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SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS: BEING A SEQUEL TO THE CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER.

Introductory Notice.

In 1821, as a contribution to a periodical work—in 1822, as a separate volume—appeared the "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater." The object of that work was to reveal something of the grandeur which belongs *potentially* to human dreams. Whatever may be the number of those in whom this faculty of dreaming splendidly can be supposed to lurk, there are not perhaps very many in whom it is developed. He whose talk is of oxen, will probably dream of oxen: and the condition of human life, which yokes so vast a majority to a daily experience incompatible with much elevation of thought, oftentimes neutralizes the tone of grandeur in the reproductive faculty of dreaming, even for those whose minds are populous with solemn imagery. Habitually to dream magnificently, a man must have a constitutional determination to reverie. This in the first place; and even this, where it exists strongly, is too much liable to disturbance from the gathering agitation of our present English life. Already, in this year 1845, what by the procession through fifty years of mighty revolutions amongst the kingdoms of the earth, what by the continual development of vast physical agencies—steam in all its applications, light getting under harness as a slave for man,[1] powers from heaven descending upon education and accelerations of the press, powers from hell (as it might seem, but these also celestial) coming round upon artillery and the forces of destruction—the eye of the calmest observer is troubled; the brain is haunted as if by some jealousy of ghostly beings moving amongst us; and it becomes too evident that, unless this colossal pace of advance can be retarded, (a thing not to be expected,) or, which is happily more probable, can be met by counter-forces of corresponding magnitude, forces in the direction of religion or profound philosophy, that shall radiate centrifugally against this storm of life so perilously centripetal towards the vortex of the merely human, left to itself the natural tendency of so chaotic a tumult must be to evil; for some minds to lunacy, for others to a reagency of fleshly torpor. How much this fierce condition of eternal hurry, upon an arena too exclusively human in its interests, is likely to defeat the grandeur which is latent in all men, may be seen in the ordinary effect from living too constantly in varied company. The word *dissipation*, in one of its uses, expresses that effect; the action of thought and feeling is too much dissipated and squandered. To reconcentrate them into [Pg 270] meditative habits, a necessity is felt by all observing persons for sometimes retiring from crowds. No man ever will unfold the capacities of his own intellect who does not at least chequer his life with solitude. How much solitude, so much power. Or, if not true in that rigour of expression, to this formula undoubtedly it is that the wise rule of life must approximate.

Among the powers in man which suffer by this too intense life of the *social* instincts, none suffers more than the power of dreaming. Let no man think this a trifle. The machinery for dreaming planted in the human brain was not planted for nothing. That faculty, in alliance with the mystery of darkness, is the one great tube through which man communicates with the shadowy. And the dreaming organ, in connexion with the heart, the eye, and the ear, compose the magnificent apparatus which forces the infinite into the chambers of a human brain, and throws dark reflections from eternities below all life upon the mirrors of the sleeping mind.

But if this faculty suffers from the decay of solitude, which is becoming a visionary idea in England, on the other hand, it is certain that some merely physical agencies can and do assist the faculty of dreaming almost preternaturally. Amongst these is intense exercise; to some extent at least, and for some persons: but beyond all others is opium, which indeed seems to possess a *specific* power in that direction; not merely for exalting the colours of dream-scenery, but for deepening its shadows; and, above all, for strengthening the sense of its fearful *realities*.

The *Opium Confessions* were written with some slight secondary purpose of exposing this specific power of opium upon the faculty of dreaming, but much more with the purpose of displaying the faculty itself; and the outline of the work travelled in this course. Supposing a reader acquainted with the true object of the Confessions as here stated, viz. the revelation of dreaming, to have put this question:—

"But how came you to dream more splendidly than others?"

The answer would have been:—"Because (*præmissis præmittendis*) I took excessive quantities of opium."

Secondly, suppose him to say, "But how came you to take opium in this excess?"

The answer to *that* would be, "Because some early events in my life had left a weakness in one organ which required (or seemed to require) that stimulant."

Then, because the opium dreams could not always have been understood without a knowledge of these events, it became necessary to relate them. Now, these two questions and answers exhibit the *law* of the work, *i.e.* the principle which determined its form, but precisely in the inverse or regressive order. The work itself opened with the narration of my early adventures. These, in the natural order of succession, led to the opium as a resource for healing their consequences; and the opium as naturally led to the dreams. But in the synthetic order of presenting the facts, what stood last in the succession of development, stood first in the order of my purposes.

At the close of this little work, the reader was instructed to believe—and *truly* instructed—that I had mastered the tyranny of opium. The fact is, that *twice* I mastered it, and by efforts even more prodigious, in the second of these cases, than in the first. But one error I committed in both. I did not connect with the abstinence from opium—so trying to the fortitude under *any* circumstances—that enormity of exercise which (as I have since learned) is the one sole resource for making it endurable. I overlooked, in those days, the one *sine quâ non* for making the triumph permanent. Twice I sank—twice I rose again. A third time I sank; partly from the cause mentioned, (the oversight as to exercise,) partly from other causes, on which it avails not now to trouble the reader. I could moralize if I chose; and perhaps *he* will moralize whether I choose it or not. But, in the mean time, neither of us is acquainted properly with the circumstances of the case; I, from natural bias of judgment, not altogether acquainted; and he (with his permission) not at all.

During this third prostration before the dark idol, and after some years, new and monstrous phenomena began slowly to arise. For a time, these were neglected as accidents, or palliated by such remedies as I knew of. But when I could no longer conceal from myself that these dreadful symptoms were moving forward for ever, by a pace steadily, solemnly, and equably increasing, I endeavoured, with some feeling of panic, for a third time to retrace my steps. But I had not reversed my motions for many weeks, before I became profoundly aware that this was impossible. Or, in the imagery of my dreams, which translated every thing into their own language, I saw through vast avenues of gloom those towering gates of ingress which hitherto had always seemed to stand open, now at last barred against my retreat, and hung with funeral crape. [Pg 271]

As applicable to this tremendous situation, (the situation of one escaping by some refluent current from the maelstrom roaring for him in the distance, who finds suddenly that this current is but an eddy, wheeling round upon the same maelstrom,) I have since remembered a striking incident in a modern novel. A lady abbess of a convent, herself suspected of Protestant leanings, and in that way already disarmed of all effectual power, finds one of her own nuns (whom she knows to be innocent) accused of an offence leading to the most terrific of punishments. The nun will be immured alive if she is found guilty; and there is no chance that she will not—for the evidence against her is strong—unless something were made known that cannot be made known; and the judges are hostile. All follows in the order of the reader's fears. The witnesses depose; the evidence is without effectual contradiction; the conviction is declared; the judgment is delivered; nothing remains but to see execution done. At this crisis the abbess, alarmed too late for effectual interposition, considers with herself that, according to the regular forms, there will be one single night open during which the prisoner cannot be withdrawn from her own separate jurisdiction. This one night, therefore, she will use, at any hazard to herself, for the salvation of her friend. At midnight, when all is hushed in the convent, the lady traverses the passages which lead to the cells of prisoners. She bears a master-key under her professional habit. As this will open every door in every corridor,—already, by anticipation, she feels the luxury of holding her emancipated friend within her arms. Suddenly she has reached the door; she descries a dusky object; she raises her lamp; and, ranged within the recess of the entrance, she beholds the funeral banner of the Holy Office, and the black robes of its inexorable officials.

I apprehend that, in a situation such as this, supposing it a real one, the lady abbess would not start, would not show any marks externally of consternation or horror. The case was beyond *that*. The sentiment which attends the sudden revelation that *all is lost*! silently is gathered up into the heart; it is too deep for gestures or for words; and no part of it passes to the outside. Were the ruin conditional, or were it in any point doubtful, it would be natural to utter ejaculations, and to seek sympathy. But where the ruin is understood to be absolute, where sympathy cannot be consolation, and counsel cannot be hope, this is otherwise. The voice perishes; the gestures are frozen; and the spirit of man flies back upon its own centre. I, at least, upon seeing those awful gates closed and hung with draperies of woe, as for a death already past, spoke not, nor started, nor groaned. One profound sigh ascended from my heart, and I was silent for days.

