will be obvious that the three exhibitions we have selected differed much in character. The

first, as we have stated, to our minds defied collusion or self-deception. The second was open to either construction, though, from the character of the parties, we should think collusion was, in the highest degree, improbable; and the experiments, although not conclusive, were very curious, and some of them not easy of explanation. In the third case, transparent and absurd as the experiments seemed to us, and as the account of them will probably appear to our readers, the doctor, from his position and practice, must have been seriously injured by his mesmeric experiments; and therefore there is fair reason to believe, that he was not a party to a fraud which must have been objectless, and professionally injurious to him; but how a man of experience could be carried away by such flimsy devices, is a psychological curiosity, almost as marvellous as the asserted phenomena of mesmerism.

We are aware that, in giving the above accounts of experiments which we have personally witnessed, our authority, being anonymous, is of no great weight. We state them to avoid the charge of writing on what we have not seen, and to show that we do not attempt unfairly to decry mesmerism without seeing it fairly tried; if we felt justified in giving the names of the parties, these instances would be much more conclusive. Nearly all the cases in Mr Townshend's book are given without the names of parties, probably for similar reasons to those which have induced us to withhold them.

The above cases supply instances of all the phenomena included in our categories, except those of insensibility to pain, powers of prediction, and the curative effects. Having never personally seen cases of this description, we shall select examples of them from the book of Mr Townshend and others; but before we give these instances, we will extract from Mr Townshend's book his account of the first mesmeric sitting at which he was present. This will give the reader a fair idea of his attractive style, and of his state of mind previously to witnessing, for the first time, mesmeric effects.

> "If to have been an unbeliever in the very existence of the state in question, can add weight to my testimony, my reader, should he also be a heretic on the subject, may be assured that his incredulity in this respect can scarcely be greater than mine was, up to the winter of 1836. That, at the time I mention, I should be both ignorant and prejudiced on the score of mesmerism, will not surprise those who are aware of its long proscription in England, and the want of information upon it, which, till very lately, prevailed there.
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> "In the course of a residence at Antwerp, a valued friend detailed to me some extraordinary results of mesmerism, to which he had been an eyewitness. I could not altogether discredit the evidence of one whom I knew to be both observant and incapable of falsehood; but I took refuge in the supposition that he had been ingeniously deceived. Reflecting, however, that to condemn before I had examined was as unjust to others as it was unsatisfactory to myself, I accepted readily the proposition of my friend to introduce me to an acquaintance of his in Antwerp, who had learned the practice of the mesmeric art from a German physician. We waited together on Mr K——, the mesmeriser, (an agreeable and well-informed person,) and stated to him that the object of our visit was to prevail on him to exhibit to us a specimen of his mysterious talent. To this he at first replied that he was rather seeking to abjure a renown that had become troublesome—half the world viewing him as a conjurer, and the other half as a getter-up of strange comedies; 'but,' he kindly added, 'if you will promise me a strictly private meeting, I will, this evening, do all in my power to convince you that mesmerism is no delusion.' This being agreed upon, with a stipulation that the members of my own family should be present on the occasion, I, to remove all doubt of complicity from every mind, proposed that Mr K—— should mesmerise a person who should be a perfect stranger to him. To this he readily acceded; and now the only difficulty was to find a subject for our experiment. At length we thought of a young person in the middling class of life, who had often done fine work for the ladies of our family, and of whose character we had the most favourable knowledge. Her mother was Irish, her father, who had been dead some time, had been a Belgian, and she spoke English, Flemish, and French, with perfect facility. Her widowed parent was chiefly supported by her industry: and, in the midst of trying circumstances, her temper was gay and cheerful, and her health excellent. That she had never seen Mr K—— we were sure; and of her probity and incapacity for feigning we had every reason to be convinced. With our request, conveyed to her through one of the ladies of our family, for whom she had conceived a warm affection, she complied without hesitation. Not being of a nervous, though of an excitable temperament, she had no fears whatever about what she was to undergo. On the contrary, she had rather a desire to know what the sensation of being mesmerised might be. Of the phenomena which were to be developed in the mesmeric state, she knew absolutely nothing; thus all deceptive imitation of them, on her part, was rendered impossible.
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> "About nine o'clock in the evening, our party assembled for what, in foreign phrase, is called 'une séance magnétique.' Anna M——, our mesmerisee, was already with us. Mr K—— arrived soon after, and was introduced to his young patient, whose name we had purposely avoided mentioning to him in the morning; not that we feared imposition on either hand, but that we were determined, by

every precaution, to prevent any one from alleging that imposition had been practised. Utterly unknown as the parties were to each other, a game played by two confederates was plainly out of the question. Almost immediately after the entrance of Mr K—— we proceeded to the business of the evening. By his directions Mademoiselle M—— placed herself in an arm-chair at one end of the apartment, while he occupied a seat directly facing hers. He then took each of her hands in one of his, and sat in such a manner as that the knees and feet of both should be in contact. In this position he remained for some time motionless, attentively regarding her with eyes as unwinking as the lidless orbs which Coleridge has attributed to the Genius of destruction. We had been told previously to keep utter silence, and none of our circle—composed of some five or six persons —felt inclined to transgress this order. To me, novice as I was at that time in such matters, it was a moment of absorbing interest: that which I had heard mocked at as foolishness, that which I myself had doubted as a dream, was, perhaps, about to be brought home to my conviction, and established for ever in my mind as a reality. Should the present trial prove successful, how much of my past experience must be remodelled and reversed!

"Convinced, as I have since been, to what valuable conclusions the phenomena of mesmerism may conduct the enquirer, never, perhaps, have I been more impressed with the importance of its pretensions than at that moment, when my doubts of their validity were either to be strengthened or removed. Concentrating my attention upon the motionless pair, I observed that Mademoiselle M—— seemed at her ease, and occasionally smiled or glanced at the assembled party; but her eyes, as if by a charm, always reverted to those of her mesmeriser, and at length seemed unable to turn away from them. Then a heaviness, as of sleep, seemed to weigh down her eyelids, and to pervade the expression of her countenance; her head drooped on one side; her breathing became regular; at length her eyes closed entirely, and, to all appearance, she was calmly asleep, in just seven minutes from the time when Mr K—— first commenced his operations. I should have observed that, as soon as the first symptoms of drowsiness were manifested, the mesmeriser had withdrawn his hands from those of Mademoiselle M——, and had commenced what are called the mesmeric passes, conducting his fingers slowly downward, without contact, along the arm of the patient. For about five minutes, Mademoiselle M—— continued to repose tranquilly, when suddenly she began to heave deep sighs, and to turn and toss in her chair. She then called out, 'Je me trouve malade! Je m'étouffe!' and rising in a wild manner, she continued to repeat, 'Je m'étouffe!' evidently labouring under an oppression of the breath. But all this time her eyes remained fast shut, and at the command of her mesmeriser, she took his arm and walked, still with her eyes shut, to the table. Mr K—— then said, 'Voulez-vous que je vous éveille?'—'Oui, oui,' she exclaimed; 'je m'étouffe.' Upon this Mr K—— again operated with his hands, but in a different set of movements, and taking out his handkerchief, agitated the air round the patient, who forthwith opened her eyes, and stared about the room like a person awaking from sleep. No traces of her indisposition, however, appeared to remain; and soon shaking off all drowsiness, she was able to converse and laugh as cheerfully as usual. On being asked what she remembered of her sensations, she said that she had only a general idea of having felt unwell and oppressed: that she had wished to open her eyes, but could not, they felt as if lead were on them. Of having walked to the table she had no recollection. Notwithstanding her having suffered, she was desirous of being again mesmerised, and sat down fearlessly to make a second trial. This time it was longer before her eyes closed, and she never seemed to be reduced to more than a state of half unconsciousness. When the mesmeriser asked her if she slept, she answered in the tone of utter drowsiness, 'Je dors, et je ne dors pas.' This lasted some time, when Mr K—— declared that he was afraid of fatiguing his patient, (and probably his spectators too,) and that he should disperse the mesmeric fluid. To do so, however, seemed not so easy a matter as the first time when he awoke the sleep-waker; with difficulty she appeared to rouse herself; and even after having spoken a few words to us, and risen from her chair, she suddenly relapsed into a state of torpor, and fell prostrate to the ground, as if perfectly insensible. Mr K——, entreating us not to be alarmed, raised her up —placed her in a chair, and supported her head with his hand. It was then that I distinctly recognised one of the asserted phenomena of mesmerism. The head of Mademoiselle M—— followed every where, with unerring certainty, the hand of her mesmeriser, and seemed irresistibly attracted to it as iron to the loadstone. At length Mr K—— succeeded in thoroughly awaking his patient, who, on being interrogated respecting her past sensations, said that she retained a recollection of her state of semi-consciousness, during which she much desired to have been able to sleep wholly; but of her having fallen to the ground, or of what had passed subsequently, she remembered nothing whatever. To other enquiries she replied, that the drowsy sensation which first stole over her was rather of an agreeable nature, and that it was preceded by a slight tingling, which ran down her arms in the direction of the mesmeriser's fingers. Moreover she assured us, that the oppression she had at one time felt was not fanciful, but real—not mental, but bodily, and was accompanied by a peculiar pain in the region of the heart, which,

> however, ceased immediately on the dispersion of the mesmeric sleep. These statements were the rather to be relied upon, inasmuch as the girl's character was neither timid nor imaginative."—(P. 38-42.)

We would willingly give the whole of the second sitting of the same patient, in which were developed the phenomena of,

1st, "Attraction towards the mesmeriser."

2d, "A knowledge of what the mesmeriser ate and drank, indicating community of sensation with him."

3d, "An increased quickness of perception."

4th, "A development of the power of vision."

Our space will not permit us to give these in detail. We shall therefore give an extract from the third sitting, where the clairvoyance was more decidedly developed, and the impressions of Mr Townshend on the phenomena he had witnessed are stated.

> "Upon first passing into the mesmeric state, Theodore seemed absolutely insensible to every other than the mesmeriser's voice. Some of our party went close to him, and shouted his name; but he gave no tokens of hearing us until Mr K——, taking our hands, made us touch those of Theodore and his own at the same time. This he called putting us '*en rapport*' with the patient. After this Theodore seemed to hear our voices equally with that of the mesmeriser, but by no means to pay an equal attention to them.
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> "With regard to the development of vision, the eyes of the patient appeared to be firmly shut during the whole sitting, and yet he gave the following proofs of accurate sight:—
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> "Without being guided by our voices, (for, in making the experiment, we kept carefully silent,) he distinguished between the different persons present, and the colours of their dresses. He also named with accuracy various objects on the table, such as a miniature picture, a drawing by Mr K——, &c. &c.
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> "When the mesmeriser left him, and ran quickly amongst the chairs, tables &c., of the apartment, he followed him, running also, and taking the same turns, without once coming in contact with any thing that stood in his way.
>
> "He told the hour accurately by Mr K——'s watch.
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> "He played several games at dominoes with the different members of our family, as readily as if his eyes had been perfectly open.
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> "On these occasions the lights were placed in front of him, and he arranged his dominoes on the table, with their backs to the candles, in such a manner that, when I placed my head in the same position as his own, I could scarcely, through the shade, distinguish one from the other. Yet he took them up unerringly, never hesitated in his play, generally won the game, and announced the sum of the spots on such of his dominoes as remained over at the end, before his adversaries could count theirs. One of our party, a lady who had been extremely incredulous on the subject of mesmerism, stooped down, so as to look under his eyelids all the time he played, and declared herself convinced and satisfied that his eyes were perfectly closed. It was not always, however, that Theodore could be prevailed upon to exercise his power of vision. Some words, written by the mesmeriser, of a tolerable size, being shown to him, he declared, as Mademoiselle M—— did on another occasion, that it was too small for him to distinguish.
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> "Towards the conclusion of the sitting, the patient seemed much fatigued, and, going to the sofa, arranged a pillow for himself comfortably under his head; after which he appeared to pass into a state more akin to natural sleep than his late sleep-waking. Mr K—— allowed him to repose in this manner for a short time, and then awoke him by the usual formula. A very few motions of the hand were sufficient to restore him to full consciousness, and to his usual character. The fatigue of which he had so lately complained seemed wholly to have passed away, together with the memory of all that he had been doing for the last hour.
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> "I must now pause to set before my reader my own state of mind respecting the facts I had witnessed. I perceived that important deductions might be drawn from them, and that they bore upon disputed questions of the highest interest to man, connected with the three great mysteries of being—life, death, and immortality. On these grounds I was resolved to enter upon a consistent course of enquiry concerning them; though as yet, while all was new and wonderful to my apprehension, I could scarcely do more than observe and verify phenomena. It was, however, necessary that my views, though for the present bounded, should be distinct. I had already asked respecting mesmeric sleep-waking, 'Does it exist?' and to this question, the cases which had fallen under my notice, and which were above suspicion, seemed to answer decidedly in the affirmative: but it was

> essential still further to enquire, 'Does it exist so generally as to be pronounced a part—though a rarely developed part—of the human constitution?' In order to determine this, it was requisite to observe how far individuals of different ages, stations, and temperaments, were capable of mesmeric sleep-waking. I resolved, therefore, by experiments on as extensive a scale as possible, to ascertain whether the state in question were too commonly exhibited to be exceptional or idiosyncratic. Again, the two cases that I had witnessed coincided in characteristics; but could this coincidence be accidental? It might still be asked, 'Were the phenomena displayed uncertain, mutable, such as might never occur again; or were they orderly, invariable, the growth of fixed causes, which, being present, implied their presence also?' In fine, was mesmeric sleep-waking not only a state, but entitled to rank as a distinct state, clearly and permanently characterized; and, as such, set apart from all other abnormal conditions of men? On its pretensions to be so considered, rested, I conceived, its claims to notice and peculiar investigation: to decide this point was, therefore, one of my chief objects; and, respecting it, I was determined to seek that certainty which can only be attained by a careful comparison of facts, occurring under the same circumstances. To sum up my intentions, I desired to show that man, through external human influence, is capable of a species of sleep-waking different from the common, not only inasmuch as it is otherwise produced, but as it displays quite other characteristics when produced."—(P. 49-52.)

In the subsequent portions of the book, similar and still more wondrous phenomena are produced by Mr Townshend. He mesmerises several Cambridge friends. He procures two patients, designated by the names of Anna M—— and E—— A——, who are said to be very susceptible of the mesmeric state, and sight or mesmeric perception is manifested in a dark closet, with large towels over the head, through the abdomen, through cards, books, &c. &c. Anna M. is mesmerised unconsciously when in a separate house from the mesmeriser; they predict remedies for themselves and others, read thoughts,[4] state how they and others can be further mesmerised and demesmerised.

As an instance of the curative effects, and the power of predicting remedies, we cite the following:—

> "Accident threw in my way a lad of nineteen years of age, a Swiss peasant, who for three years had nearly lost the faculty of sight. His eyes betrayed but little appearance of disorder, and the gradual decay of vision which he had experienced, was attributed to a paralysis of the optic nerve, resulting from a scrofulous tendency in the constitution of the patient. The boy, whom I shall call by his Christian name of Johann, was intelligent, mild-tempered, extremely sincere, and extremely unimaginative. He had never heard of mesmerism till I spoke of it before him, and I then only so far enlightened him on the subject, as to tell him that it was something which might, perhaps, benefit his sight. At first he betrayed some little reluctance to submit himself to experiment, asking me if I were going to perform some very painful operation upon him; but, when he found that the whole affair consisted in sitting quiet, and letting me hold his hands, he no longer felt any apprehension.
>
> "Before beginning to mesmerise, I ascertained, with as much precision as possible, the patient's degree of blindness. I found that he yet could see enough to perceive any large obstacle that stood in his way. If a person came directly before him, he was aware of the circumstance, but he could not at all distinguish whether the individual were man or woman. I even put this to the proof. A lady of our society stood before him, and he addressed her as 'mein herr,' (sir.) In bright sunshine he could see a white object, or the colour scarlet, when in a considerable mass, but made mistakes as to the other colours. Between small objects he could not at all discriminate. I held before him successively, a book, a box, and a bunch of keys, and he could not distinguish between them. In each case he saw something, he said, like a shadow, but he could not tell what. He could not read one letter of the largest print by means of eyesight; but he was very adroit in reading by touch, in books prepared expressly for the blind, running his fingers over the raised characters with great rapidity, and thus acquiring a perception of them. Whatever trifling degree of vision he possessed, could only be exercised on very near objects: those which were at a distance from him, he perceived not at all. I ascertained that he could not see a cottage at the end of our garden, not more than a hundred yards off from where we were standing.

> "These points being satisfactorily proved, I placed my patient in the proper position, and began to mesmerise. Five minutes had scarcely elapsed, when I found that I produced a manifest effect upon the boy. He began to shiver at regular intervals, as if affected by a succession of slight electric shocks. By degrees this tremour subsided, the patient's eyes gradually closed, and in about a quarter of an hour, he replied to an enquiry on my part—'Ich schlaffe, aber nicht ganz tief'—(I sleep, but not soundly.) upon this I endeavoured to deepen the patient's slumber by the mesmeric passes, when suddenly he exclaimed—his eyes being closed all the time—'I see—I see your hand—I see your head!' In order to put

this to the proof, I held my head in various positions, which he followed with his finger; again, he told me accurately whether my hand was shut or open. 'But,' he said, on being further questioned, 'I do not see distinctly.—I see, as it were, sunbeams (sonnen strahlen) which dazzle me.' 'Do you think,' I asked, 'that mesmerism will do you good?' 'Ja freilich,' (yes, certainly,) he replied; 'repeated often enough, it would cure me of my blindness.'

"Afraid of fatiguing my patient, I did not trouble him with experiments; and his one o'clock dinner being ready for him, I dispersed his magnetic sleep. After he had dined, I took him into the garden. As we were passing before some bee-hives, he suddenly stopped, and seemed to look earnestly at them: 'What is it you see?' I asked. 'A row of bee-hives,' he replied directly, and continued—'Oh! this is wonderful!—I have not seen such things for three years.' Of course, I was extremely surprised, for though I had imagined that a long course of mesmerisation might benefit the boy, I was entirely unprepared for so rapid an improvement in his vision. My chief object had been to develop the faculty of sight in sleep-waking; and I can assure my readers, that this increase of visual power in the natural state was to me a kind of miracle, as astonishing as it was unsought. My poor patient was in a state of absolute enchantment. He grinned from ear to ear, and called out, 'Das ist prächtig!' (This is charming!) Two ladies now passed before us, when he said, 'Da sind zwei fräuenzimmer!' (There go two ladies!) 'How dressed?' I asked. 'Their clothes are of a dark colour,' he replied. This was true. I took my patient to a summer-house that commanded an extensive prospect. I fear almost to state it, but, nevertheless, it is perfectly true, that he saw and pointed out the situation of a village in the valley below us. I then brought Johann back to the house, when, in the presence of several members of my family, he recognised, at first sight, several small objects, (a flowerpot, I remember, amongst other things,) and not only saw a little girl, one of our farmers' children, sitting on the steps of a door, but also mentioned that she had a round cap on her head. In the house, I showed Johann a book, which, it will be remembered, he could not distinguish before mesmerisation, and he named the object. But, though making great efforts, he could not read one letter in the book. Having ascertained this, I once more threw Johann into the mesmeric state, with a view to discover how far a second mesmerisation could strengthen his natural eyesight. As soon as I had awaked him, at the interval of half an hour, I presented him with the same book, (one of Marryat's novels,) when he accurately told me the larger letters of the title-page, which were as follows—'Outward Bound.' Johann belonging to an institution of the blind situated at some distance from our residence, I had unhappily only the opportunity of mesmerising him three times subsequently to the above successful trial. The establishment, also, of which he was a member, changed masters; and its new director having prejudices on the score of mesmerism, there were difficulties purposely thrown in the way of my following up that which I had so auspiciously begun."—(Pp. 176-179)

Many of these cases of clairvoyance, given by Mr Townshend, appear on the face of them ambiguous; thus the reading is said to be effected with difficulty and imperfectly, the difficulty to be increased by the superposition of obstacles. Others, as related, certainly admit of no explanation by deductions from ordinary experience. All we can say of them, therefore, is, that we have fairly sought to see such phenomena, and have never succeeded; when we see them, and can properly test them, we will believe them. But from the internal evidence of the latter portion of Mr Townshend's book, which we shall presently discuss, we cannot, although not doubting his honesty of purpose, set our faith upon his experiments and judgment.

Mr Townshend gives no account of the phreno-mesmerism, or of the surgical operations performed without any evidence of pain during the mesmeric states. We have already related one of the former exhibitions, which, we think, requires no further comment. Viewed abstractedly, the attempt to support by the assumed accuracy of one science, at best in its infancy, and confessedly fallible, another still more so, is making too large demands upon public credulity to require much counter argument. With regard to the surgical cases, they stand on a very different ground; three operations, among the most painful of those to which man is ever subjected, are alleged to have been performed during the mesmeric state—Madame Plantin, amputation of cancerous breast; and James Wombwell and Mary Ann Lakin, amputation of the leg above the knee. The case of Wombwell was canvassed at length at the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; and in that and the other cases there seems to have been no question raised as to the facts of the patients having undergone the operation without the usual evidence of suffering. In Wombwell's case the divided end of the sciatic nerve was purposely (it appears to us very wantonly) touched with the forceps, but without any appearance of sensation on the part of the patient. In all these cases the medical men most opposed to mesmerism seem to have admitted the fact, and to have rested their incredulity on the various cases known to them, of parties having borne operations with such fortitude as not to have expressed the usual cries of suffering.

In Madame Plantin's case it is stated; that she subsequently confessed to a nurse in an hospital, that she felt the full pain, but purposely, and by great effort, kept silent. This confession is, however, strongly denied by Dr Elliotson and others, and does not appear to be clearly substantiated.

A professional "*odium*" appears to have arisen on the subject; and, from the controversial tone of the speaking and writing on both sides, it is difficult to get at the truth. We must say, however, that, admitting the facts, which the antagonists of mesmerism seem to do, we are more inclined to believe the paralysis of nervous sensation by mesmeric influence, than that, with such inadequate motives as the *patients* could feel, they should have such marvellous self-control as to feign sleep, and keep their whole muscular system in a relaxed state, while suffering such exquisite pain. Medical men are, indeed, better judges of the power of endurance and simulation than we can pretend to be; but, to make their testimony conclusive, they should have witnessed the operation. The elaborate research for causes explanatory of an unseen case, lessens the weight of authority which would otherwise be very high.

Many other minor cases, such as teeth drawn, and division of tendons, are given; and though we have never had an opportunity of witnessing such effects, we must say we think, from their benefit to suffering humanity, the possibility, however remote, of their truth, deserves more calm and dispassionate enquiry than appears hitherto to have been given them.

While doctors, however, seek to explain, by various profound theories, the efficient causes of asserted mesmeric cures, a member of the Church of England, and popular preacher at Liverpool, the Rev. Hugh M. Neill, M.A., has cut the Gordian knot, by a sermon preached at St Jude's Church, on April 10th, 1842, and published in Nos. 599 and 600 of the *Penny Pulpit*, price twopence. By this sermon it appears to have occurred to the philosophic mind of the reverend divine, that mesmeric marvels may be accounted for as accomplished by the direct agency of Satan! Doubtless Satan is as actively at work in this the nineteenth century, as in any anterior period of our history; but we are inclined to think the progress of civilization has opened a sufficient number of channels for his ingenuity, without rendering it necessary that he should alarm the devout by miraculously interfering to assuage human suffering.

We have given above as many instances as our space will permit, of the asserted phenomena of mesmerism; and now to return to Mr Townshend's book.

In taking a general view of the lines of argument adopted by the author to support the possibility or probability of mesmerism, we perceive they are of two sorts, essentially different, and in some measure inconsistent with each other.

1st, It is very properly argued, that our whole knowledge of the normal course of nature is derived from experience; that a law is a mere generalization from that experience, and is not any thing intrinsically or necessarily true. Thus, if the sun were to rise in the west to-morrow, instead of in the east, it would at first sight appear to be a deviation from natural laws; in other words, a miracle. If, however, the latter circumstance were wanting, after the first sensation of the marvellous had subsided, the philosopher would enquire, whether, instead of being a deviation from a law, it were not a subordinate instance of some higher law, of which the period of history had been too short to give any co-ordinate instances; and were it found, by a long course of experience, that in every 4000 years a similar retrocession of the earth took place, a new law would be established. Applying this to mesmerism, it is said our notions of sleep and waking, of sight and hearing, and of the possible limits and modes of sensation, are derived from experience alone; we cannot estimate or understand the *modus agendi* of a new sensation, because we have never experienced it. If, then, it be proved, by the acts of A, B, or C, that they attain cognizance of objects by other means than those which any known organ of sensation will permit, you must admit the fact, and by degrees its *rationale* will become supported by the same means as all other truths are supported, viz. by habitual experience. Its law is, indeed, nothing but its constant recurrence under similar circumstances. To take Mr Townshend's own mode of enunciating this—

> "Are we entitled to conclude, in any case, that, because we have not hitherto been able to assign a law to certain operations, they are therefore absolutely without law? Are we to assert, that the orderly dispositions of the universe are deformed by a monstrous exception; or is it not wiser to believe that our own knowledge is in fault, whenever Nature appears inconsistent with herself? Surely we have enough order around us to suggest, that all which to us seems chance, is 'direction which we cannot see;' that all apparent anomalies are but like those discords which, in the most masterly music, prepare the transitions from one noble passage to another, and are actually essential to the general harmony. In many instances this is not mere conjecture. How much of fancied imperfection and disorder has fled before our investigation! The motions of comets at first appear to offer an exception to the exact arrangements of the universe.—'They traverse all parts of the heavens. Their paths have every possible inclination to the plane of the ecliptic; and, unlike the planets, the motion of more than half of those which have appeared has been retrograde—that is, from east to west.' Yet have we been able to detect the elements of regularity in the midst of all this seeming confusion, and to predict with certainty the day, the hour, and the minute of a comet's return to our region of the sky.
>
> "Experience also shows, that apparently insulated and lawless phenomena may not only be reduced to a law, but to a well-known law; that many a familiar agent puts on strange disguises; and that events, with which, in their mazy channels, we seem to be unacquainted, may be perfectly recognised by us at their source. Thus galvanism and magnetic force are proved, by recent discoveries, to be only forms of electricity; showing that a fact may be altered, not in itself, but in the

> circumstances that surround it, and that complexity of development is perfectly consistent with unity of design. Instances like these, while they encourage us to enquiry, should teach us to believe that all which is needed to vindicate the regularity of nature is a more extended observation on our parts."—(Pp. 14-15.)

This is the highest and safest ground for the advocate of mesmerism to tread; to support himself on this he has only to demonstrate his facts beyond the possibility of a doubt, and the truth of the phenomena, however inconsistent with previous experience, must in the end be admitted. But to support him on this high ground his proof must be demonstrative; he must be able to say—I ask not for faith, nor even a balanced mind; but doubt to the utmost, examine with the most rigorous scepticism; I stand upon the facts alone; I offer no explanation, or at least I make their truth dependent upon no explanation. They are or they are not. I will prove their existence, and I will defy you to disprove them.

It will not, we conceive, be denied, that one essential attribute of the social mind, a jealousy of credence in apparent anomalies, is a just and necessary guard upon human knowledge. If mere assertion were believed, every succeeding day would upset the knowledge of the preceding day; and however high the character of the assertor of new and abnormal facts may be, he must not expect them to be received upon the strength of his assertion. The best men may be deceived, and the best men may be led astray by enthusiasm. When the slightest discovery in physical science is published, it is immediately assailed by doubts from every quarter; and its promulgator, if he be accustomed to research and trained to scientific investigation, never complains of these doubts, because he knows the vast number of perplexing deceptions in which he has himself been entangled, and the caution with which he himself would receive a similar announcement.

It is vain to cite instances of truths unappreciated by the age in which they were advanced. We deprecate as much as any the persecution with which occasionally men who have seen far in advance of their age have been attacked; but the saying, "Malheureux celui qui est en avance de son siècle," is not always true: if the new truth be difficult of demonstration it will be proportionately tardy of reception, but if easy of proof it is very rapidly received. As an example of this we may instance the discovery of Volta. In the history of physical science, never was a more sudden leap taken than by this illustrious man—that a juxtaposition of matter in its least organic form should produce such surprising effects upon the human organism, was to the world, as it existed in the year 1800, a most marvellous phenomenon; and had the link in the finest chain of proof been wanting, men would have been justified in any degree of scepticism or incredulity. But it was easy of demonstration; any one with a dozen discs of iron and zinc, and the same number of penny-pieces, could satisfy himself; and the consequence was, the discovery was instantly admitted. Let mesmerists put the same power of self-satisfaction into the hands of the world, and doubt will be at once removed; if, as they say, their science is not of equal exactitude, they must bide their time and not complain.

Magnetism and electricity, moreover, often cited by Mr Townshend, and undoubtedly the most surprising additions to human knowledge within the historical period, though abnormal, are not contradictory to experience—they were an entirely new series of facts added to our previous store—they did not destroy or lessen the force of any previously received truths. Not so mesmerism, and therefore the more stringent should be, and is, the proof required.

Come we now to the second class of arguments adopted in favour of mesmerism, and by the same persons (Mr Townshend, for instance) as support the first. Mr Townshend says, (p. 29,) "to the mesmeriser the facts of mesmerism are no miracles;" and yet he avers that mesmerism can make the blind see and the deaf hear. (Pp. xxxii., and 178.) We cannot very clearly see his notion of a miracle. Passing over this, however, and taking him to assert what the first branch of his argument requires to be asserted, that there is no miracle, or that there is nothing but the contradiction of a necessary truth, such as that three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, which *may* not fall within some natural law of which we have not all the data—we cannot see why, in the second half of his book, he so sedulously endeavours to prove that mesmerism is consistent with experience, and may be supported upon similar grounds, and accounted for by similar theories, to those by which the agency of the imponderable forces is established and accounted for. After using every argument in his power to show the fallibility of experience, and the reasons why we should not disbelieve mesmerism because contradictory to it, which contradiction he admits in terms, the author writes a chapter, the title of which is, "Conformity of Mesmerism with General Experience."—(P. 155.) As instances of these reverse modes of viewing the subject, we quote the following passages—the one taken from the commencement of the book, where the first line of argument is adopted; the other from the latter portion, where the second is.

> "Thus, then, till the initial step towards a comprehension of mesmerism be taken anew, there is no hope that it will ever be understood or appreciated. Why unavailingly seek to reduce it to a formula of which it is unsusceptible? If we ascribe it to a power already ascertained, why not treat it, at least, as an entirely new function of that power? Why limit it to what we know, when, possibly, it may be destined to extend the boundaries of our knowledge? Why are we to be trammelled with foregone conclusions? Yet upon these very restrictions the opponents of mesmerism insist; thus taking away from men the means of investigating the agency in question, by forcing them to set about it in the wrong way."—(P. 12.)

Having, then, thus expressed himself in the early part of the work, towards the close we find the following sentence. "Taking this simple view of sensation, (that objects should be brought into a certain relation with us by something intermediate,) we find nothing in mesmerism contradictory of nature. Under its influence, the human frame continues to be still a system of nerves acted upon by elastic media, for the purpose of conveying to us the primal impulse of the Almighty Mind, which made, sustains, and moves the universe—having, as I trust, shown the conformity of mesmerism in all essential points with the principles of nature, and the inferences of reason," &c. &c.

If we are to admit mesmerism as a series of facts apparently inconsistent with experience, it is most hasty and unphilosophical to attempt to generalize it by crude hypotheses. To rest its probable truth upon these hypotheses, is to take a totally different ground, and one much lower and more assailable. We have no desire to be hypercritical—to expose minor scientific inaccuracies in the work before us; but we do not hesitate to assert, that, independently of its inconsistency with the previous course of reasoning, the hypothesis or hypotheses of Mr Townshend are most unsatisfactory.

Heat, light, electricity, magnetism, are by some regarded as specific fluids; by others, as undulations of one or more specific fluid; and by a third class, as undulations or polarizations of ordinary matter. Thus, by the first, light would be viewed as a material emanation from the luminous body; by the second, as an undulation of an imponderable ether, existing between the luminous body and the recipient; and by the third, as an undulation of the air, glass, or other matter, placed between the luminous body and the object. The last would regard the ether in the planetary spaces, not as a specific imponderable fluid, but as a highly attenuated expansion of air, gas, or other matter, having all the functions of ordinary matter. Whewell has, indeed, published a *demonstration* that all matter is ponderable, and that imponderable matter is not a conceivable idea. Be this as it may, the diversity of opinion on this point shows the difficulty the mind finds in departing from the truths of phenomena to the uncertainties of hypothesis; but if hypothesis be justifiable, which it is only on the ground of absolute necessity to link together, and render conventionally intelligible, certain undoubted, undeniable facts, which have been associated together under the terms *electricity*, *magnetism*, &c.—how difficult and dangerous it must be when the facts which it seeks to associate are denied by the mass of thinking men, when they are confessed to be mysterious and irregular by their most strenuous advocates, each of whom differs, in many respects, as to these facts!

These difficulties have by no means been conquered by Mr Townshend. At p. 11, he objects to this mode of theorizing, in the following strong terms:—

> "A certain school of German writers especially have theorized on our subject, after the false method of explaining one class of phenomena in nature by its fancied resemblance to another. Wishing, perhaps, to avoid the error of the spiritualists, who solve the problem in debate by the power of the soul alone, they have ransacked the material world for analogies to mesmerism, till the mind itself has been endued with its affinities and its poles. Such attempts as these have done the greatest disservice to the cause we advocate. They submit it to a wrong test. It is as if the laws of light should be applied to a question in acoustics. It is as if we should expect to find in a foreign kingdom the laws and customs of our own."—(P. 11.)

And yet, in the subsequent parts of his book, he asserts mesmerism to be capable of "reflection like light"—to have "the attraction of magnetism"—to be "transferred like heat;" to escape from a point like electricity, and to have the sympathetic undulations of sound!—(Pp. 335, 6, 7, and 8.)

Such general resemblances as the following are given:—-

> "We know that electricity is capable of all that modification in its action which our case demands. Sometimes its effects are sudden and energetic; sometimes of indefinite and uninterrupted continuance. It is 'capable of moving with various degrees of facility through the pores or even the substance of matter;' and is not impeded in its action by the intervention of any substance whatever, provided it be not in itself in an electric state. This capacity of varied action and of pervading influence, has already been shown to characterize the mesmeric medium."—(P. 335.)

Why, what is here stated of electricity, may be said of heat, of light, of any force, and its moving through the pores may be denied as easily as asserted; by many it is thought to be a molecular polarization, and not a transmission.

Zinc and silver are said (p. 237) to "produce a taste resulting from the galvanic concussion, and not from any actual flavour." This is incorrect; zinc and silver produce a taste when in voltaic communication, because they decompose the saliva, and eliminate acid and alkaline constituents.

Further on it is said, (p. 237,) "A spark drawn by means of a pointed metal from the nose of a person charged with electricity, will give him the sensation of smelling a phosphoric odour." This is also an erroneous assumption; the electric spark, in passing through the atmosphere, combines its constituents, and forms nitrous acid. This has a pungent smell; probably there are some other physical changes wrought upon the constituents of the atmosphere by the electric spark, which are now objects of anxious enquiry to natural philosophers; yet none of them have any doubt that

the electric smell is the result of a physical or chemical action of the spark, by which either the air is decomposed, or fine portions of metal carried off, or both. So again—

> "The electric medium is a far more swift and subtle messenger of vision than is the luminous ether. 'A wheel revolving with celerity sufficient to render its spokes invisible, when illuminated by a flash of lightning, is seen for an instant with all its spokes distinct, as if it were in a state of absolute repose, because, however rapid the motion may be, the light has already come and ceased before the wheel has had time to turn through a sensible space.' Again, some ingenious experiments, by Professor Wheatstone, demonstrate to a certainty, that the speed of the electric fluid much surpasses the velocity of light. It is, therefore, a different medium; yet can it serve for all the purposes of vision, and even in a superior manner. After hearing these things, shall we start at the notion of mesmeric sensation being conveyed through another medium than that in ordinary action? Even should the sleep-waker perceive the most distant objects, (as some are said to have done,) can we, from the moment a means of communication is hinted to us, be so much amazed? If his perception be more vivid, there seems to be an efficient cause in his abjuring the grosser media for such as are more swift and subtle."—(P. 272.)