It is the record of this third, or final stage of opium, as one differing in something more than degree from the others, that I am now undertaking. But a scruple arises as to the true interpretation of these final symptoms. I have elsewhere explained, that it was no particular purpose of mine, and *why* it was no particular purpose, to warn other opium-eaters. Still, as some few persons may use the record in that way, it becomes a matter of interest to

ascertain how far it is likely, that, even with the same excesses, other opium-eaters could fall into the same condition. I do not mean to lay a stress upon any supposed idiosyncrasy in [Pg 272] myself. Possibly every man has an idiosyncrasy. In some things, undoubtedly, he has. For no man ever yet resembled another man so far, as not to differ from him in features innumerable of his inner nature. But what I point to are not peculiarities of temperament or of organization, so much as peculiar circumstances and incidents through which my own separate experience had revolved. Some of these were of a nature to alter the whole economy of my mind. Great convulsions, from whatever cause, from conscience, from fear, from grief, from struggles of the will, sometimes, in passing away themselves, do not carry off the changes which they have worked. *All* the agitations of this magnitude which a man may have threaded in his life, he neither ought to report, nor *could* report. But one which affected my childhood is a privileged exception. It is privileged as a proper communication for a stranger's ear; because, though relating to a man's proper self, it is a self so far removed from his present self as to wound no feelings of delicacy or just reserve. It is privileged also as a proper subject for the sympathy of the narrator. An adult sympathizes with himself in childhood because he *is* the same, and because (being the same) yet he is *not* the same. He acknowledges the deep, mysterious identity between himself, as adult and as infant, for the ground of his sympathy; and yet, with this general agreement, and necessity of agreement, he feels the differences between his two selves as the main quickeners of his sympathy. He pities the infirmities, as they arise to light in his young forerunner, which now perhaps he does not share; he looks indulgently upon errors of the understanding, or limitations of view which now he has long survived; and sometimes, also, he honours in the infant that rectitude of will which, under *some* temptations, he may since have felt it so difficult to maintain.

The particular case to which I refer in my own childhood, was one of intolerable grief; a trial, in fact, more severe than many people at *any* age are called upon to stand. The relation in which the case stands to my latter opium experiences, is this:—Those vast clouds of gloomy grandeur which overhung my dreams at all stages of opium, but which grew into the darkest of miseries in the last, and that haunting of the human face, which latterly towered into a curse—were they not partly derived from this childish experience? It is certain that, from the essential solitude in which my childhood was passed; from the depth of my sensibility; from the exaltation of this by the resistance of an intellect too prematurely developed, it resulted that the terrific grief which I passed through, drove a shaft for me into the worlds of death and darkness which never again closed, and through which it might be said that I ascended and descended at will, according to the temper of my spirits. Some of the phenomena developed in my dream-scenery, undoubtedly, do but repeat the experiences of childhood; and others seem likely to have been growths and fructifications from seeds at that time sown.

The reasons, therefore, for prefixing some account of a "passage" in childhood, to this record of a dreadful visitation from opium excess, are—1st, That, in colouring, it harmonizes with that record, and, therefore, is related to it at least in point of feeling; 2dly, That possibly it was in part the origin of some features in that record, and so far is related to it in logic; 3dly, That, the final assault of opium being of a nature to challenge the attention of medical men, it is important to clear away all doubts and scruples which can gather about the roots of such a malady. Was it opium, or was it opium in combination with something else, that raised these storms?

Some cynical reader will object—that for this last purpose it would have been sufficient to state the fact, without rehearsing *in extenso* the particulars of that case in childhood. But the reader of more kindness (for a surly reader is always a bad critic) will also have more discernment; and he will perceive that it is not for the mere facts that the case is reported, but because these facts move through a wilderness of natural thoughts or feelings; some in the child who suffers; some in the man who reports; but all so far interesting as they relate [Pg 273] to solemn objects. Meantime, the objection of the sullen critic reminds me of a scene sometimes beheld at the English lakes. Figure to yourself an energetic tourist, who protests every where that he comes only to see the lakes. He has no business whatever; he is not searching for any recreant indorser of a bill, but simply in search of the picturesque. Yet this man adjures every landlord, "by the virtue of his oath," to tell him, and as he hopes for peace in this world to tell him truly, which is the *nearest* road to Keswick. Next, he applies to the postilions—the Westmoreland postilions always fly down hills at full stretch without locking—but nevertheless, in the full career of their fiery race, our picturesque man lets down the glasses, pulls up four horses and two postilions, at the risk of six necks and twenty legs, adjuring them to reveal whether they are taking the *shortest* road. Finally, he descries my unworthy self upon the road; and, instantly stopping his flying equipage, he demands of me (as one whom he believes to be a scholar and a man of honour) whether there is not, in the possibility of things, a *shorter* cut to Keswick. Now, the answer which rises to the lips of landlord, two postilions, and myself, is this—"Most excellent stranger, as you come to the lakes simply to see their loveliness, might it not be as well to ask after the most beautiful road, rather than the shortest? Because, if abstract shortness, if τὸ brevity is your object, then the shortest of all possible tours would seem, with submission—never to have left London." On the same principle, I tell my critic that the whole course of this narrative resembles, and was meant to resemble, a *caduceus* wreathed about with meandering ornaments, or the shaft of a tree's stem hung round and surmounted with some vagrant parasitical plant. The mere medical subject of the opium answers to the dry withered pole,

which shoots all the rings of the flowering plants, and seems to do so by some dexterity of its own; whereas, in fact, the plant and its tendrils have curled round the sullen cylinder by mere luxuriance of *theirs*. Just as in Cheapside, if you look right and left, the streets so narrow, that lead off at right angles, seem quarried and blasted out of some Babylonian brick kiln; bored, not raised artificially by the builder's hand. But, if you enquire of the worthy men who live in that neighbourhood, you will find it unanimously deposed—that not the streets were quarried out of the bricks, but, on the contrary, (most ridiculous as it seems,) that the bricks have supervened upon the streets.

The streets did not intrude amongst the bricks, but those cursed bricks came to imprison the streets. So, also, the ugly pole—hop pole, vine pole, espalier, no matter what—is there only for support. Not the flowers are for the pole, but the pole is for the flowers. Upon the same analogy view me, as one (in the words of a true and most impassioned poet[2]) "*viridantem floribus hastas*"—making verdant, and gay with the life of flowers, murderous spears and halberts—things that express death in their origin, (being made from dead substances that once had lived in forests,) things that express ruin in their use. The true object in my "Opium Confessions" is not the naked physiological theme—on the contrary, *that* is the ugly pole, the murderous spear, the halbert—but those wandering musical variations upon the theme—those parasitical thoughts, feelings, digressions, which climb up with bells and blossoms round about the arid stock; ramble away from it at times with perhaps too rank a luxuriance; but at the same time, by the eternal interest attached to the *subjects* of these digressions, no matter what were the execution, spread a glory over incidents that for themselves would be —less than nothing.

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SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS. Part I.

The Affliction of Childhood.

It is so painful to a lover of open-hearted sincerity, that any indirect traits of vanity should even *seem* to creep into records of profound passion; and yet, on the other hand, it is so impossible, without an unnatural restraint upon the freedom of the narrative, to prevent oblique gleams reaching the reader from such circumstances of luxury or elegance as did really surround my childhood, that on all accounts I think it better to tell him from the first, with the simplicity of truth, in what order of society my family moved at the time from which this preliminary narrative is dated. Otherwise it would happen that, merely by moving truly and faithfully through the circumstances of this early experience, I could hardly prevent the reader from receiving an impression as of some higher rank than did really belong to my family. My father was a merchant; not in the sense of Scotland, where it means a man who sells groceries in a cellar, but in the English sense, a sense severely exclusive—viz. he was a man engaged in *foreign* commerce, and no other; therefore, in *wholesale* commerce, and no other—which last circumstance it is important to mention, because it brings him within the benefit of Cicero's condescending distinction[3]—as one to be despised, certainly, but not too intensely to be despised even by a Roman senator. He, this imperfectly despicable man, died at an early age, and very soon after the incidents here recorded, leaving to his family, then consisting of a wife and six children, an unburthened estate producing exactly £1600 a-year. Naturally, therefore, at the date of my narrative, if narrative it can be called, he had an income still larger, from the addition of current commercial profits. Now, to any man who is acquainted with commercial life, but above all with such life in England, it will readily occur that in an opulent English family of that class—opulent, though not rich in a mercantile estimate—the domestic economy is likely to be upon a scale of liberality altogether unknown amongst the corresponding orders in foreign nations. Whether as to the establishment of servants, or as to the provision made for the comfort of all its members, such a household not uncommonly eclipses the scale of living even amongst the poorer classes of our nobility, though the most splendid in Europe—a fact which, since the period of my infancy, I have had many personal opportunities for verifying both in England and in Ireland. From this peculiar anomaly affecting the domestic economy of merchants, there arises a disturbance upon the general scale of outward signs by which we measure the relations of rank. The equation, so to speak, between one order of society and another, which usually travels in the natural line of their comparative expenditure, is here interrupted and defeated, so that one rank would be collected from the name of the occupation, and another rank, much higher, from the splendour of the domestic *ménage*. I warn the reader, therefore, (or rather, my explanation has already warned him,) that he is not to infer from any casual gleam of luxury or elegance a corresponding elevation of rank.