The electric medium is *not* a messenger of vision. To call the light produced by the electric spark electricity, would be the same as to call magnetism electricity, heat electricity, motion electricity—for all these are produced by it, and it by them. All modes of force are capable of producing the other phenomenal effects of force. It is an obvious fallacy to call the medium which transmits electric light, an electric medium; this, if carried out, would overthrow natural as well as conventional divisions, would subvert "the pales and forts of reason."

Mr Townshend, accustomed to metaphysical abstractions, shows, in these and many other instances, a want of acquaintance with physical science, and entirely fails when he bases his reasoning upon it. Many of the arguments of Mr Townshend are of such a transcendental nature, that we fear, should we attempt to follow them, our readers would lose their clairvoyance in the mist of metaphysical speculation. The following will give a fair specimen of the conclusion to which such reasoning tends:—

> "Indeed, if we lay to heart the deceptiveness and mutability of all the external species of matter, at the same time considering that we have no reason to deem it capable of change in its ultimate and imperceptible particles; if, also, we reflect, that whatever is not palpable in itself is yet indicated by its effects, forces us on pure reason by withdrawing at once the aid and the illusion of our external senses, we shall perhaps come to the conclusion that the Invisible is the only true, exclaiming, with the old Latinist, 'Invisibilia non decipiunt.'"—(P. 355.)

And yet the facts of mesmerism are to be judged of by the very senses which mesmerism proves to be so fallacious. It is because we *see* that E—— A—— reads when the book is presented to the back of his hand, that we are to believe that he does not perceive with the usual organs. Upon the rule which the author adopts, that "the invisible is the only true," we cannot rely upon our deceptive organs and should disbelieve mesmerism *because* we see it.

To analyse, in detail, the hypotheses of Mr Townshend would be quite impossible in our limited space. We might, indeed, adopt method sometimes used in controversial writing, and string together a parallel column of minor contradictions. This would however, not only be totally devoid of interest to the reader, but is not the object we have in view. We seek not for critical errors or inconsistencies, but merely to examine if there be any broad lines of truth or probability in his theory. It is summed up as follows:—

> "The real nature of vision is as shut to the vulgar as the mesmeric mode of sight is to the learned.
>
> "By the eye we appreciate light and colour only: the rest is an operation of the judgment.
>
> "Viewed metaphysically, seeing is but a particular kind of knowledge: viewed physically, seeing consists in certain nervous motions, responsive to the motions of a medium. That medium, in our ordinary condition, is light, the action of which seems cut off and intercepted in the case of mesmeric vision.
>
> "When, therefore, we hear that a mesmerised person has correctly seen an object through obstacles which to us appear opaque, we, conceiving no means of communication between the person and the object, exclaim that the laws of nature have been violated. But, in all cases where information is conveyed through interrupted spaces, show but the means of communication, and astonishment ceases.
>
> "When we know that there is a medium permeating, in one or other of its forms, all substances whatever, and that this medium is eminently capable of exciting sensations of sight; and when we take this in conjunction with a heightened sensibility in the percipient person, rendering him aware of impulses whereof we are not cognisant, we are no longer inclined to deny a fact or suppose a miracle.

> "Finally, all sensation has but one principle. All that is required for its production

> is, that objects should be brought into a certain relation with us by something intermediate; and this is effected by the impulsions of certain media upon nerves, the last changes in which are the immediate forerunners of completed sensation."—(P. 279.)

In short, we think we do not unfairly express the author's theory in the following query. As the application of the highest human powers (those of Newton, for instance) have resolved the transmission of light to the sensorium into the vibrations of an all-pervading ether, what is more probable than that a similar ethereal medium may convey sensations of objects through other channels? This may be, but another important ingredient is wanting, viz. organization, or definite molecular arrangement. Prick the eye, and, by the resulting morbid derangement, change the molecular arrangement of its particles, and vision is destroyed; pulverise the glass through which you look, and it is no longer transparent. The ether (if there be an ether) in the pores of these substances, can only convey correct impressions when these particles have a definite arrangement; but the mesmeric ether is dependent upon no such necessity. Density and tenacity, opacity and transparency, homogeneous or heterogeneous bodies, are all equally penetrable. And what is more strange, the mesmeric ether conveys correct, and not distorted impressions. The same perception of form which is conveyed through air, is convoyed through the cover of a book, through the bones of the skull, or the muscles of the stomach. And, still more extraordinary, this impression is identical as to the mental idea it conveys with that conveyed in the normal manner through the eye. The mesmeric ether has, therefore, not only the power of conveying impressions, but of preserving their continuity through any impediment. The formal impressions of a chair or table, which are conveyed by ordinary vision in right lines to the retina, if these lines be distorted by any intervening want of uniformity in the matter, are proportionally distorted. Let striæ of glass of different density intervene in an optical lens, and the objects are distorted; increase the number of striæ, the object is more imperfect; and carry the molecular derangement further, opacity is the result. Transparency and opacity, then, viewed apart from all hypotheses, resolve themselves into organization or molecular arrangement. Yet, by the mesmeric medium, a chair or table is conveyed to the recipient in its distinct form, or, what amounts to the same thing for the argument of conformity, they give to the mind distinct ideas of these objects. If, then, there be a mesmeric medium, which, being a purely hypothetic creation, cannot be disproved, its requisites must be so totally at variance with the requisites of ordinary ethereal media, that none of the rules which can be applied to this can be applied to that. The arguments of Mr Townshend depend on analogy, where there is no analogy.

Many of the objects of vision, all indeed by which reading is effected, are purposely constructed to suit the peculiar organization of the eye—they are artifices specially appropriated to given sensations; thus *black* letters are printed on *white* paper, because experience has told us that black reflects no light, while white reflects all the incident light. If we wish to read by another sense, we adapt our object to such a sense; thus, for those who read by the finger, raised letters are prepared, differing from the matrix in position but not in colour; if we read by the ear, we address it by sounds and not by forms or colours; and it would be far from impracticable to read by smell or taste, by associating given odours or given tastes with given ideas.

In all this, however, each sense requires a peculiar education and long training—it is only by constant association of the word *table* with the thing *table*, that we connect the two ideas; but mesmeric clairvoyance not only conveys things as things in all their proper forms and colours, (p. 164,) without the intervention of the usual senses, but it also dispenses with education or association, or instantly adapts to a new sense the education hitherto specially and only adapted to another.

Thus the mesmeric medium should, and does, according to Mr Townshend, (pp. 97, 99, 101,) convey to the person accustomed to read by the eye, ideas and perceptions which he has hitherto associated with the sight—to him accustomed to read by touch, ideas associated with touch—and so of the rest, and that not of sight or touch of the object itself, but of a mere arbitrary symbol of the object.

Table of five letters or forms—*table* of two sounds, bearing no resemblance to these letters or forms, or to the thing—*table* but a mere conventional substitute for the purpose of human convenience, yet by the all-potent mesmeric medium, for which they have not been previously framed, are definitely conveyed, and produce the require perception and the required association.

We trust we need go no further to show that mesmeric clairvoyance has, at all events, no conformity with general experience; and that, if it be true, the proofs of its truth cannot be based on its analogy with other sensations. To sum up our arguments, we say—1st, That without undervaluing testimony, mesmeric clairvoyance is not sufficiently proved by competent witnesses to be admitted as fact: 2d, The reasoning in support of it is insufficient, and, in most cases, fallacious.

Perhaps the best arguments employed by Mr Townshend in favour of the possibility of clairvoyance, are the authenticated cases of normal sleepwalking; these have been very little examined, but appear, in one respect, strikingly to differ from mesmeric coma. The eyes of the somnambulist are said to be open, and therefore there is every optical power of vision, and an increase of ordinary visual perception is all that is requisite. The acts performed by the sleepwalker are, moreover, generally those to which he is habitually accustomed; and, when this is not the case, he fails, as many disastrous accidents have too fatally testified.

At the close of Mr Townshend's book is a short appendix, containing some testimonials to the verity of mesmeric effects. Several of these are anonymous, and the value of their authority cannot therefore be judged of. Others are testimonies to mesmeric effects produced upon the patients, E—— A—— or Anna M——. None of these are from persons of very high authority; and they are, certainly, not such as would induce us to rest our faith upon them. We grant to them their full right to be convinced; but their testimony is not of sufficient force to produce conviction in others. The two last testimonials, however, are of a very different character. One of these is by Professor Agassiz, and the other by Signor Ranieri of Naples. Both these are testimonials, not to any effect produced upon an accustomed patient, but upon the testifiers themselves; and the former, coming from a man of high distinction, and accustomed to physical research, is undoubtedly of great weight. We therefore give it in full.

> "Desirous to know what to think of mesmerism, I for a long time sought for an opportunity of making some experiments in regard to it upon myself, so as to avoid the doubts which might arise on the nature of the sensations which we have heard described by mesmerised persons. M. Desor, yesterday, in a visit which he made to Berne, invited Mr Townshend, who had previously mesmerised him, to accompany him to Neufchatel, and try to mesmerise me. These gentlemen arrived here with the evening courier, and informed me of their arrival. At eight o'clock I went to them. We continued at supper till half past nine o'clock, and about ten o'clock Mr Townshend commenced operating upon me. While we sat opposite to one another, he, in the first place, only took hold of my hands, and looked at me fixedly. I was firmly resolved to arrive at a knowledge of the truth, whatever it might be; and therefore, the moment I saw him endeavouring to exert an action upon me, I silently addressed the Author of all things, beseeching him to give me power to resist the influence, and to be conscientious in regard to myself, as well as in regard to the facts. I then fixed my eyes upon Mr Townshend, attentive to whatever passed. I was in very suitable circumstances; the hour being early, and one at which I was in the habit of studying, was far from disposing me to sleep. I was sufficiently master of myself to experience no emotion, and to repress all flights of imagination, even if I had been less calm; accordingly it was a long time before I felt any effect from the presence of Mr Townshend opposite me. However, after at least a quarter of an hour, I felt a sensation of a current through all my limbs, and from that moment my eyelids grew heavy. I then saw Mr Townshend extend his hands before my eyes, as if he were about to plunge his fingers into them; and then make different circular movements around my eyes, which caused my eyelids to become still heavier. I had the idea that he was endeavouring to make me close my eyes; and yet it was not as if some one had threatened my eyes, and, in the waking state, I had closed them to prevent him. It was an irresistible heaviness of the lids, which compelled me to shut them, and by degrees I found that I had no longer the power of keeping them open; but did not the less retain my consciousness of what was going on around me; so that I heard M. Desor speak to Mr Townshend, understood what they said, and heard what questions they asked me, just as if I had been awake; but I had not the power of answering. I endeavoured in vain several times to do so; and when I succeeded, I perceived that I was passing out of the state of torpor in which I had been, and which was rather agreeable than painful.

> "In this state I heard the watchman cry ten o'clock; then I heard it strike a quarter past; but afterwards I fell into a deeper sleep, although I never entirely lost my consciousness. It appeared to me that Mr Townshend was endeavouring to put me into a sound sleep; my movements seemed under his control, for I wished several times to change the position of my arms, but had not sufficient power to do it, or even really to will it; while I felt my head carried to the right or left shoulder, and backwards or forwards, without wishing it; and, indeed, in spite of the resistance which I endeavoured to oppose, and this happened several times.

> "I experienced at the same time a feeling of great pleasure in giving way to the attraction, which dragged me sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other; then a kind of surprise on feeling my head fall into Mr Townshend's hand, who appeared to me from that time to be the cause of the attraction. To his enquiry if I were well, and what I felt? I found I could not answer, but I smiled; I felt that my features expanded in spite of my resistance; I was inwardly confused at experiencing pleasure from an influence which was mysterious to me. From this moment I wished to wake, and was less at my ease; and yet on Mr Townshend asking me, whether I wished to be awakened, I made a hesitating movement with my shoulders. Mr Townshend then repeated some frictions, which increased my sleep; yet I was always conscious of what was passing around me. He then asked me, if I wished to become lucid, at the same time continuing, as I felt, the frictions from the face to the arms. I then experienced an indescribable sensation of delight, and for an instant saw before me rays of dazzling light, which instantly disappeared. I was then inwardly sorrowful at this state being prolonged—it appeared to me that enough had been done with me; I wished to awake, but could not, yet when Mr Townshend and M. Desor spoke, I heard them. I also heard the clock, and the watchman cry, but I did not know what hour he cried. Mr Townshend then presented his watch to me, and asked if I could see the time, and

> if I saw him; but I could distinguish nothing. I heard the clock strike the quarter, but could not get out of my sleepy state. Mr Townshend then woke me with some rapid transverse movements from the middle of the face outwards, which instantly caused my eyes to open, and at the same time I got up, saying to him, 'I thank you.' It was a quarter past eleven. He then told me, and M. Desor repeated the same thing, that the only fact which had satisfied them that I was in a state of mesmeric sleep, was the facility with which my head followed all the movements of his hand, although he did not touch me, and the pleasure which I appeared to feel at the moment when, after several repetitions of friction, he thus moved my head at pleasure in all directions."—(P. 385 to 388.)

This we think a most interesting and valuable document, and the best key we have ever seen to the *facts* of mesmerism. It is the production of a resolute, religious, and philosophic mind, and bears all the impress of truth; it proves that there are facts worthy of the most careful investigation—it proves a power of inducing a comatose or sleep-waking state—an influence exercised by one mind over another—and it goes far to prove a physical attraction subsisting between two persons in mesmeric relation. But, on the other hand, how strikingly do the phenomena here described differ from those exhibited by the other patients. In those cases, to use the general proposition of Mr Townshend, "the sleep-waker seems incapable of analysing his new sensations while they last, still more of remembering them when they are over. The state of mesmerism is to him as death."—(P. 156.) Here, on the other hand, the patient analyses all the sensations he experienced, and recollects them when they are over; here, notwithstanding the efforts of the mesmeriser, the production of the mesmeric effect, and no resistance on the part of the mesmerisee, the latter does not become clairvoyant; "*je ne distinguais rien*," are the emphatic words of Professor Agassiz.

Precisely similar is the testimony of Signor Ranieri, the historian—

> Having been mesmerised by my honourable friend Mr Hare Townshend, I will simply describe the phenomena which I experienced before, during, and after my mesmerisation. Mr Townshend commenced by making me sit upon a sofa, he sat upon a chair opposite me, and keeping my hands in his, placed them on my knees. He looked at me fixedly, and from time to time let go my hands, and placed the points of his fingers in a straight line opposite my eyes, at an inch, I should think, from my pupils; then, describing a kind of ellipse, he brought his hands down again upon mine. After he had moved his hands thus alternately from my eyes to my knees for ten minutes, I felt an irresistible desire to close my eyelids. I continued, nevertheless, to hear his voice, and that of my sister, who was in the same room. Whenever they put questions to me, I always answered him correctly; but the whole of my muscular system was in a state of peculiar weakness, and of almost perfect disobedience to my will; and, consequently, the pronunciation of the words with which I wished to answer had become extremely difficult.
>
> "Whilst I experienced to a certain point the effects of sleep, not only was I not a stranger to all that was passing around me, but I even took more than usual interest in it. All my conceptions were more rapid; I experienced nervous startings to which I am not accustomed; in short, my whole nervous system was in a state of perfect exaltation, and appeared to have acquired all the superabundance of power which the muscular system had lost.
>
> "The following are the principal phenomena which I was able to feel distinctly. Mr Townshend did not fail to ask me occasionally if I could see him or my sister without opening my eyelids; but this was always impossible, and all that I could say I had seen was a glimmering of light, interrupted by the black and confused images of the objects presented to me; a light which appeared to me a little less clear than that which we commonly see when we shut the eyelids opposite the sun or a candle.
>
> "Mr Townshend at last determined to demesmerise me. He began to make elliptical movements with his hands, the reverse of those which he had made at the commencement; I could now open my eyes without any kind of effort, my whole muscular system became perfectly obedient to my will; I was able to get up, and was perfectly awake; but I remained nearly an hour in a kind of stupefaction very similar to that which sometimes attacks me in the mornings, if I rise two or three hours later than usual."—(P. 388 to 390.)

Similar, as to the general conclusions, are the reports of the French Academy and the testimonies of all rigorous and well-conducted scientific examination. These testimonies apply to facts which it is the duty of those experimentalists and physiologists, who have time and opportunity at their disposal, fairly to investigate.

The insensibility to pain, and to the effects of the galvanic shock, are also within the limits of the credible—and the latter is the more easy of proof, as being incapable of simulation. As we stated at the commencement, so we repeat here; mesmerism has been too little investigated by competent persons, and is too much mystified by charlatanism, to enable us accurately to define the limits of the true and false, far less to predict what may be the discoveries to which it may lead. With regard to the facts of clairvoyance, we are at present entirely incredulous. Mr Townshend says, p. 91—

"Let, then, body after body of learned men deny the phenomena of mesmerism, and logically disprove their existence; an appeal may ever, and at any moment, be made to the proof by experiment; and even should experiment itself fail a thousand times, the success of the thousandth and first trial would justify further examination. Till the authority of observation can be wholly set aside, the subject of our enquiry can never be said to have undergone its final ostracism."

This is certainly a strong proposition; nevertheless it is with the hope that observation may be directed to the *facts* of mesmerism, that we have written the preceding pages. In reasoning on a subject, we can use only those lights which experience has given us. The efficacy of logical disproof, somewhat contemptuously treated by Mr Townshend in the above passage, is yet fully vindicated by the latter half of the book itself, which is an endeavour, logically, to bring home mesmerism to the understanding of men of experience. It is vain to make light of logic, when the parties who set it at nought are themselves obliged to use it to prove its own worthlessness. You must not exalt *reason*, and we will give you the *reason* why—this cuts their own ground from under them. We so far agree with the last quoted sentence, as to admit that, when experiments fairly tried by competent parties have and do succeed, mesmerism will be established—hitherto they have *not* succeeded. The alleged proofs are not brought home to the observation of cautious, thinking men; and reason, thus at once derided and appealed to, is unsatisfied. Time "may bring in its revenges," may show things which would be to us marvellous; and we deny no future possibilities. At present, we admit some very curious phenomena, which we would willingly see further examined; but we are unconvinced of those facts of mesmerism enounced by its professors, which wholly contradict our previous experience. Upon what we consider the only safe grounds for the general admission of newly asserted facts, the evidence in support of these should more than counterpoise the evidence for their rejection. Up to the present time, balancing, as we have endeavoured to do, impartially, the evidence in favour of clairvoyance, and the preternatural powers of mesmerism, against those of an opposite tendency, the former seems to us inordinately outweighed. On the other hand, the production, by external influence, either of absolute coma or of sleep-waking, whether resulting from imagination in the patient, or from an effort of the will on the part of the mesmeriser, or from both conjointly, has been too lightly estimated and too little examined. This alone is in itself an effect so novel, so mysterious, and apparently so connected with the mainsprings of sentient existence, as to deserve and demand a rigorous, impartial, and persevering scrutiny.

Since this article was written, the letters of Miss Martineau have appeared. Had these been published earlier, we should undoubtedly have noticed them at some length; they have not, however, induced us to alter any thing we have written; they have, indeed, confirmed one remark made above. The effects described by Miss Martineau as produced upon herself, are credible and not preternatural, while the second-sight of the girl J—— is preternatural and not credible; *i. e.* not credible as preternatural, otherwise easily explicable.

In this, as in every mesmeric case, the marvellous effects are developed by the uneducated—the most easily deceived, and the most ready to be deceivers.

The clairvoyant writers have greatly the advantage of the sceptics in one respect, viz. the public interest of their communications. Every one reads the description of new marvels, few care to examine the arguments in contravention of them.

"Pol, me occidistis, amici,
Non servastis, ait, cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error."

ÆSTHETICS OF DRESS.

No. II.

About a Bonnet.

So then, having "put down" hats, we come to bonnets; this is the due order of things—hats should be taken off before bonnets always; "common politeness makes us stop and do it." And here, as the immortal Butler found it necessary in olden times to lament the perils that environed a man meddling with a hard subject, so we might well indulge in an ejaculation at what may be our fate if we presume to take liberties with the head-dress of the ladies. Actæon, when he contemplated Diana *simplicem munditiis*, paid a severe penalty in the transformation of his own head; and so, perhaps, we may incur—but never mind; the task, worthy of a Hercules, (for the hydra of female fashion is more than hundred-headed,) must be gone through with, and the *scrivano umillimo* must push his pen even under the pole of a lady's bonnet.

The best-dressed woman in the world was our great-great-great progenitrix; we really cannot trace up the pedigree, but you all know whom we mean—your common mother and ours: we have

the highest authority among our own poets for saying so. There can be no doubt that her *coiffure* was perfect. It is a law of nature—it was true then—it has been true ever since—it is indisputable at the present day—the expressive beauty of a woman lies in her face: whatever, therefore, conceals the face is a disfigurement, and inherits the principle of the ugly. Ye who would study the æsthetics of human habiliments, look at the lovely lines of the female face; contemplate that fairest type of the animated creation; observe the soft emotions of her gentle soul, now shooting forth rays of tender light from between her long enclasping eyelashes, now arching her rosy lips into the playful lineaments of Cupid's mortal bow; or gaze upon the subdued and affectionate contentment of the maternal countenance—remember, while you were yet young, your mother's look of love, that look which was all-powerful to master your fiercest passions in your wildest mood—who will say that the female face ought to be concealed? As far as we, the more powerful, though not the better, portion of the human race are concerned—off with the bonnet! off with the veil! say we. But there are others to be consulted in settling this preliminary dogma of taste—the feelings and the inclinations of woman herself are entitled to at least as much regard as the imperious wishes of man. She, who possesses the bright but fleetly fading gift of beauty, has also that inestimable, indefinable accompaniment of it—modesty. Beauty is too sensitive a gem to be always exposed to the light of admiration; it must be ensheathed in modesty for its rays to retain their primitive lustre; it would perish from exposure to the natural changes of the atmosphere, but it would die much sooner from the incomprehensible, yet positive, effects of moral lassitude. To use a commonplace simile, gentle reader, woman's beauty is like champagne, it gets terribly into a man's head: do not, however, leave the cork out of your champagne bottle—the sparkling spirit will all evaporate; and do not quarrel with your sweet-heart if she muffles up her face sometimes, and will not let you look at it for a week together—her eyes will be all the brighter when you next see them. There is a good cause for it; man is an ungrateful, hardly-pleased animal; every indulgence that woman grants him loosens her power over him. Women have an innate right to conceal their heads!

We arrive, then, at the foundation of taste for a lady's head-dress. Her face, her head, is naturally so beautiful, that the less it is concealed—as far as the mere gratification of the eye is concerned—the better; but the necessity for veiling and protecting this precious object is so inevitable, that a suitable extraneous covering must be provided; let that covering be as consonant to her natural excellence as it is possible to make it.

Now, we are not going to write a history of all the changes of female head-dress that have taken place since the world began: nothing at all of the kind. We refer the curious amateur to the work of that learned Dutchman—we forget his name, 'tis all the same—*De Re Vestiaria*; or he may look into Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*—there is a pretty considerable variety of bonnets or caps to be seen therein, we calculate. If he be a decided *cognoscente*, let him rather go to the Attic gallery in the British Museum, and examine the Panathenaic procession, where the virgins are in the simple attire of the best days of Greece: but here, or in any of the monuments of that foster-country of art, and in all the series of Roman sculpture and coins, he will find no head-dress for a female beyond that of the veil. The great artists and the great conquerors of the world never tolerated any thing beyond this flowing drapery of the veil, as the covering for their wives' or daughters' heads. They were satisfied with the beautiful contrast given by the curving lines of its graceful folds; they admired its simplicity; and they saw the perfect suitableness of its nature to its purpose. The veil could be hastily drawn over the head, so as to conceal every feature, and protect it from the gaze of man or the roughness of the seasons—and it could as easily be withdrawn partially to allow of "a sidelong glance of love," or wholly to give "a gaze of welcome," to a relation and a friend. Happy men those old Greeks and Romans! they had no bills for milliners—whatever their jewellers' accounts might have come to! When they travelled, their slaves were not pestered with bonnet-boxes and similar abominations—a clean yard or two of Phœnician gauze, or Asian linen, set up Mrs Secretary Pericles, or Mrs General Cæsar, with a braw new veil. There was little caprice of fashion—the veil would always fall into something like the same or at least similar folds; and we do believe that, for a thousand years or more, the type of the *mode* remained fixed. Whether the ancient Asiatics made their women wear precisely the same mask-veils as those jealous rascals the Turks and Arabs do at the present day, we do not know, and we are not now going to enquire: we only wish to protest, *en passant*, against these same modern Eastern veils; they are the most frightful, unclassical, unbecoming things ever invented as face-cases. Our present purpose is with the head-dress of modern British ladies—let us look into their bonnets.

And truly a bonnet, taken by itself, without the jewel that often lies under it—a bonnet *per se*—is as bad a thing as a hat; something between a coal-scuttle and a bread-basket; it is only fit to be married to the hat, and, let us add—settled in the country. But it is, nevertheless capricious in its ugliness, just as its possessor is capricious in her prettiness; for, look at it from behind, its lines do not greatly deviate from the circular form of the head; it seems like a smart case;—look at it from before; there it is seen to best advantage as an oval frame, set with ribands, flowers, and laces, for the sweet picture within; but look at it from the side, and the genuine, vulgar, cookmaid form of the coal-scuttle is instantly perceived. It serves in this view evidently as blinkers do to a horse in harness, just to keep the animal from shying, or to guard off a chance stroke of the whip. But it is uncommonly tantalizing into the bargain. You walk along Regent Street some fine day, and for a hundred paces or more you are troubled by the crowd keeping you always in the rear of an old, faded, frumpy bonnet, that hinders you from watching a sweet little *chapeau-de-soie* immediately beyond. Your patience is exhausted, and your curiosity driven to the highest pitch of anxiety; you make a desperate stride, push by the old bonnet, and look round with indignation to see what beldam had thus been between you and the "cynosure of neighbouring eyes:"—whew!

'tis the pretty young shop-girl that served you with your last pair of gloves, and measured them so fascinatingly along your hand, that your heart still palpitates with the electrical touch of her fingers. You pocket your indignation, exchange one of your blandest smiles, and pass on, still striding to see what lovely features grace that exquisite *chapeau*. Half afraid, of course—for she is a lady evidently, and you pique yourself on being a perfect gentleman—you venture, as you pass, to let your eye just glance within the sacred enclosure of blonde and primroses;—pshaw! it's old Miss Thingamy, that you had to hand down to dinner the other day at Lady Dash's; and instantly catching your eye, she gives you a condescending nod, and you're forced to escort her all the way up to Portland Place! It's enough to make a man hang himself; and, to say the truth, many a poor fellow has been ruined by bonnets before now—even Napoleon himself had to pay for *thirty-six* new bonnets within *one month* for Josephine!

Bonnets, however, have more to do with women than with men; and we defy our fair friends to prove that these articles of dress, about which they are always so anxious, (a woman—a regular genuine woman, reader—will sacrifice a great deal for a bonnet,) are either useful or ornamental. And first, for their use; if they were good for any thing, they would protect the head from cold, wet, and sunshine. Now, as far as cold is concerned, they do so to a certain degree, but not a tenth part so well as something else we shall talk of by and by; as for wet—what woman ever trusted to her bonnet in a shower of rain? What woman does not either pop up her parasol, or green cotton umbrella, or, if she has not these female arms, ties over it her pocket-handkerchief, in a vain attempt to keep off the pluvious god? Women are more frightened at spoiling their bonnets than any other article of their dress: let them but once get their bonnets under the dripping eaves of an umbrella, and, like ostriches sticking their heads under ground, they think their whole persons safe;—we appeal to any man who has walked down Cheapside with his eyes open, on a rainy day, whether this be not true. And then for the sun—who among the ladies trust to her bonnet for keeping her face from freckling? Else why all the paraphernalia of parasols? why all these endless patents for sylphides and sunscreens of every kind, form, and colour? why can you never meet a lady in a summerwalk without one of these elegant little contrivances in her hand? Comfort, we apprehend, does not reside in a bonnet: look at a lady travelling, whether in a carriage or a railroad diligence—she cannot for a moment lean back into one of the nice pillowed corners of the vehicle, without running imminent risk of crushing her bonnet; her head can never repose; she has no travelling-cap, like a man, to put on while she stows away her bonnet in some convenient place: the stiffened gauze, or canvass, or paper, of which its inner framework is composed, rustles and crackles with every attempt at compression; and a pound's worth or two of damage may be done by a gentle tap or squeeze. Women, if candid, would allow that their bonnets gave them much more trouble than comfort, and that they have remained in use solely as conventional objects of dress—we will not allow, of ornament. The only position in which a bonnet is becoming—and even then it is only the modern class of bonnets—is, when they are viewed full front: further, as we observed before, they make a nice *encadrement* for the face: and, with their endless adjuncts of lace, ribands, and flowers, they commonly set off even moderately pretty features to advantage. But is only the present kind of bonnet that does so; the old-fashioned, poking, flaunting, square-cornered bonnet never became any female physiognomy: it is only the small, tight, come-and-kiss-me style of bonnet now worn by ladies, that is at all tolerable. All this refers, however, only to that portion of the fairer half of the human race which is in the bloom and vigour of youth and womanhood: those that are still in childhood, or sinking into the vale of years, cannot have a more inappropriate, more useless, covering for the head than what they now wear, at least in England. Simplicity, which should be the attribute of youth, and dignity, which should belong to age, cannot be compatible with a modern bonnet: fifty inventions might be made of coverings more suitable to these two stages of life.

How, then, has it come to pass that women have persuaded themselves, or have been overpersuaded, into the belief that a bonnet is the highest point of perfection in their dress? It has all been done by a foolish imitation of the caprices of French milliners, themselves actuated by millions of caprices and fancies—but at the same time by one steadily-enduring principle, that novelty and change, no matter how useless, how extravagant, form the soul of their peculiar trade. For, note it down—the bonnet mania has not mounted upwards from the lower to the higher ranks of society; on the contrary, it has been a regular plant, sown as a trifling casual seed in the hotbed of some silly creature's brain, and then sending down its roots into many an inferior class. Any one who has crossed the British Channel, knows that the bonnet—as we understand the word in England—is not an article of national costume in any portion of the world except our own island—America and Australia we place, of course, out of the pale of taste. In France itself, the peasantry, and all classes of women immediately under the conventional denomination of ladies, wear *bonnets*. This word does not signify the same thing as with us, gentle reader. The French word *bonnet* means a snow-white cap, whether rising into an enormous cone, like those of the Norman beauties, or limited to a jaunting frill and lappels, like those of the Parisian grisettes. The real bonnets, the French female *chapeau*, is worn only by those who call themselves ladies; and this difference of costume marks a most decided difference of rank and self-esteem in the various grades of Gallic society. In the Bourbonnois, it is true, and in some parts of Switzerland and Germany, straw-hats of various sizes are worn by the peasantry; but these do not resemble the actual bonnet of the nineteenth century. Who does not know the exquisite national head-dresses of the Italian and Spanish women, from pictorial representation, if not from actual inspection? Who has not read of the Greek cap and veil? Who has not heard of the national caps of Poland, Hungary, and Russia? Not the slightest approximation to the eccentricity of the bonnet is to be found in any of these. In all of them, not caprice, but the more rational qualities of use and ornament, have been studiously regarded. It is in England only that our lower classes of

women have abandoned their national costume, and are content to suffer the inconvenient consequences of imitating their superiors. Let any one who has traversed Europe only recall to his mind the appearances of the female peasants as to their head-dress, whether in their houses or in the fields, and comparing them with the tattered, dirty things worn by the labourers' wives and daughters of England, say which are to be preferred in point of taste—which are the cleanest—which are the most becoming.

Not to go too far back into the mist of antiquity, the earliest traces that we can find of hats being commonly worn in England, are to be met with somewhere in the first half of the last century. Previous to that time ladies wore hoods and caps; and in the Middle Ages muffled their heads in wimples and veils; but some time or other—in the reign of the second George, we believe—some lady or other stuck on her head a round silk hat with a low crown and a broad brim, perfectly circular, and the brim or ledge at right angles to the crown or head-piece. This she subsequently changed into a straw one, and this was the root of the evil—*hinc illæ lachrymæ!* We are aware that, at the gay court of Louis XIV., and even before he had a court, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, when she went to battle or to hunt, wore a gold-laced semi-cocked hat: so did Madame de Montespan when she accompanied the king to one of his grand *parties de chasse*. But then, at the same time, these illustrious "leaders of *ton*" put on gold-embroidered male coats, and evidently endeavoured to transform themselves into men while partaking in manly sports and dangers. Their hunting-hats bore no more relation to the bonnets of their descendants, than do the black beaver hats of the latter, when they mount their horses in Hyde Park or the Bois de Boulogne. Indeed this very custom of wearing the male hat, is derived by our modern belles from the times we are speaking of. Plain beaver or felt hats were worn by some of our farmers' wives as early as the reign of Charles I.; but, to judge from the prints of that date, they borrowed them from their husbands. And to a period like this is to be traced the custom, still extant throughout most parts of Wales, for the women to wear the same head-costume as the men. The round ladies' hat, however, of the middle and end of the last century, may be seen in its primitive state in those enormous circles of straw, brought from Tuscany, and sold in our milliners' shops, fit to be pinched and cut into the prevailing fashion. The hats, both of men and women—when once they had quitted the becoming costume of the Middle Ages—arose out of one and the same type; a large circle of stuff with a projecting central cap for the skull. Human invention, in the matter of hats, seems for several centuries to have rested in this solitary idea. When this circular adumbral and pluvial roofing had to be adapted to the female head, it was found advisable to fasten it down to the cranium—not, indeed, by any screw driven therein, nor by any intriguing with the locks of woman's hair, but by the simple expedient of ribands passing under the chin. The difficulty consisted in attaching the upper ends of these ribands; for if they were sewn on under the overlapping brim, the same brim would take liberties on a windy day, and would flap up and down like an Indian punka. If they were sewn outside, they acted like the sheets of a ship's sail, and pulled down the struggling circumference into two ugly projections, bellying out before and behind. However, women, for comfort's sake, having got an awkward article to deal with, preferred the latter alternative—tied down their hats with ribands, (men, be it remembered, at the same time, tied *up* their brims into the prim, high, cocked shape,) and called these ugly coverings "gipsy hats." We remember something like them, dear reader,

"When first we went a-gipsying, long long ago."