We, the children of the house, stood in fact upon the very happiest tier in the scaffolding of society for all good influences. The prayer of Agar—"Give me neither poverty nor riches"—was realized for us. That blessing had we, being neither too high nor too low; high enough we were to see models of good manners; obscure enough to be left in the sweetest of solitudes. Amply furnished with the nobler benefits of wealth, *extra* means of health, of [Pg 275] intellectual culture, and of elegant enjoyment, on the other hand, we knew nothing of its social distinctions. Not depressed by the consciousness of privations too sordid, not tempted into restlessness by the consciousness of privileges too aspiring, we had no motives for shame, we had none for pride. Grateful also to this hour I am, that, amidst luxuries in all

things else, we were trained to a Spartan simplicity of diet—that we fared, in fact, very much less sumptuously than the servants. And if (after the model of the emperor Marcus Aurelius) I should return thanks to Providence for all the separate blessings of my early situation, these four I would single out as chiefly worthy to be commemorated—that I lived in the country; that I lived in solitude; that my infant feelings were moulded by the gentlest of sisters, not by horrid pugilistic brothers; finally, that I and they were dutiful children of a pure, holy, and magnificent church.

The earliest incidents in my life which affected me so deeply as to be rememberable at this day, were two, and both before I could have completed my second year, viz. a remarkable dream of terrific grandeur about a favourite nurse, which is interesting for a reason to be noticed hereafter; and secondly, the fact of having connected a profound sense of pathos with the re-appearance, very early in spring, of some crocuses. This I mention as inexplicable, for such annual resurrections of plants and flowers affect us only as memorials, or suggestions of a higher change, and therefore in connexion with the idea of death; but of death I could, at that time, have had no experience whatever.

This, however, I was speedily to acquire. My two eldest sisters—eldest of three *then* living, and also elder than myself—were summoned to an early death. The first who died was Jane —about a year older than myself. She was three and a half, I two and a half, *plus* or *minus* some trifle that I do not recollect. But death was then scarcely intelligible to me, and I could not so properly be said to suffer sorrow as a sad perplexity. There was another death in the house about the same time, viz. of a maternal grandmother; but as she had in a manner come to us for the express purpose of dying in her daughter's society, and from illness had lived perfectly secluded, our nursery party knew her but little, and were certainly more affected by the death (which I witnessed) of a favourite bird, viz. a kingfisher who had been injured by an accident. With my sister Jane's death [though otherwise, as I have said, less sorrowful than unintelligible] there was, however, connected an incident which made a most fearful impression upon myself, deepening my tendencies to thoughtfulness and abstraction beyond what would seem credible for my years. If there was one thing in this world from which, more than from any other, nature had forced me to revolt, it was brutality and violence. Now a whisper arose in the family, that a woman-servant, who by accident was drawn off from her proper duties to attend my sister Jane for a day or two, had on one occasion treated her harshly, if not brutally; and as this ill treatment happened within two days of her death—so that the occasion of it must have been some fretfulness in the poor child caused by her sufferings—naturally there was a sense of awe diffused through the family. I believe the story never reached my mother, and possibly it was exaggerated; but upon me the effect was terrific. I did not often see the person charged with this cruelty; but, when I did, my eyes sought the ground; nor could I have borne to look her in the face—not through anger; and as to vindictive thoughts, how could these lodge in a powerless infant? The feeling which fell upon me was a shuddering awe, as upon a first glimpse of the truth that I was in a world of evil and strife. Though born in a large town, I had passed the whole of my childhood, except for the few earliest weeks, in a rural seclusion. With three innocent little sisters for playmates, sleeping always amongst them, and shut up for ever in a silent garden from all knowledge of poverty, or oppression, or outrage, I had not suspected until this moment the true complexion of the world in which myself and my sisters were living. Henceforward the character of my thoughts must have changed greatly; for so [Pg 276] *representative* are some acts, that one single case of the class is sufficient to throw open before you the whole theatre of possibilities in that direction. I never heard that the woman, accused of this cruelty, took it at all to heart, even after the event, which so immediately succeeded, had reflected upon it a more painful emphasis. On the other hand, I knew of a case, and will pause to mention it, where a mere semblance and shadow of such cruelty, under similar circumstances, inflicted the grief of self-reproach through the remainder of life. A boy, interesting in his appearance, as also from his remarkable docility, was attacked, on a cold day of spring, by a complaint of the trachea—not precisely croup, but like it. He was three years old, and had been ill perhaps for four days; but at intervals had been in high spirits, and capable of playing. This sunshine, gleaming through dark clouds, had continued even on the fourth day; and from nine to eleven o'clock at night, he had showed more animated pleasure than ever. An old servant, hearing of his illness, had called to see him; and her mode of talking with him had excited all the joyousness of his nature. About midnight his mother, fancying that his feet felt cold, was muffling them up in flannels; and, as he seemed to resist her a little, she struck lightly on the sole of one foot as a mode of admonishing him to be quiet. He did not repeat his motion; and in less than a minute his mother had him in her arms with his face looking upwards. "What is the meaning," she exclaimed, in sudden affright, "of this strange repose settling upon his features?" She called loudly to a servant in another room; but before the servant could reach her, the child had drawn two inspirations—deep, yet gentle—and had died in his mother's arms. Upon this the poor afflicted lady made the discovery that those struggles, which she had supposed to be expressions of resistance to herself, were the struggles of departing life. It followed, or seemed to follow, that with these final struggles had blended an expression, on *her* part, of displeasure. Doubtless the child had not distinctly perceived it; but the mother could never look back to the incident without self-reproach. And seven years after, when her own death

happened, no progress had been made in reconciling her thoughts to that which only the depth of love could have viewed as any offence.

So passed away from earth one out of those sisters that made up my nursery playmates; and so did my acquaintance (if such it could be called) commence with mortality. Yet, in fact, I knew little more of mortality than that Jane had disappeared. She had gone away; but, perhaps, she would come back. Happy interval of heaven-born ignorance! Gracious immunity of infancy from sorrow disproportioned to its strength! I was sad for Jane's absence. But still in my heart I trusted that she would come again. Summer and winter came again—crocuses and roses; why not little Jane?