Before matters had arrived at this pitch of ugliness, the ladies of the court of George III.—the very antipodes of that of Louis XIV.—had essayed, under the auspices of good Queen Charlotte, to render the round hat, with the straight-projecting brim, less ugly; but their invention carried them no further than to surround it, at one time, with a deep ruff of ribands, or they crushed it into an untidy rumble-tumble shape; at another, they let copious streamers float from the crown down their backs; or again, they gave it a monstrous pitch up behind. There is this to be said in their excuse—they hardly knew what parasols and umbrellas were. They wielded enormous fans, nearly two feet long; they had capuchins to their cloaks; and they delighted in the rotundity of hoops. Peace be with the souls of our grandmothers! Good old creatures! they were not very tasty, to be sure; but they wore glorious stiff taffety fardingales, and they have left us many an ample commode full of real china. As times wore on, and as the free-and-easy revolutionary school came to inculcate their loose doctrines on women as well as men, the ladies began to find the hinder pokes of their hats uncommon nuisances; and so, in a fit of spleen, one day the Duchess of G——, or some other woman of fashion, cut off this hinder protuberance, and appeared, to the scandal of her neighbours, *plus* the front poke, *minus* the back one. This was a daring, free-thinking, revolutionary innovation. Somebody had probably done it at Paris before her; but the startling idea had gone forth—women began to see daylight through their hats—the dawn of emancipation appeared—clip, clip, went the scissors, and, for the time being, the dynasty of gipsy hats had ceased to reign. Hereupon—the consequence of all changes of dynasties—whether of bonnets or Bourbons, 'tis much the same—a fearful period of anarchy ensued: every milliner's shop in Paris and London was pregnant with new shapes—bonnets periodically overturned bonnets, numbers were devoted to the block every week, and each succeeding month saw fresh competitors for public favour coming to the giddy vortex of fashion. Husbands suffered dreadfully during those troublous times: many a man's temper and purse were then irremediably damaged; and there seemed to be no means of escaping from this reign of female terror, this bonnetian chaos, until the great peace of 1814 brought about a prompt solution. Here, to be classical in so grave a matter, we may observe, that, just as Virgil in his Georgics represents a civil tumult, even in its loudest hubbub, to be suddenly calmed by the appearance of some man of known virtue and authority, so in London—and therefore in England—the visit of an illustrious lady, and the cut of her bonnet, appeased the agitated breasts of our fair countrywomen, and

reduced their fancy to a fixed idea. The Grand-duchess of Oldenburg came over with her brother, the Emperor of all the Russias, and wore on her head, not a coronet—but such a bonnet!

"Ye powers who dress the head, if such there are,
And make the change of woman's taste your care!"

—so Cowper might well have exclaimed, had he been then living. Tell us, ye gods, whence did her imperial highness derive the idea of her bonnet? Truly, we can conjecture no other source, than these very words designating her rank, for the bonnet was imperial—none but such a lady would have dared to originate it; and it was also high—high indeed! The crown rose eighteen inches in perpendicular altitude from the nape of the neck, while the front poke retained the modest dimensions of the original gipsy hat. We recollect the duchess in Hyde Park with this monstrous headgear, and the women all in ecstacy at the delightful novelty. The success of this bonnet was universal—it was a "tremendous hit," as they say in the play-bills; every woman that could afford it raised her crown, and Oldenburgized her head. Well, this fashion lasted tolerably long; it had the great value of rendering public opinion nearly uniform; but it got old, as all fashions must do, and died a natural death—not without an heir, a worthy heir. The new idea, you will perceive, was that of inordinate length, in one way or the other. The duchess had got it all up aloft—up in her top-royals—the new bonnet (we really do not know who invented it, but some wicked little hussy at Paris, no doubt) had it all down below, in the main-sail; the crown dwindled to nothing, and out went the front poke to exactly the same length, eighteen inches. This was truly exquisite —every body was in raptures. The bonnet was tied tight under the chin, and to see a woman's face you had to look down a sort of semi-funnelled hollow, where the ambiguous shade of her countenance was illuminated only by the radiance of her eyes. Here, too, the success was immense; the mothers of us, the young bloods, the choice spirits of the present day, all wore bonnets of this kind, when our governors went wooing them in narrow-brimmed overtopping hats. The next change of any note worth mentioning, was one of comparatively recent times, such as some of us may remember their first loves in; it was derived from a partial return to the primitive round expanded hat, and was in its chief glory, when that last great piece of French dirty work, the Revolution of 1830, was perpetrated. Women had retrograded to the old circular idea; they had given up their pokes. It was too much—female folly had, it was supposed, worn itself out—a revolution was wanted, and it came. To wear the hat, however, in its primitive rotundity was impossible—it would have suited a lady in the West Indies, but not in Europe; to tie down the brim would not do, it would have been re-adopting the worn-out fashions; so, just as was done in the Parisian political revolution, a compromise of principles was resorted to—women cut off part of their brims, turned the circle into a sort of eccentric oval, and rejoiced in the redundant curve projecting now from the left, now on the right side of their heads. Ribands, stiffened out into gigantic bows, set forth the ample *chapeau* right gaily; the brim stretched itself out with all the insolence of a public favourite; and at length Tom Hood showed us how a lady might go to church on a rainy day, and shelter the whole family beneath her maternal hat. The present queen of the French wore an enormous chapeau of this kind at the audience which Louis Philippe gave to the peers and deputies that came to offer him the throne; every lady in England, of a certain age, has worn a hat of the same sort.

We are bound to allow that this hat had something of the useful in it: the ample size of the brim effectually warded off both sun and rain; and we much question whether the parasol trade did not rather languish under its influence. But then it had corresponding disadvantages; it was unbearable in a windy day, and rendered any thing like close contact with a friend impossible. To get a kiss from your pretty cousin, or your maiden aunt, if you met them in the street, was quite out of the question, unless you previously doffed your hat; and, as for two young ladies laying their heads together and whispering soft secrets, no such thing was practicable. The downfall, therefore, of such stiff and unwieldy hats might have been foretold from an early period of their existence; it came, and with it a counter-revolution—a restoration of the legitimist bonnet. But, mark the malignity of a certain elderly personage, whose name and residence we never mention in ears polite; a change, a final change, came, and it came from the source of all abominations—Paris! Yes! 'twas a pure and genuine invention of the fickle people—of *la jeune France*! We gave up the restored bonnet, and we adopted the little, reduced, cut-away, impudent bonnet of the present moment. Now, with regard to the actual origin of this same form of bonnet, which has met with universal approbation, but which has no really good qualities to recommend it, except those of portability and warmth to the ears of the wearer—we make, with some regret, the following assertion, upon the accuracy of which we stake our æsthetic reputation. We were witnesses of the fact; any man in Paris, who had his eyes about him, must have witnessed the same thing; we appeal to all the *lions* of the Bois, or the Boulevard des Italiens: these small bonnets, and the peculiar mode of wearing them at the back of the head were first introduced in Paris by a class of persons, to whom we cannot make any more definite allusion than to say that their names must not be mentioned. These people invented these bonnets, and wore them for nearly six months before they were imitated; and then, the fashion being taken up by the milliners, became general both in France and England. A corresponding change in the cut of the upper portions of ladies' gowns, and in the manner of putting on the shawl—that very cut and manner now universally adopted—came from the same source, and at the same time. These changes added greatly to female comfort, we admit; and they were founded, mainly, on principles of good taste; but they had also other causes, obvious to the æsthetician and the ethnologist, which we abstain from noticing. Once more, having been eye-witnesses to the change, and having at the time maliciously speculated within our own breasts as to how long it would take for such a *mode* to run the round of women's heads—our anticipations having been fully realized—we pledge ourselves to the accuracy of this statement.

Well, then, having thus run a-muck against bonnets, what reparation are we to make to the fair sex, for abusing their taste and condemning their practice? We will try to point out to them certain leading ideas, which may bring them back to sounder principles, and make the covering of their heads worthy of the beauty of their faces. And here, as in the case of hats, the first thing to be aimed at must be, utility—the second, ornament. Be it observed, too, that we are writing for the latitude of England; because in this respect, as in most others, the climate ought to decide upon the basis of national costume. Now an Englishwoman, of whatever grade she may be, requires, when she goes out of doors, protection principally from wet, next from cold, and lastly from heat. Her head-dress, to be really useful, ought to comprise qualities that will effect these three objects. The substance, therefore, of the covering cannot consist of cotton, linen, or silk, at *all* times of the year; these substances will do for the more temperate or the hotter seasons, but not in winter—that is to say, they will not be serviceable during five months out of the twelve. In this inclement season nothing but woollen cloth or fur ought to be the principal article of female head-dress; only these two substances will effectually keep off wet and cold. They may be lined with silk or any other soft substance, but the foundation, we repeat, ought to be fur or woollen cloth; both of them articles of English manufacture or preparation—one varying through all degrees of price; the other within the reach of most persons, even in the middling classes of society. In the summer, silk, linen, cotton, or any other light fabric, will effect the purpose proposed—protection from the rays of the sun, and from the casual wet that may occur—though from the last, less than from the first inconvenience. So much for the common *substance* of an Englishwoman's out-of-door head-dress—for the *material*, that is to say: its use should always be modified by the rank and occupation of the wearer. The *form* must be ascertained from a reference to the principles laid down above, as to the combining a proper degree of concealment, with the due exhibiting of the beautiful features of the female face; the covering should afford ample concealment when wanted, but should also admit of the head being completely exposed when required. Now, the veil gives abundant concealment, but does not admit of total removal, and is rather inconvenient to the wearer; it is apt to get in the way, and is in danger of causing a slovenly, or even a dirty, appearance; it is more suited for in-door, than for out-of-door use—more for a warm than a cold climate. The *hood* is the best thing we know of, for combining the two requisites of complete concealment and complete exposure. It unites by its shape all the purposes of form, to the applicability of any kind of soft material; and it is suitable to the climate of this country at any period of the year. But, "how ugly!" the ladies will exclaim—"who could bear to tie her head up in a pudding-bag?—Does not the very form of the hood approach too nearly to that of the head, and thus violate a fundamental principle of æsthetics?" Our reply must be, that there are various kinds of hoods, and that, if they be considered ugly, it is more from their strangeness, through long disuse, than from any fault in their natural form. Besides, the very principle of concealment, so essential to a woman's modesty, militates rather against the principle of beauty; we admit it to be a difficulty—we would even say that the head of the female while out-of-doors, amid the busy throng, does not admit of the same degree of ornament as the head of the male. If we can make woman's covering graceful, it is enough; the beauty of it should be reserved for the drawing-room and the boudoir—it should not be exhibited in the street. And after all, beauty for beauty, we will back a hood against a bonnet any day in the week.

Bear with us, however, gentle ladies, while we explain to you how we would have you make and wear your hoods; and, to do so the better, examine with us some of those delightful portraits of the time of Rubens and Vandyke, when, among the nobler classes of females, dress had certainly attained a high, if not its highest point of picturesque and elegant effect. Look at some of those admirable Flemish pictures, where you will see many a pretty face enveloped in a fur-trimmed hood, and observe how much grace and modest dignity is given by that simple habiliment. It is something of this kind which we would recommend. For example—if a hood, so cut as not to admit of too close a conformation to the shape of the head, were attached to a tippet which might descend and protect the shoulders, or come even lower, at the fancy of the wearer, and were fastened round the neck, the hood itself might be elevated so as to cover the head, and might be drawn even over the face; or it might be instantly thrown back, and would lie on the upper part of the neck in picturesque and graceful folds. The lines of such a covering, not so flowing, indeed, as those of a veil, would yet be not inelegant; and they would afford sufficient contrast to the features of the face, while they would be far superior to the unmeaning rigidity of the bonnet. Hoods, such as those, are even now worn by some ladies for carriage purposes, or while going to evening parties; and they would look just as well in the bright light of the sun, as by the pale rays of the moon. Consider for a moment the comfort and the utility of such a dress; what a complete protection from cold, and, if necessary, from wet! Even in summer, the hood would keep off the sun's beams much more effectually than any bonnet; it would be light, warm, portable—useable at pleasure, always ornamental, always becoming. These hoods would be of service, whether for a walk or for a journey in a carriage; they would not need to be disentangled from the person like bonnets; they would merely have to be thrown back; they never could get spoiled by crushing; they never would need cumbrous boxes to be carried in; and, what is worthy of consideration, their cost might always be suited to the means of the wearer. They would admit of any kind of ornament that would not destroy their principle of utility;—for ornament ceases to be ornament when it negatives the purpose of the object to which it is applied—it becomes in such a case a mere excrescence: they might be edged and lined with any, the most sumptuous or the plainest materials: they might be attached round the neck by rich cords of gold and jewelled clasps; or they might be fastened with simple ribands. Thus, in spring time, a young and high-born damsel might wear her hood and tippet of light-coloured silk or brocade, edged with ermine or swan's-down, and attached with silver cords and clasps of pearl—while the noble matron might wear the same of crimson or purple velvet, edged with sable, and attached with golden cords and

diamonds. The peasant's wife and daughter might use hoods of black, blue, or grey woollen cloth, lined with grey linen, edged with plain riband, and fastened with a simple button. How much better, how much more rational, how much more becoming, such head-dresses as these, than the gay but useless ribands, feathers, and chapeaux of the one class, or the misshapen, uncomfortable, untidy-looking bonnets of the other! According to the present system, it is almost impossible to infer the rank of a lady from her external costume—many a milliner's girl has passed for a duchess before now—whereas by the adoption of articles of dress, founded on principles like those of the hood, some decisive marks of distinction might be obtained. Thus the rich furs and the jewels, or the gold brocade of the princess, might indeed be imitated by the merchant's wife—who at the present day is nearly her equal in wealth—the representative of political power in, what is called, a constitutional government; but the shop-girl and the dancing-mistress might break their hearts with spite, ere they could set up a system of dress in keeping with hoods of the kind alluded to. We do not recommend, that distinction of dress according to difference of rank should be carried to an undue limit; for in the present age of the world, and especially in our country, where the basis of society is shifting, and where the pivots of the commonweal are loose, too little distinction of rank is allowed; rank is not respected as it ought to be; but, nevertheless, the promiscuous jumbling together and confounding of all men is carried too far; it is one of the elements of republicanism and anarchy that we should do well to discourage. To ladies, more than to men, would distinctions of dress be useful, and with them they would be more practicable of reintroduction; any thing that would tend to augment the outward respect of men for women, and of women for each other, would be so much gained toward a revival of some of the soundest maxims of former days.

Bonnets, then, to Orcus! Hoods to the seventh heaven!

H. L. J.

GERMAN-AMERICAN ROMANCES.

The Viceroy and the Aristocracy, or Mexico in 1812.

Part the First.

The most obvious defect of the German school of romance is the universal tendency of its writers to the indefinite and periphrastic, and the consequent absence of the characteristic and the true in their descriptions both of human and of external nature. Much of this prevailing habit may perhaps be attributed to the example of Goethe, who, in his works of fiction, narrates the adventures of A and B, residing in the town of C, situate in some nameless and inscrutable section of Germany. And when, to all this mystery, is superadded the ponderous and ungraceful style of most German writers, and the Latin construction of their interminable sentences, for the solution of which the reader must wade to the final word, the lack of good original novels, and the universal preference, in Germany, of translations from French and English authors, will be readily accounted for. The main source of these defects in the German writers may be found in their retired and bookish habits. Shut up in their studies, with no companions but their books and their meerschaums, and viewing the eternal world through the loopholes of retreat, often anxious, too, to advance and illustrate some pet theory of their own, their writings smell horribly of the lamp, and are long-winded, tedious, and unnatural. Another cause of the deficiencies above-named, may perhaps be discovered in the severity of German censorship, and the apprehension that more clearness and identity in their descriptions of persons and places might be twisted into political and personal allusions.

The admitted superiority of French and English works of fiction, may be attributed to the widely different habits of the writers. Nearly all the French, and many of the English writers of the present day, are men of the world, eschewing solitude, and mixing largely in society. The good effects of this frequent collision with their fellow-men are visible in their works, many of which display a deep knowledge of human nature, a vivid power of description, and a command of dialogue, not only spirited and natural, but often rising with the occasion into dramatic point and brilliancy.

At length, however, a new and radiant star has arisen in the cloudy firmament of German fiction—a novel-writer whose works exhibit a striking example of entire exemption from the defects so evident in the great majority of his brethren. This is a nameless personage, known among German reviewers as Der Unbekannte, or the Unknown, and who has broken ground that no German writer had hitherto ventured upon. Some have supposed him to be a Pennsylvanian, a considerable part of which state was originally colonized by Germans, whose descendants still, to a large extent, preserve the language and habits of the mother country. Another report stated him to be a native German, who had emigrated to Louisiana, and established himself there as a planter. Nothing definite, in short, is known; but what is certain is, that he has been long resident in the United States and in Mexico, and has made excellent use of his opportunities for becoming acquainted with those countries and their inhabitants. His subjects are, with slight exceptions, Transatlantic, his materials original, his style singularly natural and forcible; proving that however rugged the German language may appear in the works of others, it will yield to the hand of a master, and readily adapt itself to every subject.

Our readers will probably not have forgotten a series of American, Texian, and Mexican tales and sketches, which have appeared during the last few months in the pages of this magazine. With some alterations and adaptations, intended to render them more acceptable to English tastes, [Pg 252] they are selections from the works of the writer above described. These works being published, as already mentioned, anonymously, and at prices beyond the means of most German readers, are but partially known and read even in Germany; and in this country they are entirely unknown, such portions excepted as have appeared without a name in our recent numbers. Having there presented our readers with specimens only, and for the most part of his latest works, we will now proceed to give them some account of one of his earliest and most important productions—a Mexican historical romance of striking interest, dated two years subsequently to the first revolutionary outbreak in Mexico, and exhibiting a degree of descriptive and dramatic power unparalleled in the whole range of German fiction.

When, in the year 1776, the British colonies, now known as the United States of America, made their declaration of independence, the struggle that ensued was unmarked by any circumstances of particular atrocity or blood-thirstiness, except perhaps, occasionally, on the part of the Indian allies of either party. The fight was between men of the same race, who had been accustomed to look upon each other as countrymen and brothers, and whose sympathies and feelings were in many respects in unison; it was fought manfully and fairly, as beseemed civilized men in the eighteenth century of the Christian era. Whatever wrongs, real or imaginary, the British Americans had to complain of, they had none that sufficed, even in their own eyes, to justify reprisals or cruelties beyond those which the most humanely conducted and least envenomed wars inevitably entail. But it was under strikingly different circumstances that the second of the two great republics which, with the exception of British possessions, now comprise the whole civilized portion of the North American continent, started into existence. In the former instance was seen the young and vigorous country which, having attained its majority, and feeling itself able to dispense with parental guardianship, asserted its independence, and vindicated it, with a strong hand, it is true, but yet with a warm heart and a cool judgment. In the latter case it was the spring of the caged tiger, that for years had pined in narrow prison beneath the scourge of its keeper, whom it at last turned upon and rent in its fury.

Subdued by the fierce assault of a handful of desperate adventurers, the history of Mexico, from the earliest period of its conquest, is one continuous record of oppression and cruelty on the one hand, of long and bitter suffering on the other. Deprived of its religious and customs, its priesthood and legitimate sovereigns mercilessly tortured and slain, its temples and institutions annihilated, its very history and traditions blotted out, Mexico, in the hands of the Spaniards, was rapidly transformed from a flourishing and independent empire into a huge province; while its inhabitants became a disposable horde, on whom the conquerors seemed to think they were conferring a benefit, when they made gift of them by hundreds and thousands, like sheep or oxen, to a lawless and reckless soldiery. Their houses and lands, sometimes even their wives and children, were snatched from them, and they were driven in herds to labour in the mines, or condemned to carry burdens over pathless and precipitous mountains; like the Gibeonites of old, they were made hewers of wood and drawers of water to all the congregation. Expelled from the towns, and confined to hamlets and villages, whence they were only summoned to toil in the service of their oppressors, they became in time entirely brutalized, losing the finer and more noble qualities that distinguish man from the beast of the forest, and retaining only a bitter sense of their degradation, a vivid impression of the sufferings they daily endured, and a gloomy instinctive longing after a bloody revenge.

With these Indians, who, at the commencement of the present century, composed two-fifths of the population of Mexico, may be classed a race of beings equally numerous, equally unfortunate and destitute, and still wilder and more despised—namely, the various castes sprung from the intercourse of the conquerors of the country, of their successors and slaves, with the aborigines. [Pg 253] These half-bloods, who united the apparent stupidity and real apathy of the Indian with the lawlessness and impatience of restraint of their white fathers, found themselves driven out into a world that branded them for the accident of their birth; deprived of all property, and reduced to the most ignoble employments; continual objects of fear and detestation to the better classes, because they had nothing to risk, and every thing to gain, by a political convulsion. Such were the principal elements of a population which, after centuries of patient endurance, was at last roused to enter the lists and struggle for its independence, with all the fury of the captive who breaks the long-worn fetters from his chafed and bleeding limbs, and seeks his deliverance in the utter extermination of his jailers.

For three hundred years had the Mexicans groaned under the lash of their taskmasters, ruled by monarchs whom they never beheld, and enduring innumerable evils, without nourishing a single rebellious or revolutionary thought. If the breeze of liberty that blew over from the north, occasionally awakened in their minds the idea of an improved state of things, the hope, or rather wish, speedily died away, crushed and annihilated under the well-combined system of oppression employed by the Spaniards. The nobles had ranged themselves entirely on the side of the government, the middle classes had followed their example, and the people were compelled to obey. All was quiet in Mexico, long after insurrections had broken out in Spanish colonies further south; and this state of tranquillity was not even disturbed, when news were brought of the invasion of Spain by its hereditary foe, of the occupation of Madrid by French armies, and of the scenes of butchery that took place in that capital on the second day of May 1808. The Mexicans, far from availing themselves of this favourable opportunity to proclaim their own independence, hastened to give proofs of their sympathy with the aggrieved honour of the mother country; and

on all sides resounded curses upon the head of the powerful usurper who had ousted their legitimate but unknown monarch from his throne, and now detained him in captivity. Intelligence of the Junta's declaration of war against Napoleon was received with unbounded applause, and all were striving to demonstrate their enthusiasm in the most efficient manner, when a royal decree arrived, issued by the very prince whose misfortunes they were deploring, and by which Mexico was ordered to recognise as its sovereign the brother of that usurper who had dispossessed its rightful king.

A stronger proof of Ferdinand's unworthiness to rule, could hardly have been given to the Mexicans than the decree in question. Loyalty had long been an article of faith with the whole nation; but even as the blindest superstition is sometimes metamorphosed on a sudden into total infidelity, passing from one extreme to the other, so was all feeling of loyalty utterly extinguished in the breast of the Mexican people by this instance of regal abjectness. It would have been long before they revolted against their hereditary Spanish ruler; but to find themselves given away by him in so ignominious a manner, was a degradation which they felt the more deeply from its being almost the only one that had been hitherto spared them. Discontent was universal; and by a unanimous and popular movement, the decree was publicly burned.

With just indignation did the Mexicans now discover that those persons who had hitherto most prided themselves on their loyalty and fidelity to the king and the reigning dynasty, were precisely the first to transfer their allegiance to the new sovereign. The whole of the government officers, Spaniards nearly to a man, hastened to take measures for the surrender of the nation to its new ruler, without even enquiring whether it approved of the change. One man only was in favour of a more honourable expedient, and that man was Iturrigaray, the viceroy. Well acquainted with the cowardice and cunning of his captive sovereign, the former of which qualities had dictated the decree, he had nevertheless formed a plan to preserve Mexico for him, in accordance with the wish of its population. A junta, composed of Spaniards and of the most distinguished Mexicans, was to represent the nation till the arrival of further news or orders from Europe. This plan was generally approved of by the Mexicans, who looked forward with unbounded delight to the moment when they should have a voice in the public affairs of their country. The joy was universal; but in the very midst of this joy, and of the preliminaries to the carrying out of this project, the author of it, the viceroy himself, was seized in his palace by his own countrymen, conducted with his family to Vera Cruz, and slipped off to Spain as a state prisoner.

By this lawless proceeding, it was made evident to the weakest comprehension, that so long as the Spaniard ruled, the Mexican must remain in a state of unconditional slavery; that he could never hope to obtain a share in the management of his country; and that the act of violence of which Iturrigaray had been the victim, had been solely caused by the disposition he had shown to pave the way for the gradual emancipation of the Creoles. From this moment may be dated the decision of the Mexicans to get rid of the Spaniards at any price; and a conspiracy was immediately organized, which was joined by at least a hundred of the principal Creoles, and by a far larger number of the middle classes, and of the military—the object being to shake off the ignominious yoke that pressed so heavily upon them. The treason of one of the conspirators, who on his death-bed, in confession, betrayed his confederates, accelerated the outbreak of the plot.

It was at nine o'clock on the evening of the 15th September 1810, that Don Ignacio Allende y Unzaga, captain in the royal regiment *de la Reyna*, came in all haste from Gueretaro to Dolores, and burst into the dwelling of Padre Hidalgo, the parish priest of the latter place, with news that the conspiracy had been discovered, and an order issued to take prisoners, dead or alive, all those concerned in it. With the prospect of certain death before their eyes, the two conspirators held a short consultation, and then hastened to announce to their friends their firm decision to stake their lives upon the freedom of their country. Two officers, the lieutenants Abasalo and Aldama, and several musicians, friends and companions of the cura, joined them, and by these men, thirteen in number, was the great Mexican revolution begun.

Whilst Hidalgo, a crucifix in his left hand, a pistol in his right, hurried to the prison and set at liberty the criminals confined there, Allende proceeded to the houses of the Spanish inhabitants, and compelled them to deliver up their plate and ready money. Then, with the cry of "*Viva la Independencia, y muera el mal gobierno!*" the insurgents paraded the streets of Dolores. The whole of the Indian population ranged themselves under the banner of their beloved curate, who, in a few hours, found himself at the head of some thousand men. They took the road to Miguel el Grande, and, before reaching that place, were joined by eight hundred recruits from Allende's regiment. Shouting their war-cry of "Death to the Gachupins!"[5] the rebels reached San Felipe; in three days their numbers amounted to twenty thousand; at Zelaya, a whole regiment of Mexican infantry, and a portion of the cavalry regiment of the Principe, came over to them. On they went, "Mueran los Gachupinos!" still their cry, to Guanaxato, the richest city in Mexico, where they were joined by some more troops. Indians kept flowing in from all sides, and the mob, for it was little more, soon reached fifty thousand men. The fortified alhondega, or granary, at Guanaxato, was taken by storm; the Spaniards and Creoles who had shut themselves up there with their treasures, were massacred; upwards of five millions of hard dollars fell into the hands of the insurgents. This success brought more Indians from all parts of the country. There were soon eighty thousand men collected together, but amongst them were hardly four thousand muskets. Pressing forward, by way of Valladolid, towards Mexico, they totally defeated Colonel Truxillo at Las Cruces, and, on the 31st October, looked down from the rising ground of Santa Fé upon the capital city, within the walls of which were thirty thousand Léperos,[6] who awaited but

the signal to break into open insurrection. Only two thousand troops of the line garrisoned Mexico; Calleja, the commander-in-chief, was a hundred leagues off; another general, the Count of Cadena, sixty; in the mountains the people were rising in favour of the revolution; another patriot chief was marching from Tlalnepatla to support Hidalgo, while the viceroy was preparing to retire to Vera Cruz. The fate of Mexico was, according to all appearance, about to be decided; one bold assault, and the Indians would again be the rulers of the country. But on the very day after their arrival within sight of Mexico, Hidalgo, with his hundred and ten thousand men, commenced a retreat. The capital was saved; and from that day may be dated the sufferings and reverses of the patriots.

Or the 7th November, at Aculco, Hidalgo met the united Spanish and Creole army, and was defeated in the combat that ensued. Soon afterwards, Allende experienced a like misfortune at Marfil; and a third action, near Calderon, decided the fate of the campaign. Hidalgo himself was betrayed at Acalito, with fifty of his companions, and put to death.

The first act of the revolutionary drama was over, within six months after the bloody curtain had been raised; but the torch of insurrection, far from being extinguished by the fall of its bearer, had divided and multiplied itself, as if to spread the conflagration with more certainty. Thousands of those who had escaped from the battle-fields of Aculco, Marfil, and Calderon, now spread themselves through the different provinces, and commenced a war of extermination that was destined, slowly but surely, to sweep away their unappeasable tyrants. Most of these bands were commanded by priests, lawyers, or adventurers, who acted without plan or concert, and possessed little or no qualification for their post as leaders, save their hatred of the Gachupins. But few of the better class of Creoles were to be found amongst the insurgents; and the strife was to all appearance between the Indians and half-bloods, on the one hand, and the property and intelligence of the country, represented by the Spaniards and Creoles, on the other.

The Creoles, although considerably less oppressed than the coloured races, had felt themselves more so; because, being more enlightened and civilized, they had a livelier feeling and perception of the yoke than the Indians and half-castes. Children and descendants of the Spaniards, who looked with sovereign contempt upon every thing Creole, even to their own offspring, the white Mexicans imbibed hatred of Spain almost with their mothers' milk. Far from enjoying what the letter of the law gave them, the same rights as their European fathers, they found themselves driven back among the people; while all offices and posts were filled by Spaniards, who, for the most part, came to Mexico in rags, and left it possessed of immense wealth. Even the possession of magnificent estates, with their incalculable subterranean treasures, was of precarious benefit to the Creoles; for the Spaniards paid small respect to the laws of property, and, in the name of their royal master, assumed unlimited power over the land.

The bitterness of feeling consequent on this state of things, at length roused into activity the latent desire of freedom from the Spanish rule, a freedom which was to have been obtained by the conspiracy already referred to. On a given day, there was to have been a general rising throughout Mexico; all the Spanish officers and *employés* were to have been arrested, and their places filled by Creoles; the seaports were to have been seized and garrisoned, so as to prevent succours coming to the Spaniards from the neighbouring island of Cuba. The discovery and premature outbreak of the plot, as already mentioned, were the causes of its failure. Hidalgo, who was too deeply compromised to recede, had put himself at the head of the revolution, and enraged against the Creoles, who had, for the most part, managed to draw their heads out of the noose, commenced with his Indians a war of extermination that spared neither Spaniards nor Creoles. This terrible blunder on the part of the soldier-priest, of itself decided the fate of the outbreak. The Creoles were compelled to unite with the very Spaniards whose downfall they had been plotting; and it was mainly through their co-operation that the three battles with the rebels had been won. The Spaniards, however, instead of being grateful for the assistance they had received from the Creoles, persisted in looking upon the latter as a pack of unlucky rebels, whose treason had not even been rendered respectable by success.

Enraged at the revolt that had threatened to deprive their king of his supremacy, and themselves of the plunder of the richest country in the world, the Spaniards applied themselves to obviate the possibility of any future rebellion, by pretty much the same measures that a bee-hunter takes to secure himself against the stings of the bees before seizing their honey, namely, by fire and the axe. Twenty-four cities, both large and small, and innumerable villages, were razed to the ground during the first eighteen months of the revolution, and their inhabitants utterly exterminated, as a punishment for having favoured the insurgents. Even then, these bigoted and barbarous servants of legitimacy were not satisfied with this wholesale slaughter. Through the medium of the church, and in the name of the divine Trinity and of the blessed Virgin, they proclaimed a solemn amnesty, and those among the credulous and unfortunate rebels who availed themselves of it were mercilessly massacred. This infamous and blasphemous piece of bad faith rendered any pacification of the country impossible, and went far towards uniting the whole population against its contemptible and blood-thirsty tyrants.

Amongst the adventurers who had joined Hidalgo on his triumphant march from Guanaxato to Mexico, was his old friend and schoolfellow, Morellos, rector of Nucupetaro. Hidalgo received him as a brother, and comnissioned him to raise the standard of revolt in the south-western provinces of Mexico. Morellos, who was then sixty years of age, repaired to his appointed post with only five followers. In Petalan he was joined by twenty negroes, to whom he promised their freedom; and soon afterwards several Creoles ranged themselves under his banner. Unlike the unfortunate Hidalgo, he began the war on a small scale, and after the fashion of those guerillas

who in Spain had done so much mischief to the French armies. Gradually enlarging the sphere of his operations, he had, during a sixteen months' warfare, gained several not unimportant advantages over the Spanish generals. Report represented him as a man of grave and earnest character—quite the converse of the hasty and unreflecting Hidalgo—of sound judgment, irreproachable morals, and far more liberal and extended views than could have been expected from the confined education of a Mexican priest. The influence he possessed over the Indians was said to be unbounded.

At the time at which the action of the book now before us commences, namely, upon a carnival day of the year 1812, Morellos had marched into the vicinity of Mexico at the head of his little army. The principal leaders of the patriots, Vittoria, Guerero, Bravo, Ossourno, and others, had placed themselves under his orders; and the moral weight of his name seemed to be at last producing what had been wanting since the death of Hidalgo—namely, that unanimity in the operations of the patriots, and that degree of discipline amongst their troops, which were calculated to gain them the confidence of the nation.

The first two chapters of the "Viceroy" are of so striking a nature, and give such strange and startling glimpses of the state of Mexican society and feeling at that period, that, with some slight abridgement, we shall here translate them both.

Chapter the First.

"'Tis known, at least it should be, that throughout
   All countries of the Catholic persuasion,
Some weeks before Shrove Tuesday comes about,
   The people take their fill of recreation,
And buy repentance, ere they grow devout,
   However high their rank, or low their station,
With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking, masking,
And other things which may be had for asking."
Byron.

The siesta was over; and the profound stillness in which the capital of New Spain had been buried during the preceding two hours, was suddenly broken by the hum of innumerable voices. The noise, which commenced in the suburbs, extended itself rapidly, and increased almost to a roar, scaring away the gallinazos and other birds of prey, that were as usual seeking food in the streets and squares of the city of Mexico. Thousands of the inhabitants arose from their resting-places under the porticoes of houses, churches, and palaces, or hurried forth from the great bazar, eager to celebrate the carnival with that boundless mirth and license by which Roman Catholic nations seem to console themselves for the fasts and privations that are to succeed it.

The variety of the costumes in which the maskers had arrayed themselves was endless, while the profanity of some of them was no less remarkable. Here might be seen a gigantic *tenatero*, or porter, in a sergeant's jacket, and with the enormous cocked hat of a Spanish general upon his head, a globe and sceptre in one hand, in the other a pasteboard cross, strutting proudly about in the character of the Redeemer of Atolnico;[7] while around him a party of Indians, Zambos, and Metises, metamorphosed into Apostles, Pharisees, and Jewish women, performed dances of very questionable propriety in honour of their divine master. In another place, Adam and Eve were incessantly driven out of Paradise by an angel with a flaming sword—the three figures resembling very much the same persons, as they used to be represented in the halfpenny woodcuts of the past century. Beside them, *Dios el Padre* led off a dance to the sound of a cracked guitar, which St Cecilia was twanging as an accompaniment to the nasal melody of the gangaso;[8] and a little further on, the child Jesus, mounted on a jackass, was flying into Egypt, and squirting, as he went, streams of water into the open windows of houses, and into the faces of the passers-by. Mingled with the mummers were crowds of loathsome *léperos*; and again, amongst these might be seen numerous groups of perfumed dandies and elegantly dressed ladies, who contrasted with the throng of Indians as swamp-lilies do with the filth and corruption of a pestilential marsh. In spite of the broad sunlight, rockets were going off on all sides, to the great amusement of the Indians, who burst out into screams of wild delight each time that one of the fiery missiles caused alarm and confusion amongst the gaily attired dames who thronged the balconies, and gazed down from their windows upon the motley scene. The contrast of all this movement and uproar with the silence and solitude that had reigned so few moments before, was startling. It was as if the earth had suddenly opened and vomited forth the thousands of Mulattoes and Zambos, Indians, Metises, and Creoles,[9] that now sang, danced, chattered, screamed, and shouted—doing their utmost worthily to play their part in the time-honored saturnalia of the Romish church.

Differing from the custom of more refiled, although perhaps not more enlightened, countries, only a very few of the numerous parties of maskers seemed to aim, by their costume or action, at a satire on the follies, foibles, or occurrences of the times. Now and then, however, an exception was to be met with; and this was especially remarkable in a group which it becomes necessary here to describe.