Thus easily was healed, then, the first wound in my infant heart. Not so the second. For thou, dear, noble Elizabeth, around whose ample brow, as often as thy sweet countenance rises upon the darkness, I fancy a tiara of light or a gleaming *aureola* in token of thy premature intellectual grandeur—thou whose head, for its superb developments, was the astonishment of science[4]—thou next, but after an interval of happy years, thou also wert [Pg 277] summoned away from our nursery; and the night which, for me, gathered upon that event, ran after my steps far into life; and perhaps at this day I resemble little for good or for ill that which else I should have been. Pillar of fire, that didst go before me to guide and to quicken—pillar of darkness, when thy countenance was turned away to God, that didst too truly shed the shadow of death over my young heart—in what scales should I weigh thee? Was the blessing greater from thy heavenly presence, or the blight which followed thy departure? Can a man weigh off and value the glories of dawn against the darkness of hurricane? Or, if he could, how is it that, when a memorable love has been followed by a memorable bereavement, even suppose that God would replace the sufferer in a point of time anterior to the entire experience, and offer to cancel the woe, but so that the sweet face which had caused the woe should also be obliterated—vehemently would every man shrink from the exchange! In the *Paradise Lost*, this strong instinct of man—to prefer the heavenly, mixed and polluted with the earthly, to a level experience offering neither one nor the other—is divinely commemorated. What worlds of pathos are in that speech of Adam's —"If God should make another Eve," &c.—that is, if God should replace him in his primitive state, and should condescend to bring again a second Eve, one that would listen to no temptation—still that original partner of his earliest solitude—

> "Creature in whom excell'd
> Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
> Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet"—

even now, when she appeared in league with an eternity of woe, and ministering to his ruin, could not be displaced for him by any better or happier Eve. "Loss of thee!" he exclaims in this anguish of trial—

> "Loss of thee
> Would never from my heart; no, no, I feel
> The link of nature draw me; flesh of flesh,
> Bone of my bone thou art; and from thy state
> Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe."[5]

But what was it that drew my heart, by gravitation so strong, to my sister? Could a child, little above six years of age, place any special value upon her intellectual forwardness? Serene and capacious as her mind appeared to me upon after review, was *that* a charm for stealing away the heart of an infant? Oh, no! I think of it *now* with interest, because it lends, in a stranger's ear, some justification to the excess of my fondness. But then it was lost upon me; or, if not lost, was but dimly perceived. Hadst thou been an idiot, my sister, not the less I must have loved thee—having that capacious heart overflowing, even as mine overflowed, with tenderness, and stung, even as mine was stung, by the necessity of being loved. This it [Pg 278] was which crowned thee with beauty—

> "Love, the holy sense,
> Best gift of God, in thee was most intense."

That lamp lighted in Paradise was kindled for me which shone so steadily in thee; and never but to thee only, never again since thy departure, *durst* I utter the feelings which possessed me. For I was the shiest of children; and a natural sense of personal dignity held me back at all stages of life, from exposing the least ray of feelings which I was not encouraged *wholly* to reveal.

It would be painful, and it is needless, to pursue the course of that sickness which carried off my leader and companion. She (according to my recollection at this moment) was just as much above eight years as I above six. And perhaps this natural precedency in authority of judgment, and the tender humility with which she declined to assert it, had been amongst the fascinations of her presence. It was upon a Sunday evening, or so people fancied, that the spark of fatal fire fell upon that train of predispositions to a brain-complaint which had hitherto slumbered within her. She had been permitted to drink tea at the house of a labouring man, the father of an old female servant. The sun had set when she returned in the company of this servant through meadows reeking with exhalations after a fervent day. From that time she sickened. Happily a child in such circumstances feels no anxieties. Looking upon medical men as people whose natural commission it is to heal diseases, since

it is their natural function to profess it, knowing them only as *ex-officio* privileged to make war upon pain and sickness—I never had a misgiving about the result. I grieved indeed that my sister should lie in bed: I grieved still more sometimes to hear her moan. But all this appeared to me no more than a night of trouble on which the dawn would soon arise. Oh! moment of darkness and delirium, when a nurse awakened me from that delusion, and launched God's thunderbolt at my heart in the assurance that my sister *must* die. Rightly it is said of utter, utter misery, that it "cannot be *remembered*."[6] Itself, as a remembrable thing, is swallowed up in its own chaos. Mere anarchy and confusion of mind fell upon me. Deaf and blind I was, as I reeled under the revelation. I wish not to recal the circumstances of that time, when *my* agony was at its height, and hers in another sense was approaching. Enough to say—that all was soon over; and the morning of that day had at last arrived which looked down upon her innocent face, sleeping the sleep from which there is no awaking, and upon me sorrowing the sorrow for which there is no consolation.

On the day after my sister's death, whilst the sweet temple of her brain was yet unviolated by human scrutiny, I formed my own scheme for seeing her once more. Not for the world would I have made this known, nor have suffered a witness to accompany me. I had never heard of feelings that take the name of "sentimental," nor dreamed of such a possibility. But grief even in a child hates the light, and shrinks from human eyes. The house was large; there were two staircases; and by one of these I knew that about noon, when all would be quiet, I could steal up into her chamber. I imagine that it was exactly high noon when I reached the chamber door; it was locked; but the key was not taken away. Entering, I closed the door so softly, that, although it opened upon a hall which ascended through all the stories, no echo ran along the silent walls. Then turning round, I sought my sister's face. But the bed had been moved; and the back was now turned. Nothing met my eyes but one large window wide open, through which the sun of midsummer at noonday was showering down torrents of splendour. The weather was dry, the sky was cloudless, the blue depths seemed the express types of infinity; and it was not possible for eye to behold or for heart to conceive any symbols more pathetic of life and the glory of life. [Pg 279]

Let me pause for one instant in approaching a remembrance so affecting and revolutionary for my own mind, and one which (if any earthly remembrance) will survive for me in the hour of death,—to remind some readers, and to inform others, that in the original *Opium Confessions* I endeavoured to explain the reason[7] why death, *cæteris paribus*, is more profoundly affecting in summer than in other parts of the year; so far at least as it is liable to any modification at all from accidents of scenery or season. The reason, as I there suggested, lies in the antagonism between the tropical redundancy of life in summer and the dark sterilities of the grave. The summer we see, the grave we haunt with our thoughts; the glory is around us, the darkness is within us. And, the two coming into collision, each exalts the other into stronger relief. But in my case there was even a subtler reason why the summer had this intense power of vivifying the spectacle or the thoughts of death. And, recollecting it, often I have been struck with the important truth—that far more of our deepest thoughts and feelings pass to us through perplexed combinations of *concrete* objects, pass to us as *involutes* (if I may coin that word) in compound experiences incapable of being disentangled, than ever reach us *directly*, and in their own abstract shapes. It had happened that amongst our nursery collection of books was the Bible illustrated with many pictures. And in long dark evenings, as my three sisters with myself sate by the firelight round the *guard* of our nursery, no book was so much in request amongst us. It ruled us and swayed us as mysteriously as music. One young nurse, whom we all loved, before any candle was lighted, would often strain her eyes to read it for us; and sometimes, according to her simple powers, would endeavour to explain what we found obscure. We, the children, were all constitutionally touched with pensiveness; the fitful gloom and sudden lambencies of the room by fire-light, suited our evening state of feelings; and they suited also the divine revelations of power and mysterious beauty which awed us. Above all, the story of a just man,—man and yet *not* man, real above all things and yet shadowy above all things, who had suffered the passion of death in Palestine, slept upon our minds like early dawn upon the waters. The nurse knew and explained to us the chief differences in Oriental climates; and all these differences (as it happens) express themselves in the great varieties of summer. The cloudless sunlights of Syria—those seemed to argue everlasting summer; the disciples plucking the ears of corn—that *must* be summer; but, above all, the very name of Palm Sunday, (a festival in the English church,) troubled me like an anthem. "Sunday!" what was *that*? That was the day of peace which masqued another peace deeper than the heart of man can comprehend. "Palms!"—what were they? *That* was an equivocal word: palms, in the sense of trophies, expressed the pomps of life: palms, as a product of nature, expressed the pomps of summer. Yet still even this explanation does not suffice: it was not merely by the peace and by the summer, by the deep sound of rest below all rest, and of ascending glory,—that I had been haunted. It was also because Jerusalem stood near to those deep images both in time and in place. The great event of Jerusalem was at hand when Palm Sunday came; and the scene of that Sunday was near in place to Jerusalem. Yet what then was Jerusalem? Did I fancy it to be the *omphalos* (navel) of the earth? That pretension had once been made for Jerusalem, and once for Delphi; and both pretensions had become ridiculous, as the figure of the planet became known. Yes; but if not of the earth, for earth's tenant Jerusalem was the *omphalos* of mortality. Yet how? there on the contrary it was, as we infants understood, that mortality had been trampled under foot. True; but for that very reason there it was that mortality had opened its very gloomiest crater. There it was indeed

that the human had risen on wings from the grave; but for that reason there also it was that the divine had been swallowed up by the abyss: the lesser star could not rise, before the greater would submit to eclipse. Summer, therefore, had connected itself with death not merely as a mode of antagonism, but also through intricate relations to Scriptural scenery and events. [Pg 280]

Out of this digression, which was almost necessary for the purpose of showing how inextricably my feelings and images of death were entangled with those of summer, I return to the bedchamber of my sister. From the gorgeous sunlight I turned round to the corpse. There lay the sweet childish figure, there the angel face: and, as people usually fancy, it as said in the house that no features had suffered any change. Had they not? The forehead indeed, the serene and noble forehead, *that* might be the same; but the frozen eyelids, the darkness that seemed to steal from beneath them, the marble lips, the stiffening hands, laid palm to palm, as if repeating the supplications of closing anguish, could these be mistaken for life? Had it been so, wherefore did I not spring to those heavenly lips with tears and never-ending kisses? But so it as *not*. I stood checked for a moment; awe, not fear, fell upon me; and, whilst I stood, a solemn wind began to blow—the most mournful that ear ever heard. Mournful! that is saying nothing. It was a wind that had swept the fields of mortality for a hundred centuries. Many times since, upon a summer day, when the sun is about the hottest, I have remarked the same wind arising and uttering the same hollow, solemn, Memnonian, but saintly swell: it is in this world the one sole *audible* symbol of eternity. And three times in my life I have happened to hear the same sound in the same circumstances, viz. when standing between an open window and a dead body on a summer day.

Instantly, when my ear caught this vast Æolian intonation, when my eye filled with the golden fulness of life, the pomps and glory of the heavens outside, and turning when it settled upon the frost which overspread my sister's face, instantly a trance fell upon me. A vault seemed to open in the zenith of the far blue sky, a shaft which ran up for ever. I in spirit rose as if on billows that also ran up the shaft for ever; and the billows seemed to pursue the throne of God; but *that* also ran before us and fled away continually. The flight and the pursuit seemed to go on for ever and ever. Frost, gathering frost, some Sarsar wind of death, seemed to repel me; I slept—for how long I cannot say; slowly I recovered my self-possession, and found myself standing, as before, close to my sister's bed.

Oh[8] flight of the solitary child to the solitary God—flight from the ruined corpse to the throne that could not be ruined!—how rich wert thou in truth for after years. Rapture of grief, that, being too mighty for a child to sustain, foundest a happy oblivion in a heaven-born sleep, and within that sleep didst conceal a dream, whose meanings in after years, when slowly I deciphered, suddenly there flashed upon me a new light; and even by the grief of a child, as I will show you reader hereafter, were confounded the falsehoods of philosophers.[9]

In the *Opium Confessions* I touched a little upon the extraordinary power connected with opium (after long use) of amplifying the dimensions of time. Space also it amplifies by degrees that are sometimes terrific. But time it is upon which the exalting and multiplying power of opium chiefly spends its operation. Time becomes infinitely elastic, stretching out to such immeasurable and vanishing termini, that it seems ridiculous to compute the sense of it on waking by expressions commensurate to human life. As in starry fields one computes by diameters of the earth's orbit, or of Jupiter's, so in valuing the *virtual* time lived during some dreams, the measurement by generations is ridiculous—by millennia is ridiculous: by æons, I should say, if æons were more determinate, would be also ridiculous. On this single occasion, however, in my life, the very inverse phenomenon occurred. But why speak of it in connexion with opium? Could a child of six years old have been under that influence? No, but simply because it so exactly reversed the operation of opium. Instead of a short interval expanding into a vast one, upon this occasion a long one had contracted into a minute. I have reason to believe that a *very* long one had elapsed during this wandering or suspension of my perfect mind. When I returned to myself, there was a foot (or I fancied so) on the stairs. I was alarmed. For I believed that, if any body should detect me, means would be taken to prevent my coming again. Hastily, therefore, I kissed the lips that I should kiss no more, and slunk like a guilty thing with stealthy steps from the room. Thus perished the vision, loveliest amongst all the shows which earth has revealed to me; thus mutilated was the parting which should have lasted for ever; thus tainted with fear was the farewell sacred to love and grief, to perfect love and perfect grief. [Pg 281]

Oh, Ahasuerus, everlasting Jew![10] fable or not a fable, thou when first starting on thy endless pilgrimage of woe, thou when first flying through the gates of Jerusalem, and vainly yearning to leave the pursuing curse behind thee, couldst not more certainly have read thy doom of sorrow in the misgivings of thy troubled brain than I when passing for ever from my sister's room. The worm was at my heart: and, confining myself to that stage of life, I may say—the worm that could not die. For if, when standing upon the threshold of manhood, I had ceased to feel its perpetual gnawings, *that* was because a vast expansion of intellect, it was because new hopes, new necessities, and the frenzy of youthful blood, had translated me into a new creature. Man is doubtless *one* by some subtle *nexus* that we cannot perceive, extending from the newborn infant to the superannuated dotard: but as regards many affections and passions incident to his nature at different stages, he is *not* one; the unity of man in this respect is coextensive only with the particular stage to which the passion

belongs. Some passions, as that of sexual love, are celestial by one half of their origin, animal and earthy by the other half. These will not survive their own appropriate stage. But love, which is *altogether* holy, like that between two children, will revisit undoubtedly by glimpses the silence and the darkness of old age: and I repeat my belief—that, unless bodily torment should forbid it, that final experience in my sister's bedroom, or some other in which her innocence was concerned, will rise again for me to illuminate the hour of death.

On the day following this which I have recorded, came a body of medical men to examine the brain, and the particular nature of the complaint, for in some of its symptoms it had shown perplexing anomalies. Such is the sanctity of death, and especially of death alighting on an innocent child, that even gossiping people do not gossip on such a subject. Consequently, I knew nothing of the purpose which drew together these surgeons, nor suspected any thing of the cruel changes which might have been wrought in my sister's head. Long after this I saw a similar case; I surveyed the corpse (it was that of a beautiful boy, eighteen years old, who had died of the same complaint) one hour *after* the surgeons had laid the skull in ruins; but the dishonours of this scrutiny were hidden by bandages, and had not disturbed the repose of the countenance. So it might have been here; but, if it were *not* so, then I was happy in being spared the shock, from having that marble image of peace, icy and rigid as it was, unsettled by disfiguring images. Some hours after the strangers had withdrawn, I crept again to the room, but the door was now locked—the key was taken away—and I was shut out for ever.

Then came the funeral. I, as a point of decorum, was carried thither. I was put into a carriage with some gentlemen whom I did not know. They were kind to me; but naturally [Pg 282] they talked of things disconnected with the occasion, and their conversation was a torment. At the church, I was told to hold a white handkerchief to my eyes. Empty hypocrisy! What need had *he* of masques or mockeries, whose heart died within him at every word that was uttered? During that part of the service which passed within the church, I made an effort to attend, but I sank back continually into my own solitary darkness, and I heard little consciously, except some fugitive strains from the sublime chapter of St Paul, which in England is always read at burials. And here I notice a profound error of our present illustrious Laureate. When I heard those dreadful words—for dreadful they were to me—"It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory;" such was the recoil of my feelings, that I could even have shrieked out a protesting —"Oh, no, no!" if I had not been restrained by the publicity of the occasion. In after years, reflecting upon this revolt of my feelings, which, being the voice of nature in a child, must be as true as any mere *opinion* of a child might probably be false, I saw at once the unsoundness of a passage in *The Excursion*. The book is not here, but the substance I remember perfectly. Mr Wordsworth argues, that if it were not for the unsteady faith which people fix upon the beatific condition after death of those whom they deplore, nobody could be found so selfish, as even secretly to wish for the restoration to earth of a beloved object. A mother, for instance, could never dream of yearning for her child, and secretly calling it back by her silent aspirations from the arms of God, if she were but reconciled to the belief that really it *was* in those arms. But this I utterly deny. To take my own case, when I heard those dreadful words of St Paul applied to my sister—viz. that she should be raised a spiritual body—nobody can suppose that selfishness, or any other feeling than that of agonizing love, caused the rebellion of my heart against them. I knew already that she was to come again in beauty and power. I did not now learn this for the first time. And that thought, doubtless, made my sorrow sublimer; but also it made it deeper. For here lay the sting of it, viz. in the fatal words—"We shall be *changed*." How was the unity of my interest in her to be preserved, if she were to be altered, and no longer to reflect in her sweet countenance the traces that were sculptured on my heart? Let a magician ask any woman whether she will permit him to improve her child, to raise it even from deformity to perfect beauty, if that must be done at the cost of its identity, and there is no loving mother but would reject his proposal with horror. Or, to take a case that has actually happened, if a mother were robbed of her child at two years old by gipsies, and the same child were restored to her at twenty, a fine young man, but divided by a sleep as it were of death from all remembrances that could restore the broken links of their once-tender connexion, would she not feel her grief unhealed, and her heart defrauded? Undoubtedly she would. All of us ask not of God for a better thing than that we have lost; we ask for the same, even with its faults and its frailties. It is true that the sorrowing person will also be changed eventually, but that must be by death. And a prospect so remote as that, and so alien from our present nature, cannot console us in an affliction which is not remote but present—which is not spiritual but human.