It consisted of twelve persons, the majority of whom were fantastically attired in the national costumes of the various Indian tribes. These were grouped round a *carro*, or two-wheeled cart in so picturesque a manner, that it was easy to see that their performance had been preconcerted

and rehearsed. They wore symbols of mourning, and seemed acting as pall-bearers and followers of a funeral; while upon the cart itself were two figures, in which the horrible and the comic were blended after a most extraordinary fashion. One of them was a Torso, from whose breast and headless neck, and on the stumps of his arms and legs, blood was incessantly dropping, and as fast as it dropped, it was greedily licked up by several persons in Spanish masks and dresses. The mutilated form seemed still to have life in it, for it groaned and gave out hollow sounds of agony and complaint; at the same time struggling, but in vain, to shake off a monster that sat vampire-like upon its body, and dug its tiger claws into the breast of the sufferer. The aspect of this monster was as strange as that of its victim. It had the cowl, and the sleek but sinister countenance of well-fed Dominican friar; on its right hand was fixed a blazing torch, on its left stood a dog that barked continually; its head was covered with a brass basin, apparently meant to represent the barber helmet of the knight of La Mancha. From the shoulders of the figure protruded a pair of dusky wings, not unlike those with which griffins and other fabulous monsters are represented in old books of heraldry; its back was terminated by the tail of the coyote, or Mexican wolf; while the claws with which it seemed digging into the very bowels of the Torso, were those of caguar or tiger.

This singular pageant passed through the Tacuba street into that of San Agustin, thence through the Plateria and the Calle Aguila into the quarter of the city known as the Trespana, where it came to a halt before the hotel of the same name. During this progress, the crowd of Indians, Metises, and other coloured races, had been augmented by numerous parties of Creoles; while the Spaniards contented themselves with gazing distrustfully at the procession from the windows of their houses. The strange group was now surrounded by thousands of Zambos, Creoles, Metises, and Indians, presenting a variety and originality of costume, physiognomy, and colour—a contact and contrast of the most costly and sumptuous habiliments with the meanest and most disgusting rags, such as it would be in vain to seek in any other country than Mexico.

Amongst the most elegantly dressed of those whom the enigmatical masquerade attracted, was a young man, of whom it would have bee difficult to say to what race he belonged. His face was covered by a closely-fitting silken mask, in which every hue of the rainbow was blended, but which, nevertheless, was adapted so admirably to his features, as at first to leave the spectators in doubt whether it were not the real colour of his skin. He skipped airily out of the fonda of Trespana into the street, cast a keen but hasty glance around him, and then began to make his way through the mob that surrounded the pageant. There was a nameless something in his manner and appearance that caused the throng to open him a willing passage towards the object of general curiosity.

"Foolish mob! brainless mob! swinish mob!" cried the stranger, when he at length stood beside the cart upon which the monster was still rending its hapless victim; "whither are ye running, and pressing, and crowding, and what are ye come to see? Know ye not that in Mexico it is forbidden to see, especially to see clearly?"

The tone of the speaker, his sudden appearance, and the bold originality of his manner, contrasted strongly with the timidity of the other Creoles, who had all in their turn approached the cart cautiously, viewed it for a few moments with an air of mistrust, and then withdrawn themselves to a distance, in order to await in safety what might next ensue. The daring address of the new-comer, so different from this prudent behaviour, did not fail to attract universal attention.

"What now, men of Mexico, or of Anahuac, if you prefer that name, Aztecs and Tenochtitlans and Othomites, and Metises and Zambos and Salta-atras, and whites, whom the devil fly away with," added he in a lower tone, "or at least with one-twentieth of them?"[10]

"Bravo!" vociferated hundreds of Metises and Zambos, whom the last few words had suddenly enlightened as to the political opinions of the speaker. "Bravo! *Escuchad!* Hear him!"

The object of this applause was apparently busied examining the composition of the pageant. When silence was restored, he again turned to the crowd.

"And so you would like to know what it means?" said he. "Fools! know ye not that knowledge is forbidden? And yet, if you are any better than a parcel of mules, you may see and understand."

"And if we *are* no better than mules?" cried a voice.

"Then will I be your *arriero*, and drive you," replied the stranger laughing, and tripping round the cart. "Mules! ay, *Madre de Dios!* that are ye, and have been all the days of your lives, ever since the gloomy Gachupin yonder"—and he pointed to the monster, half monk, half beast—"has chosen for his resting-place the body of the poor unhappy creature, whom some call Anahuac, some Mexitli, and some Guatemozin.[11] Mules, ay, threefold mules! Poor mules!" added he, in a tone of mingled compassion and contempt.

"Poor mules!" sighed the surrounding spectators, gazing alternately at the speaker and at the bleeding Torso.

On a sudden, the masked cavalier raised the cowl of the monster-monk, and the severed head of the Torso rolled out from it. The features were Indian, modelled and coloured in so masterly a manner, that the resemblance they were intended to convey struck every body, and hundreds of voices simultaneously exclaimed—

"Guatemozin!"

"Guatemozin!" was repeated from mouth to mouth, while the *pregonero* or crier, as the crowd had already christened the speaker, continued to lift the veil from the significant allegory before him.

"See!" cried he, "here have his claws struck deepest. 'Tis in Guanaxato and Guadalajara."

A shudder seemed to run through the crowd.

"'Tis Tio Gachupin," continued the pregonero with a strange laugh, "who would fain play with you the same game that he did three centuries since with poor Guatemozin. And see! 'tis Guatemozin's ghost that appears bleeding before ye, and claims vengeance at your hands!"

It had now become evident to the surrounding crowd, that the pageant had a deep and dangerous political meaning. The spectators had greatly increased, and were each moment increasing, in number; the flat roofs and the *miradores*, or latticed balconies, of the surrounding houses, were crowded with gazers, while the street presented the appearance of a sea of heads. A deep silence reigned, broken only by an occasional whisper, or by the peculiar kind of low shuddering murmur that the Indian is apt to utter when reminded of the power and prosperity of his forefathers. Suddenly there was a loud cry.

"Vigilancia! Vigilancia!" was shouted from a distant balcony. The word passed from mouth to mouth.

"Vigilancia!" repeated the pregonero; "*gracias*, thanks, Señoras y Señores," added he, with a laugh and a slight bow, and then was lost in the crowd. There was a movement round the ghastly group upon the cart, which the next instant disappeared; and when the alguazils, by the aid of their staves, had forced themselves a passage to the spot where the pageant had been, no trace of it remained save fragments of wood and pasteboard, that were showered from all sides upon their detested heads. The crowd itself separated and dispersed in different directions; no inconsiderable portion of it entering the hotel, in front of which the scene had passed.

This hotel or *fonda*, the first in Mexico at that time, was then, as now, a great resort of the highest and lowest classes of the population—that is to say, of the greatest luxury and most squalid misery that the world can show. The ground floor was used as a sort of bazar, in which various articles of Mexican manufacture were exposed for sale; while the rooms on the upper story were appropriated to the reception of guests, and furnished with a sumptuousness that contrasted strangely with the appearance of the majority of those who frequented them.

In the first of these rooms stood a long and broad table, somewhat resembling a billiard-table, but upon which, instead of balls and cues, were piles of silver and gold, amounting to thousands of dollars; while the wardrobe of the players, who sat and stood around, did not appear to be worth as many farthings. Excepting the jingle of the money, and the words *Señor* and *Señoria*, occasionally uttered, scarcely a sound was heard; but upon the excited and eager countenances of the gamblers, which varied with every change in their luck, might be read the flushed exultation of the winners, and the suppressed fury of the less fortunate—a fury that, to judge from their fiery glances and set teeth, might momentarily be expected to break out into fierce and deadly strife.

The occupants of the second saloon were, if possible, still more repulsive than those of the first. Men, women, and children—some half naked—some with the most loathsome rags for a covering—were lying, sitting, squatting, and crouching in every part of the room—some sunk into a kind of doze—others, on the contrary, actively engaged in ridding their own and their children's heads of those inhabitants that seemed to constitute the sole wealth of this class of people—an occupation which they pursued with as great zeal and apparent interest, as if it had been absolutely essential to the proper celebration of the festival-day. A third room was devoted to the chocolate and sangaree drinkers, who might be seen emptying their cups and glasses with as much satisfaction and relish, as if the sight of the poverty and squalor that surrounded them gave additional zest to the draught; while, all about them, between and under chairs, tables, and benches, the wretched Léperos lay grovelling. Parties of richly-dressed Spaniards and Creoles, both men and women, their eyes still heavy from the siesta, were each moment entering, preceded by negro or mulatto girls carrying cigars and sweetmeats, and screaming out, "*Plaza, plaza, por nuestras señoras!*—Make way for our ladies!" A summons, or rather command, which the *cortejos*, with their sticks and sabres, were ever ready to enforce.

"*Caramba! Que bella y querida compania!*" exclaimed, on a sudden, the same voice that a short time previously had explained the dangerous allegory in the street below. The owner of the voice, however, wore another mask and dress, although his present costume, like his previous one, was that of a *caballero* or gentleman. He glanced round the room with that supercilious air which young men of fashion and quality are apt to assume when amongst persons whom they consider immeasurably inferior to themselves.

"*C—jo à la bonanza!* Here's to try my luck!" cried he, stepping up to the gambling table, and placing a rouleau of dollars on a card, which the next moment won. "Bravo, bravissimo! Doble!"

He won a second time, and placed the stake, which was now a heavy one, upon a fresh card.

"Triplo!" cried he. Fortune again favoured him. His luck still holding good, he won a fourth time; and the banker, rising from his seat with a savage curse upon his lips, pushed over the whole of

his bank to the fortunate player, and left the table with a look of hate and rage that one would have thought must be the prelude to a stab. Nothing of the sort, however, ensued. The man removed from his ears the two reals which, according to Mexican usage, he had stuck there for luck; called to the waiter, and uttered the word "*cigarros!*" as he showed one coin, and "*aguardiente de caña!*" as he exhibited the other. Having thus disposed of his last real, he draped his cloak over his shoulder with such skill, that the end of it hung down to his heels, concealing the tattered condition of that very essential part of his dress called trousers. He then awaited, with perfect composure, the refreshment he had ordered. Meanwhile, the fortunate winner took a couple of reals from a small purse, stuck one in each ear, accompanying the action with the sign of the cross, and prepared in his turn to hold the bank.

"*Plaza, gavillas!*" cried several voices just at this moment. "Make room, knaves, for the señoras!" and in came a party of Spanish soldiers, accompanied by their mistresses—the latter dressed out in a style that many European ladies of the highest rank might well have envied. Before each of them walked three mulatto girls, whose sole dress consisted of a short and loosely-fitting silk petticoat, reaching to the knees; their hair being confined in nets of gold thread, and their arms encircled with bracelets of the same metal. One of these hand-maidens bore an open box of cigars, out of which the lady and her cortejo from time to time helped themselves; another had a basket with various comfits, which was also frequently put in requisition, and the third carried the purse.

"Plaza!" was again the cry; and at the same time, the companions of the ladies, well-conditioned sub-officers of the Spanish troops, swung their canes and sabres, and the terrified Indians, and Metises, and Zambos tumbled and rolled off their benches and chairs as if they had been mowed down.

"*Demonio!* What is all this?" exclaimed the new banker, who had already taken his seat at the table, but now sprang suddenly up. "*Por todos bastos et bastas de todo el mundo*—By every card in the pack!"——

He spoke in so threatening a tone, and his gesticulation was so thoroughly Mexican in its vehemence, that three of the sergeants sprang upon him at once.

"*Gojo, que quieres?* Dog! what do you mean?"

"Dog!" repeated the Mexican, and his right hand disappeared under his cloak—a movement which was immediately imitated by the owners of the white, black, brown, and greenish physiognomies by which he was surrounded. The three Spaniards stepped back as precipitately as they had advanced. Meanwhile, the fourth sergeant approached the table, and, seizing upon the cards, invited the company to stake their money against a bank which he put down. The effect of this invitation was no less extraordinary than rapid. The same men who, an instant before, had been ready to espouse their countryman's quarrel to the death—for such had been the meaning of the mysterious fumbling under the cloaks—no sooner perceived that the cards had changed masters, than they called to the Mexican with one voice—

"*Por el amor de Dios, señor*—leave us in peace, and God be with your señoria!"

"Ay, go, and the devil take you!" growled the Spaniards.

The young man gazed in turn at his countrymen and at the sergeants; and then, as if struck by the curious contrast between the courtesy of the former and the rudeness of the latter, he laughed right out, swept together his winnings, and walked away from the table, whistling a bolero.

The sort of ramble which the masked cavalier now commenced through the adjoining saloons, seemed for some time to have no particular object. He strutted across one, paused for a moment in the next to take a sip out of a friend's liqueur glass, dipped a biscuit into the chocolate of one acquaintance, and helped another to finish his sangaree; and so lounged and loitered about, till he found himself in the last of the suite of rooms, which was then unoccupied. Stepping up to a door at the further end of the apartment, he knocked at it, at the same time uttering the words, "*Ave Maria purissima!*"

The door was opened.

"*Sin peccado concebida!*" added the Mexican, when he saw that the occupants of the room did not make the usual reply to his pious but customary salutation. "For God's sake, señores, is there neither piety nor politeness among ye? Could you not say, '*Sin peccado concebida?*'"

Chapter the Second.

"Verdades diré en camisa,
Poco menos que desnuda."
Quevedo.

The company assembled in the room which the masked cavalier entered consisted of some five-and-twenty young men, in whose picturesque Spanish-Mexican costume, velvets, silk, and gold embroidery had been employed with lavish profusion. The air of scornful superciliousness with which they glanced at the intruder, and the indifference with which they seemed to regard the heaps of gold that lay glittering on the table, denoted them to be practised gamblers, or, which in

Mexico is the same thing, noblemen of the highest rank. The saloon was richly furnished; chairs, sofas, and tables of the most costly woods, and splendidly gilt, cushions, drapery, and chandeliers, after the newest fashion.

"Sixteen to the doubloon!" cried the new-comer, apparently noways abashed by the contemptuous manner of his reception, as he stepped up to the table, and placed a roll of dollars upon a card.

"*No pueden.* It cannot be," replied the banker, pushing back the silver with his wooden rake.

"It cannot be," echoed several of the players in the same short contemptuous tone. "*Una sociedad con fuero.* A private and privileged society." [Pg 263]

"*Una sociedad con fuero!*" repeated the stranger, shaking his head. "All due respect for *fueros*, so long as they are respected and respectable. But know you not, Señores, that *our* fuero is the older one?"

"Thy fuero older, *gato*?" drawled one of the noblemen.

"Ay, truly is it. 'Tis the fuero of the carnival, and dates from the time that Mother Church first fell into her dotage."

"Mother Church in her dotage! Knave, what mean ye?"

"Your Señorias need only look into the street to see what I mean. She has practised folly till she has become a fool. 'Tis just like the mother country, who has drunk Mexican blood till she has grown bloodthirsty."

The young cavaliers became suddenly attentive.

"*Paz! Señor*," said the banker, "such words are dangerous. Begone, in God's name, and beware of the alguazils and the Cordelada."[12]

"*Paz!*" replied the stranger; "peace, do you say? Would you have peace and quiet? They are no more to be found in Mexico. Quiet!" repeated he, with a fiery enthusiasm in his voice and gesture, "you will have as little of it as Pedrillo had—

"No rest by day
No sleep by night,
For poor Pedrillo,
The luckless wight."

And he broke, on a sudden, into the beautiful and piquant air of Pedrillo, which he sang with a taste and spirit that made the assembled cavaliers gaze at him open-mouthed. At the same moment, a guitar and castanets were heard in the adjoining room, accompanying the song.

Either the charm of the surprise, or the originality of the individual who thus appositely introduced this popular fragment from the masterpiece of a favourite composer, produced an electrifying effect upon the young noblemen. They sprang from their chairs, and, at the conclusion of the song, a score of doubloons fell ringing at the feet of the singer.

"*Otra vez!* Encore, encore!" was the universal cry.

"Señorias," said the banker, who alone appeared dissatisfied at this interruption, and now approached the stranger; "I warn you, Señorias! I recognise in this *caballero*"—he spoke the word in an ironical and depreciating tone—"the same *gentilhombre* whom the alguazils were so lately seeking. Beware! his presence may get us into trouble."

"Ha! are you the fellow who played the alguazils such a trick?" cried several of the young men.

Instead of replying, the stranger stamped with his foot; and, as if the stamp had been the blow of an enchanter's wand, two folding-doors, opposite to those by which he had entered the apartment, suddenly opened, and four dancing figures, with flesh-coloured silk masks upon their faces, and clothed in tightly-fitting dresses of the same material, bounded into the room.

"Señorias! *Por el amor de Dios!*" cried the banker, imploringly.

As he spoke, two guitar-players, who accompanied the dancers, began twanging their instruments; and the young men, absorbed in contemplation of the graceful and luxuriant forms of the two female dancers, paid no attention to his entreaties and warnings. Hastily gathering up his bank, he packed it into a box, and left the saloon with all possible despatch.

And now, to the music of the guitars and the clatter of the castanets, the two couples of dancers began a performance, of which the most vivid pen would fail to portray the graceful and fascinating voluptuousness. They commenced with the bolero, and thence glided, with a stamping of the feet and whirling of the arms, into the more licentious fandango. But the sensual character of the latter dance was so far veiled and refined by the grace and elegance of the dancers, that [Pg 264] what is usually a mere appeal to the senses, became in their performances the very poetry of motion. The young noblemen remained as though entranced, their eyes fixed upon the dancers, and totally unable to give utterance to their delight. While thus absorbed, they were suddenly startled by a hoarse inarticulate sound, proceeding from the further corner of the room. At the same moment the dance ceased; dancers and musicians retired through the door by which they

had entered, and a figure became visible that will probably excite the astonishment of the reader as much as it did that of the young cavaliers who now first perceived it.

Upon an ottoman extending along one side of the apartment, there reclined, in a half-lying, half-sitting posture, a person whose dress was that of a Moslem of the highest rank. His robe and turban were both green, and in the folds of the latter was interwoven a chain, or wreath, of precious stones, of extraordinary beauty and apparent value. In striking contrast with this rich attire were the features of the Turk, which were singularly repulsive. A low forehead receded from above a pair of bluish-grey eyes, in the glazed, hard look of which, perfidy, cruelty, and pride seemed to have taken up their abode. From between the eyes protruded a long nose, curved like that of a bird of prey, over an upper lip indicative of gluttony and the coarsest animal propensities; the mouth was large, the lower lip hung relaxed and slavering over a long square chin. The complexion was in good keeping with the false and malignant expression of the countenance, being of an indefinite tint, that could be classed under no particular colour.