Lastly came the magnificent service which the English church performs at the side of the grave. There is exposed once again and for the last time, the coffin. All eyes survey the record of name, of sex, of age, and the day of departure from earth—records how useless! and dropped into darkness as if messages addressed to worms. Almost at the very last comes the symbolic ritual, tearing and shattering the heart with volleying discharges, peal after peal, from the final artillery of woe. The coffin is lowered into its home; it has disappeared from the eye. The sacristan stands ready with his shovel of earth and stones. The priest's voice is heard once more—*earth to earth*, and the dread rattle ascends from the lid of the coffin; *ashes to ashes*, and again the killing sound is heard; *dust to dust*, and the [Pg 283] farewell volley announces that the grave—the coffin—the face are sealed up for ever and ever.

Oh, grief! thou art classed amongst the depressing passions. And true it is, that thou humblest to the dust, but also thou exaltest to the clouds. Thou shakest as with ague, but also thou steadiest like frost. Thou sickenest the heart, but also thou healest its infirmities. Among the very foremost of mine was morbid sensibility to shame. And ten years afterwards, I used to reproach myself with this infirmity, by supposing the case, that, if it were thrown upon me to seek aid for a perishing fellow-creature, and that I could obtain that aid only by facing a vast company of critical or sneering faces, I might perhaps shrink basely from the duty. It is true, that no such case had ever actually occurred, so that it was a mere romance of casuistry to tax myself with cowardice so shocking. But to feel a doubt, was to feel condemnation; and the crime which *might* have been, was in my eyes the crime which *had* been. Now, however, all was changed; and for any thing which regarded my sister's memory, in one hour I received a new heart. Once in Westmoreland I saw a case resembling it. I saw a ewe suddenly put off and abjure her own nature, in a service of love—yes, slough it as completely, as ever serpent sloughed his skin. Her lamb had fallen into a deep trench, from which all escape was hopeless without the aid of man. And to a man she advanced boldly, bleating clamorously, until he followed her and rescued her beloved. Not less was the change in myself. Fifty thousand sneering faces would not have troubled me in any office of tenderness to my sister's memory. Ten legions would not have repelled me from seeking her, if there was chance that she could be found. Mockery! it was lost upon me. Laugh at me, as one or two people did! I valued not their laughter. And when I was told insultingly to cease "my girlish tears", that word "*girlish*" had no sting for me, except as a verbal echo to the one eternal thought of my heart—that a girl was the sweetest thing I, in my short life, had known —that a girl it was who had crowned the earth with beauty, and had opened to my thirst fountains of pure celestial love, from which, in this world, I was to drink no more.

Interesting it is to observe how certainly all deep feelings agree in this, that they seek for solitude, and are nursed by solitude. Deep grief, deep love, how naturally do these ally themselves with religious feeling; and all three, love, grief, religion, are haunters of solitary places. Love, grief, the passion of reverie, or the mystery of devotion—what were these without solitude? All day long, when it was not impossible for me to do so, I sought the most silent and sequestered nooks in the grounds about the house, or in the neighbouring fields. The awful stillness occasionally of summer noons, when no winds were abroad, the appealing silence of grey or misty afternoons—these were fascinations as of witchcraft. Into the woods or the desert air I gazed as if some comfort lay hid in *them*. I wearied the heavens with my inquest of beseeching looks. I tormented the blue depths with obstinate scrutiny, sweeping them with my eyes and searching them for ever after one angelic face that might perhaps have permission to reveal itself for a moment. The faculty of shaping images in the distance out of slight elements, and grouping them after the yearnings of the heart, aided by a slight defect in my eyes, grew upon me at this time. And I recal at the present moment one instance of that sort, which may show how merely shadows, or a gleam of brightness, or nothing at all, could furnish a sufficient basis for this creative faculty. On Sunday mornings I was always taken to church: it was a church on the old and natural model of England, having aisles, galleries, organ, all things ancient and venerable, and the proportions majestic. Here, whilst the congregation knelt through the long Litany, as often as we came to that passage, so beautiful amongst many that are so, where God is supplicated on behalf of "all sick persons and young children," and that he would "show his pity upon all prisoners and captives"—I wept in secret, and raising my streaming eyes to the windows of the galleries, [Pg 284] saw, on days when the sun was shining, a spectacle as affecting as ever prophet can have beheld. The sides of the windows were rich with storied glass; through the deep purples and crimsons streamed the golden light; emblazonries of heavenly illumination mingling with the earthly emblazonries of what is grandest in man. There were the apostles that had trampled upon earth, and the glories of earth, out of celestial love to man. There were the martyrs that had borne witness to the truth through flames, through torments, and through armies of fierce insulting faces. There were the saints who, under intolerable pangs, had glorified God by meek submission to his will. And all the time, whilst this tumult of sublime memorials held on as the deep chords from an accompaniment in the bass, I saw through the wide central field of the window, where the glass was uncoloured, white fleecy clouds sailing over the azure depths of the sky; were it but a fragment or a hint of such a cloud, immediately under the flash of my sorrow-haunted eye, it grew and shaped itself into a vision of beds with white lawny curtains; and in the beds lay sick children, dying children, that were tossing in anguish, and weeping clamorously for death. God, for some mysterious reason, could not suddenly release them from their pain; but he suffered the beds, as it seemed, to rise slowly through the clouds; slowly the beds ascended into the chambers of the air; slowly, also, his arms descended from the heavens, that he and his young children whom in Judea, once and for ever, he had blessed, though they *must* pass slowly through the dreadful chasm of separation, might yet meet the sooner. These visions were self-sustained. These visions needed not that any sound should speak to me, or music mould my feelings. The hint from the Litany, the fragment from the clouds, those and the storied windows were sufficient. But not the less the blare of the tumultuous organ wrought its own separate creations. And oftentimes in anthems, when the mighty instrument threw its vast columns of sound, fierce yet melodious, over the voices of the choir—when it rose high in arches, as might seem, surmounting and overriding the strife of the vocal parts, and gathering by strong coercion the total storm into unity—sometimes I seemed to walk triumphantly upon

those clouds which so recently I had looked up to as mementos of prostrate sorrow, and even as ministers of sorrow in its creations; yes, sometimes under the transfigurations of music I felt[11] of grief itself as a fiery chariot for mounting victoriously above the causes of grief.

I point so often to the feelings, the ideas, or the ceremonies of religion, because there never yet was profound grief nor profound philosophy which did not inosculate at many points with profound religion. But I request the reader to understand, that of all things I was not, and could not have been, a child trained to *talk* of religion, least of all to talk of it controversially or polemically. Dreadful is the picture, which in books we sometimes find, of children discussing the doctrines of Christianity, and even teaching their seniors the boundaries and distinctions between doctrine and doctrine. And it has often struck me with amazement, that the two things which God made most beautiful among his works, viz. infancy and pure religion, should, by the folly of man, (in yoking them together on erroneous principles,) neutralize each other's beauty, or even form a combination positively hateful The religion [Pg 285] becomes nonsense, and the child becomes a hypocrite. The religion is transfigured into cant, and the innocent child into a dissembling liar.[12]

God, be assured, takes care for the religion of children wheresoever his Christianity exists. Wheresoever there is a national church established, to which a child sees his friends resorting; wheresoever he beholds all whom he honours periodically prostrate before those illimitable heavens which fill to overflowing his young adoring heart; wheresoever he sees the sleep of death falling at intervals upon men and women whom he knows, depth as confounding to the plummet of his mind as those heavens ascend beyond his power to pursue—*there* take you no thought for the religion of a child, any more than for the lilies how they shall be arrayed, or for the ravens how they shall feed their young.

God speaks to children also in dreams, and by the oracles that lurk in darkness. But in solitude, above all things, when made vocal by the truths and services of a national church, God holds "communion undisturbed" with children. Solitude, though silent as light, is, like light, the mightiest of agencies; for solitude is essential to man. All men come into this world *alone*—all leave it *alone*. Even a little child has a dread, whispering consciousness, that if he should be summoned to travel into God's presence, no gentle nurse will be allowed to lead him by the hand, nor mother to carry him in her arms, nor little sister to share his trepidations. King and priest, warrior and maiden, philosopher and child, all must walk those mighty galleries alone. The solitude, therefore, which in this world appals or fascinates a child's heart, is but the echo of a far deeper solitude through which already he has passed, and of another solitude deeper still, through which he *has* to pass: reflex of one solitude—prefiguration of another.

Oh, burthen of solitude, that cleavest to man through every stage of his being—in his birth, which *has* been—in his life, which *is*—in his death, which *shall* be—mighty and essential solitude! that wast, and art, and art to be;—thou broodest, like the spirit of God moving upon the surface of the deeps, over every heart that sleeps in the nurseries of Christendom. Like the vast laboratory of the air, which, seeming to be nothing, or less than the shadow of a shade, hides within itself the principles of all things, solitude for a child is the Agrippa's mirror of the unseen universe. Deep is the solitude in life of millions upon millions who, with hearts welling forth love, have none to love them. Deep is the solitude of those who, with secret griefs, have none to pity them. Deep is the solitude of those who, fighting with doubts or darkness, have none to counsel them. But deeper than the deepest of these solitudes is that which broods over childhood, bringing before it at intervals the final solitude which watches for it, and is waiting for it within the gates of death. Reader, I tell you a truth, and hereafter I will convince you of this truth, that for a Grecian child solitude was nothing, but for a Christian child it has become the power of God and the mystery of God. Oh, mighty and essential solitude, that wast, and art, and art to be—thou, kindling under the torch of Christian revelations, art now transfigured for ever, and hast passed from a blank negation into a secret hieroglyphic from God, shadowing in the hearts of infancy the very dimmest of his truths!

MRS POOLE'S "ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT."[13] [Pg 286]

An "Englishwoman in Egypt," thanks to the Mediterranean steamers and the overland route to India, is no longer so unusual or astounding a spectacle as it would appear to have been five-and-twenty years ago, when that dilettante traveller, Monsieur le Comte de Forbin, made a precipitate retreat from Thebes in consequence of the shock sustained by his nerves, from encountering among the ruins "une femme-de-chambre Anglaise, en petit *spencer* couleur de rose," in the person of the Countess of Belmore's lady's-maid; though the Quarterly Reviewers, who in those days had no mercy for a French misstatement, even in the colour of a soubrette's dress, triumphantly declared the offending garment to have been "a pale-blue pelisse;" and proceeded to demolish the hapless Count accordingly—(*Quarterly*

Review, Vol. xxiii. p. 92.) Since the period of this rencontre, the *ill-omened* blue eyes,[14] as well as blue pelisses, of our countrywomen, have been seen with sufficient frequency on the banks of the Nile to render the one, it is to be hoped, no longer an object of alarm to the natives, nor the latter to errant members of the Institute: but a narrative of the impressions produced on a cultivated female mind by a residence among the modern inhabitants of the land of the pyramids, was still a desideratum. The "Notes" (published in 1840 in the *Asiatic Journal*) of the late lamented Emma Roberts, than whom no one would have been better qualified to fill up the void, though replete with interest and information, are merely those of a traveller hastening through the country on her way to India; and, except the fugitive sketches of Mrs Dawson Damer, we cannot call to mind a single one among all the lady-tourists, with whose tours and voyages the press has lately teemed, who has touched on this hitherto unbroken ground. In such a dearth of information, we may deem ourselves doubly fortunate in finding the task undertaken by a lady possessing such peculiar advantages as must have been enjoyed by the sister of the well-known Orientalist, to whose pen we are indebted for perhaps the most comprehensive and accurate account ever published of the habits and manners of any nation, and under whose immediate superintendence, as we are informed, the work before us was prepared.

The title of the "Englishwoman in *Cairo*," would perhaps have more appropriately designated the character of Mrs Poole's volumes than that which she has adopted; since her opportunities of personal observation, after her arrival in the capital from Alexandria, were bounded by the environs of the city, her excursions from which do not appear to have extended further than the pyramids. A considerable portion of the first volume is occupied by an abstract of Egyptian history from the time of the Arab conquest, an account of the foundation of Cairo, an agricultural and general calendar for each month of the year, and various matters connected with the physical features, statistics, &c., of the country. These dissertations form a sort of supplement to the work of her brother, from whose MS. notes they are avowedly taken; being introduced (as Mrs Poole, with much *naïveté*, confesses) "in the hope of obtaining a more favourable reception for her letters, for the sake of the more solid matter with which they are interspersed;" but though they certainly convey much [Pg 287] valuable additional information to the readers of the "Modern Egyptians," they are scarcely "germane to the matter," as interpolations in the work of a lady. The authoress can very well afford to rest her claim to popularity on her own merits; and we prefer to follow her, in her own peculiar sphere, into those mysterious recesses of an Oriental establishment, whither no male footstep can ever penetrate. Mrs Poole is probably the first English lady who has been admitted, not merely as a passing visitor, but as a privileged friend, into the hareems of those of the highest rank in the Egyptian capital. We find her threading the narrow and crowded thoroughfares of Cairo, borne aloft on the "high ass,"[15] (the usual mode of conveyance for morning calls;) and are introduced to the wives and daughters of the viceroy, and even (in the hareem of Habeeb Effendi) to ladies of the imperial house of Othman, in the ease and *disinvoltura* of their domestic circles, amid that atmosphere of *dolce far niente* and graceful etiquette, in which the hours of an Oriental princess appear to be habitually passed. With the exception of Lady Mary Wortley Montague's piquant sketches of the Turkish hareems and their inmates, and the singular narrative of her personal experience of life in an Indian zenana, by *Mrs Meer Hassan Ali*,[16] we know no female writer who has enjoyed such opportunities for the delineation of the scenes of domestic privacy of the East, and who has so well availed herself of them, as the sister of *Mansoor Effendi*, in the pages before us.

The narrative opens with the landing of the authoress and her companions at Alexandria in July 1842; but that city, with its double harbour, its quays crowded with a motley assemblage of every nation and language in Europe and the Levant, and the monuments of antiquity in its environs, has been too often described to present too much opportunity for novelty of remark. Passing over, therefore, the details given of these well-known objects, we find the party, after a rapid passage along the Mahmoodiyeh canal in an iron track-boat, drawn by four horses, and a vexatious delay of two days at the junction of the canal and the river, (during which the want of musquitto-curtains gave them an ample foretaste of the quantity and quality of the insect plagues of Egypt,) fairly embarked on the broad stream of the Nile. The voyage to Cairo was performed in a *kanjeh*, or passage-boat of the kind usual on the river—a long, narrow craft, with two masts, bearing large triangular sails; and Mrs Poole, in common with most travellers arriving for the first time in the East, was greatly impressed by the simple devotion with which the Reyyis (or Arab captain) and his crew commended themselves, on setting sail, to the protection of Providence, by reciting altogether, in a low voice, the short prayer of the *Fathah*, or opening chapter of the Koran. "The sight of the Muslim engaged in his devotions is, I think, most interesting; the attitudes are particularly striking and impressive; and the solemn demeanour of the worshipper, who, even in the busy market-place, appears wholly abstracted from the world, is very remarkable. The practice of praying in a public place is so general in the East, and attracts so little notice from Muslims, that we must not regard it as the result of hypocrisy or ostentation."