"*Por el amor de Dios!*" cried the young noblemen, now really alarmed. "What is this? What does it mean?" And they hesitatingly approached the ottoman, and then again shrunk back, as if scared by some loathsome and unnatural object.

Beside the figure two other Moslems were kneeling, one in a green, the other in a snow-white turban. Their hands were folded upon their breasts, and their faces bowed till they almost touched the carpet.

"Brr!" growled the Moslem in a tone more like the grunt of a wild boar than the voice of a human being, and stretching himself peevishly out upon the ottoman. His kneeling attendants started, rose respectfully to their feet, and taking a step backwards, began conversing in a subdued tone, and without appearing aware of the presence of the Mexicans, who on their part were so bewildered by this strange scene that they seemed to have lost the power of speech and movement.

"Zil ullah!" exclaimed he of the white turban. "Allah be with us! His sublimity has again spoken! Spoken, but how little!" added he in a disconsolate tone. "Right willingly would Ben Haddi commence this very day a barefooted pilgrimage"——

"And Bultshere," interrupted the other, "would kiss the black stone of Ararat"——

"If," resumed the first speaker, "his sublimity might be thereby healed of his malady. Zil ullah! 'Tis three days since his highness tasted of the bean of Mocha, or of the glorious juice that transports the true believer, while yet living, into the realms of Paradise."

"Three days," continued his companion, "since he deigned to permit the soft caresses of the beauteous Zuleima, or the ardent embraces of the dark-eyed Fatima. What can be the cause?"

"Indigestion," quoth Green-turban.

"Cares of state," rejoined White-turban. "We must amuse his highness. There are new Almas and Odalisques arrived. He will perhaps deign to witness their performance."

And so saying, he approached the Caliph, for such was the high rank of the personage whom the sitting Moslem was intended to represent, and throwing himself prostrate on the ground, preferred his request.

A reply was returned in a sort of affirmative grunt, whereupon the vizier arose in great joy, stepped back to his former place, and after giving three distinct but not loud stamps upon the floor, retreated with his companion into a corner of the room. Scarcely had he done so, when, to the redoubled astonishment of the Mexican cavaliers, the folding-doors again flew open, and four couples of dancers tripped in, attired in costumes so rich and magnificent as to eclipse even that of the Caliph. They were followed by four negroes, two of whom bore guitars of Moorish make and appearance, the third the East Indian *tomtom* or drum, and the fourth the Persian flute.

For a brief space the eight dancers stood in mute expectation, awaiting a signal to begin. This was given by a Brr! from the Sultan, who at the same time vouchsafed to raise his head, and manifest an intention of witnessing the entertainment offered him.

An adagio on the guitars, gradually increasing in volume, and in which the tap of the tomtom mingled like the rolling of distant thunder, opened the dance. Then came the sharp and yet mellow clack of the dancers' castanets, and finally the soft tones of the flute, blending the whole into harmony. The dancers seemed to follow and imitate by their action each change of the music: at first, and with wonderful grace and elegance, they fell into a group or *tableau*, their silken scarfs, of transparent texture and bright and varied colours, floating in the air like rainbows, behind which glanced the houri-like forms of the women. Presently the music glided from the adagio into the allegro; the steps of the dancers became quicker, their gestures more animated, the play of their limbs more voluptuous. With the exception of one couple, every glance and movement of the performers seemed directed or aimed at the Caliph. This couple consisted of the most sylph-like and exquisitely formed of the four female dancers, and of a Persian warrior, who was pursuing her, and from whom she strove coyly to escape. With admirable grace and skill did these two figures detach themselves from their companions, in order to continue a while their simulated flight and pursuit. The fairy feet of the fugitive scarcely touched the ground, and such charm and fascination were in her movements that the Caliph several times raised his eyelids and gave a grunt of approval. At each of these indications on the part of the despot, the anxiety of the

poor Persian seemed to increase till it bordered on despair, and so naturally was this despair portrayed as to draw a loud bravo from the spectators: only the Caliph appeared insensible to the refined play of these elegant dancers. Once or twice, indeed, his dull eyes seemed to emit a ray of animal delight, but this quickly faded away; and even the triumph of the Persian, when his mistress finally fell panting and yielding into his arms, was insufficient to rekindle it.

"Brr!" cried the Commander of the Faithful, in the same harsh grunting voice as before; "and you call that pastime, that which we have seen a thousand and one times? By the beard of the Prophet, vizier," he continued in a louder tone, "if I have no sleep to-day, nor appetite to-morrow, there is the bowstring for you, and the stake for your Almas!"

At this terrible threat the vizier stood speechless with horror, while the mouth of the alarmed emir gaped to an unnatural extent: the dancers paused, as though suddenly turned to stone, in the very same posture in which the menace of the Caliph had surprised them. One of the *bayadères* remained with her leg in a horizontal position, the point of her toe almost in her partner's open mouth; another, in the terror of the moment, had entangled her foot in the ample robe of the emir, who now began to run up and down in his extremity of consternation, compelling her to dance after him on one leg; in short, all the actors in this strange scene expressed so naturally, by dumb show, their amazement and alarm, that the Caliph burst into a loud fit of laughter.

"Allah Akbar!" cried vizier and emir and dancers, with one voice, and then all burst forth in loud praises of the goodness of Allah, who, through the agency of his slaves, had done so great a wonder, and extracted a refreshing laugh from his highness. This unanimous demonstration of affection on the part of his loving subjects, seemed pleasing to the potentate. He nodded, and the emir, encouraged by this sign of approbation, ventured to draw nearer.

"With all submission"—he began.

"By the Prophet's beard!" interrupted the Caliph, "we know what thou wouldst say before it is spoken. We require not a vizier to talk, but to act as a leech, and draw blood where it is too rich or corrupt. How thinkest thou? If I were to impale one of these lazy dancers, would terror make the others dance better?"

"On the contrary, please your highness, it would lame them. 'Twere better to impale a swine from the herd called the people—one who possesses zechins. Your highness's treasury is empty, and these Almas are as poor as the mice in the churches of the Giaours, and withal right useful servants of the state."

"Thou sayest well; by the Prophet, they *are* useful servants of the state," cried the Caliph, stroking his belly as he spoke, "and they may be assured of our grace and favour. Strike off the heads of some dozen or two knaves in the quarter of the Bezestein, and let the half of their zechins be given to these poor devils."

There was a gentle tapping at the door, which the vizier hastened to open, and returned with the news that the chief of the mollahs humbly solicited the favour of an audience.

"Again cares of state, and nothing but cares of state!" groaned the Caliph, allowing his head to fall on his breast as if in reflection. "'Tis well," he said at last in a peevish tone. "We will receive the spiritual shepherd of our kingdom. Away with these mummers! 'tis not fitting that the expounder of the Koran should find us in such carnal company."

Dancers and musicians now stepped into the background, and the doors opened to admit the tall figure of the head mollah, who entered with eyes fixed upon the floor; and, on finding himself in presence of the Caliph, knelt down and touched the carpet with his forehead.

"Speak thy business," said the Sultan, "and quickly. We have been already much engrossed with affairs of government, more, perhaps, than is good for the feeble state of our bodily health."

"Bismillah!" quoth the high priest gravely, "we have caused prayers to be offered up from each minaret of the mosques, and have commanded that all true believers should bestrew themselves with dust and ashes. We have sent men upon the holy pilgrimage, and to kiss the black stone of Ararat in order that the sufferings of your sublimity may be alleviated."

"Thou hast done well, oh mollah!" replied the Sultan.

"Luminary of the World, whose light is brighter than the sun," continued the head mollah; "we have also, with regard to this malady of your highness, consulted the book that serves us instead of all the wisdom of the Giaour, and therein have we found that Haroun al Raschid was afflicted with a like evil, which he unquestionably brought on himself through too great attention to the duties of his government."

"Hold there, mollah!" interrupted the Caliph in a voice of thunder, "and weigh thy words before thou speakest. Duties of government, sayest thou? Duties! Who has duties? A worm like myself, that we have been pleased to exalt out of the dust; but we have nought to do either with such reptiles or with duty; we, the vicar of the Prophet. Our pleasure is your duty, and our will your law."

"Doubtless, doubtless, Light of the World," cried the mollah, hastening to correct his error. "Thy unworthy servant meant to say, pleasures. When Haroun al Raschid found himself in similar

moments of suffering and despondency, which he unquestionably brought on by too great attention to his pleasures"—

"Slave!" again interrupted the Caliph, "dost thou mock us, saying that our glorious ancestor exhausted himself with pleasures, thus striving to make it appear that we do the same? Do we not each day perform nine times nine prostrations, our face towards Mecca? Did we not, no longer back than yesterday, sign our name full twenty times to the death-warrants of those scurvy and unbelieving hounds who dared to blaspheme us, the Prophet's vicegerent, and to say in the Bezestein—What said the dogs? Have we not given orders to hang, impale, and exterminate like noisome vermin, all those who dare in any way to think or have an opinion? Have we not made this order public, to the great glorification of the Prophet and of our own name?" [Pg 267]

The Caliph paused for a moment. Then turning suddenly to the mollah—"You may inform us," said he, "what our ancestor Haroun al Raschid was wont to do when afflicted like ourselves with heaviness of spirit."

"Bismillah!" again began the mollah. "When Haroun al Raschid was thus afflicted, he applied to the book which we have brought with us, and which your highness, if he so pleases, can see and even read"—

"Miserable wretch!" thundered the Caliph, with a glance of scorn at the speaker and his book. "Wherefore do we maintain you, and those like you, if it is not to do for us what we hold it beneath our dignity to do for ourselves? And is not the reading of books beneath our dignity? Do not all books contain the ideas and notions of a pack of scoundrels, who talk about things which they do not understand, and that in no wise concern them? Have we not decreed that the bowstring should be the portion of all those who are reported to be either writers or readers of books? And have we not therefore taken into our service a parcel of idlers, of whom thou art the chief, and whose duty it is to read and think for the whole of our people?"

"And why should the Light of the World read?" replied the mollah after a respectful pause. "He who is already the source of all earthly wisdom, the joy and admiration of all nations? How shall I express my wonder—how shall I sufficiently praise his high qualities?"—

"Stop, mollah!" cried the Caliph. "Know that it does not please us to be praised or wondered at by such as thou. Truly thy praises stink in our nostrils, and are as discords in our ears. It becometh not worms like thyself, whom we have raised from the dirt, and can again dash back into it, to seek to spy out our good qualities, lest at the same time they should discern"—our bad ones, the Caliph would probably have said, but he left the sentence unfinished.

"Thou shouldst look up at us," continued he, "as to the sun, in which neither good nor evil can be seen, but of which the presence is known by its effects. And now tell us what Haroun al Raschid did, when assailed by despondency even as we ourselves are."

"Allah Akbar! Haroun al Raschid, when afflicted like your highness, was wont to disguise himself in various ways, as a merchant, a soldier, or a sailor"——

"All that is well known to us," interposed the Caliph; "but although we are disposed to follow the example of our glorious ancestor so far as we can, without too great exertion of mind or body, yet we doubt whether just now we—— Thou knowest," he continued, interrupting himself, and in a lower tone, "that although Haroun al Raschid was certainly our forefather, yet our blood, improving by descent, is even purer and more illustrious than his. We cannot, therefore, condescend to imitate him in the way you speak of. But we will undertake a work that shall be far more pleasing to the Prophet. With our own hands will we embroider a twelfth under petticoat for his blessed mother, so that she may have one for each month in the year."

During the latter part of this dialogue, a whispering had been more than once audible at the door of the apartment. This circumstance, implying the presence of listeners, might well endanger the necks of the daring representatives of the Caliph and his courtiers; but nevertheless, without allowing themselves to be discomposed by the vicinity of spies, the Moslems had played out their parts, and the Caliph now rose from his ottoman with all the dignity of an eastern despot, repeating, as he did so, to his attendants, what great things he would do, and how he would stitch with his own hands a twelfth under petticoat for the mother of the Prophet. The procession had nearly reached the door by which it had entered, when one of the young Mexicans, recovering apparently from the state of inaction in which this extraordinary scene had plunged him and his companions, suddenly sprang forward, gazed earnestly in the face of the Caliph, and then started back again with a cry of horror.

"*Por el amor de Dios! Fernando el Rey!* 'Tis his majesty, King Ferdinand!" cried the young nobleman. "Stop, traitor!" he exclaimed, again advancing and endeavouring to seize the Caliph. [Pg 268] But even in this moment of peril, the latter did not forget his assumed dignity. With a look of the most profound contempt he strode out of the apartment, while the gigantic mollah, seizing the Creole by the collar, raised him from the ground like a feather, and hurling him back into the room, followed the Commander of the Faithful, and shut the door.

Before the Mexican cavaliers had recovered from their alarm at the daring and treasonable dramatic satire of which they had so unwittingly been made spectators, the other doors were thrown violently open, and several alguazils burst into the apartment. After a hurried glance round the room, perceiving that the objects of their search had disappeared, they darted out again at the opposite door, and hastened through the adjacent saloons, uttering loud curses and

cries of treason. This furious but fruitless chase led them through the whole suite of apartments, till they came round again to the room where the young noblemen were still assembled.

"*Todos diabolos!*" cried one of the police agents, running to the window, "yonder go the villains, they have escaped us this time.—Demonio!" vociferated he, with a fury that made the foam fly from his lips.

"And so, Caballeros!" snarled he to the Creoles, who now stood in trembling alarm, and fully enlightened by the rage of the alguazils as to the enormity of the treasonable pasquinade they had witnessed; "so you have been pleased to take the person of his most sacred majesty for your sport and laughing-stock?"

"Don Bautista, on our honour, we knew not."

"By *our* honour," yelled another alguazil, "you shall pay for this with your heads, Creole hounds that ye are!"

"Don Iago," cried the insulted cavaliers in a threatening tone, "we say that on our *honour*"——

"Say what you please," interrupted the alguazil, "but I tell you that if I were viceroy"——

"Your turn may come. You are a born Gachupin," cried one of the cavaliers with a bitter sneer.

"I am a Spaniard," retorted the other; "and you are nothing but wretched Creoles; vile, miserable Creoles; *y basta!*"

The very earth-worm will turn when trodden upon, and this last insult was too much even for Creole endurance. The young men made a furious rush at the alguazil; but he had foreseen the storm and effected a timely retreat.

Hundreds of Creoles of the middle classes, Metises, Zambos, and Spaniards, had assembled in the adjoining apartment, and looked on at the scene without showing any sympathy either with the police or the young Mexicans. The latter gazed for a second or two at each other in perplexity and dismay, and then separating, disappeared through the different doors.

Some extraordinary scenes and incidents grow out of this masquerade, or rather out of the punishment to which the young noblemen who witnessed it are sentenced. But, lest we should exceed our limits, we must reserve further extracts for a second notice of this very remarkable book.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] The prose even is, in its music, rude in ordinary folks—or *artful*, as in Hamlet's admiration of the world.

[2] *Spain and Spaniards in 1843.* By Captain S. E. Widdrington, R.N., K.T.S., F.R.S., F.G.S. *A Journey across the Desert from Ceylon to Marseilles, &c. &c.* By Major and Mrs Griffith. 2 vols. *Facts in Mesmerism, with Reasons for a Dispassionate Enquiry into it.* By the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend, A.M.

[3] For an account of one of the most notorious of the public exhibitions of mesmeric clairvoyance, we refer the reader, who may feel sufficiently interested in the matter, to the papers of Dr Forbes in the *Lancet*, New Series, Vol. i. p. 581, and to the counter statement in the *Zoist*, Vol. ii. No. 7.

[4] P. 316.

[5] Gachupin is an untranslatable word of Mexican origin. The Spaniards asserted it to mean a hero on horseback; the Indians and coloured races, who applied it as a term of contempt and reproach to the Spaniards and their dependent Creoles, understood by it a thief.

[6] The word Léperos, which, literally translated, means lepers, is the term applied to the homeless and houseless wretches who are to be seen wandering by thousands about the city and suburbs of Mexico. They consist of beggars, mechanics, writers, and even artists. The most industrious amongst them work one, or at most two, days in the week, and the dress of these consists of thin trousers, a sort of cloak, and a straw hat. Their dwelling is in any hole or corner, under the arcades of the houses, or in the mud cottages of the suburbs. Some of the work they produce is wonderful for its beauty and ingenuity. They manufacture the finest gold chains, surpassing any thing of the kind that is to be found in Europe. Their statuettes and images of saints are often masterpieces. During the revolution their character as a class became materially worse. There are more than ten thousand of them who do literally nothing, possess nothing, and lie about the streets stark naked, with the exception of a tattered woollen blanket.

[7] The chapel of the Redeemer of Atolnico is situated on the summit of a steep and high mountain, two and a half leagues from Miguel el Grande, and is much resorted to by pilgrims. On the high altar are statues of the Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and Mary Magdalen, of solid silver, studded with rubies and emeralds. There are also in the same church thirty other altars, with statues as large as life, pillars, crosses, and candlesticks, all of the same metal. The sums that are each year offered up at this shrine, are said to amount to considerably more than one hundred thousand dollars.

[8] A monotonous species of dance.

[9] Creoles are born in Mexico of white parents. The Metises are the descendants of whites and Indians, the Mulattoes of whites and Negroes, the Zambos, or Chinos, of Negroes and Indians. The unmixed races are Spaniards, Creoles, Indians, and Negroes. *Salta-atras*, literally, a spring backwards, is the term applied to those of whom the mothers were of a whiter race than the fathers.

[10] The Spaniards, at the period here referred to, (1812,) the rulers and tyrants of Mexico, were estimated at 60,000 souls, or one-twentieth of the white population of the country.

[11] Anahuac, the ancient name of Mexico. Mexitli, the god of war of the Mexicans. Guatemozin, the last Mexican emperor. He was tortured in the time of Cortes, to induce him to reveal the place where his treasures were concealed; and subsequently hung for conspiracy, by order of the same Spanish chief.

[12] One of the three principal prisons in Mexico.

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