As the kanjeh lay to at night to avoid danger from sand-banks, the travellers were three days in reaching Cairo; and found little to interest them in the contemplation of the banks of the Nile, which at this season are destitute of the brilliant verdure which clothes them for some [Pg 288] time after the inundation. On arriving at Boulak, the authoress for the first time shrouded herself in the cumbrous folds of a Turkish riding-dress, "an overwhelming covering of black silk, extending, in my idea, in every direction;" and mounted on a donkey, she followed her

janissary guide through the dilapidated suburb, "and at length we fairly entered Cairo.... The first impression on entering this celebrated city is, that it has the appearance of having been deserted for perhaps a century, and suddenly re-peopled by persons, unable, from poverty or some other cause, to repair it, and clear away its antiquated cobwebs.... I wrote to you that the streets of Alexandria were narrow; they are *wide* compared to those of Cairo. The *meshreebeyehs*, or projecting windows, facing each other above the ground floor, literally touch in *some* instances, and in *many*, the opposite windows are within reach.... After passing through several of the streets, into which it appeared as though the dwellings had turned out nearly all their inhabitants, we arrived at an agreeable house in the midst of gardens, in which we are to take up our temporary residence."

The plan of these gardens, however, intersected by parallel walks, with gutters on each side to convey water into the intermediate squares, was so much at variance with Mrs Poole's English notions of horticulture, that she was almost tempted to conclude, "that a garden in Egypt was not worth cultivation—so much for national prejudice!" As it was indispensable for the health of the children that their residence should be fixed in the outskirts of the city, some delay was experienced in finding a permanent abode; but at the end of a month they considered themselves fortunate in engaging a house "infinitely beyond the usual run," in the most healthy and cheerful quarter, for which the rent demanded by the landlady, (who bore the picturesque name of Lalah-Zar, or *Bed of Tulips*,) was only L.12 per annum. The arrangement of the apartments was nearly as described by Mr Lane in his account of the private houses in Cairo—(*Modern Egyptians*, i. p. 11:) on the ground-floor a court, open to the sky, round which were the rooms appropriated to the male inhabitants, while a gallery, running round the first floor, conducted to the hareem, consisting of two principal apartments, and "three small marble paved rooms, forming *en suite* an antechamber, a reclining chamber, and a bath. Above are four rooms, the principal one opening to a delightful terrace, considerably above most of the surrounding houses, and on this we enjoy our breakfast and supper under the clearest sky in the world." But scarcely had the establishment been removed into this new residence, when it became evident that something was *not right*. The two maid-servants, Amineh and Zeyneb, disappeared one after the other without giving warning—strange noises were heard, which were at first ascribed to the wedding rejoicings of a neighbour, but an explanation was at last elicited from the doorkeeper. The house was haunted by an 'Efreet, (ghost or evil spirit,) in consequence of the murder of a poor tradesman and two slave girls by the previous owner, who had bequeathed it to Lalah-Zar, with reversion (perhaps in hope of expiating his crimes) to a mosque. One of the victims had perished in the bath, and like Praed's[17] Abbess of St Ursula, who

> "From evensong to matins,
> In gallery and scullery,
> And kitchen and refectory,
> Still tramp'd it in her pattens,"

the angry spirit stalked at night, apparently in heavy clogs like those worn in the bath, knocking at the doors, and uttering unearthly sounds, which allowed no sleep to the inmates. In vain had poor Lalah-Zar endeavoured to appease this unwelcome intruder, which had driven tenant after tenant from the house, by distributing bread to the poor at the tomb [Pg 289] of the late owner; the annoyance continued undiminished—pieces of charcoal were left at the doors, equivalent to the imprecation, "May your faces be blackened!" and no female servant would remain in the house, it being universally believed that the touch of an 'Efreet renders a woman a demoniac. The Ramadan (during which it is held that all 'Efreets are chained up,) brought a temporary respite; and they flattered themselves that they had succeeded in barring out the intruder; but with the conclusion of the fast the disturbances were resumed with increased violence. At length a new doorkeeper, worn out with want of sleep, obtained permission to fire at the phantom, which he said he saw every night in the gallery, alleging that 'Efreets were always destroyed by the discharge of fire-arms. At midnight the house was startled by the report of a pistol, which it afterwards appeared had been loaded, contrary to orders, with a brace of bullets: the voice of the doorkeeper was heard crying, "There he lies, the accursed;" and sounds and cries were heard, which convinced them all that *somebody* had been shot. "It passed me in the gallery," said the doorkeeper, "when I thus addressed it, 'Shall we quit this house, or will you do so?' 'You shall quit it,' he answered; and he threw dust into my right eye: this proved it was a devil. It stopped in that corner, and I observed it attentively. It was tall, and perfectly white. Before it moved again I discharged the pistol, and the accursed was struck down before me, and here are the remains." So saying, he picked up a small burnt mass, resembling more the sole of a shoe than any thing else, but perforated by fire in several places, and literally burnt to a cinder. This he asserted (agreeably with a popular opinion) was always the relic when a devil was destroyed.

The mystery remained unexplained, though we fear that most sober Franks (in spite of the corroboration afforded to the doorkeeper's theory by the high authority of the *Thousand and One Nights*[18]) will be tempted to share Mrs Poole's scepticism as to the remains of a devil assuming the shape of the calcined sole of an old shoe: but after an interval of peace, they were eventually compelled, by a renewal of the attack, to abandon the haunted house—and those who succeeded them fared even worse. Six families were driven out in as many weeks —their windows broken, and their china demolished by invisible hands, not only by night,

but in broad day—"and now," says Mrs Poole, "I have done with this subject. I have said much upon it; but I must be held excusable, as ''tis passing strange.'"

The annoyance of this spectral warfare, which continued many months, had not prevented Mrs Poole (in spite of the *desagrémens* of flies, "black thick-legged spiders," and handmaidens, "who scarcely ever wash themselves except when they go to the bath, which is once in about ten days or a fortnight") from becoming gradually at home in her Egyptian residence, and tolerably familiarized with the language and manners of the country. She had even adopted the native manner of eating; and had habituated herself to wear the Turkish dress with such ease, as to witness unsuspected the splendid procession of the *Mahmal*,[19] or emblem of royalty, which precedes the march of the pilgrim caravan to Mekka—an occasion on which the boys of Cairo enjoy a kind of saturnalia, and are privileged to maltreat any Christian or Jew who may be detected near the route. Under the guidance of an elderly Muslim friend of her brother, she had also entered the principal mosques of Cairo, including that of the Hasaneyn (the grandsons of the prophet, Hasan and Hoseyn) and the Zamé-el-Azhar, the two most sacred edifices of Cairo. But the Azhar (splendid mosque) is not only the *cathedral* mosque of the Egyptian capital, but the principal, and perhaps in the present day the only Moslem university. In the *riwaks*, or apartments appropriated to students from [Pg 290] different countries, chiefly poor scholars supported by the funds of the mosque, "after passing successively among natives of different divisions of Egypt, we find ourselves in the company of people of Mekkeh and El-Medeeneh; then in the midst of Syrians; in another minute among Muslims of Central Africa; next among Magharbeh, (or natives of Northern Africa west of Egypt;) then with European and Asiatic Turks; and quitting these, we are introduced to Persians, and Muslims of India; we may almost fancy ourselves transported through their respective countries. No sight in Cairo interested me more than the interior of the Azhar; and the many and great obstacles which present themselves when a Christian, and more especially a Christian lady, desires to obtain admission into this celebrated mosque, make me proud of having enjoyed the privilege of walking leisurely through its extensive porticoes, and observing its heterogeneous students engaged in listening to the lectures of their professors."

A far different *locale* from the cloisters of the Azhar, into which Mrs Poole was, perhaps, induced to penetrate by the example of Mrs Dawson Damer, was the *maristan*, or madhouse, perhaps the oldest public establishment of the kind in the world, as it was attached by the Baharite Sultan Kalaoon to the mosque which he founded in 1284. "Our ears were assailed by the most discordant yells as soon as we entered the passage leading to the cells," where the lunatics were chained like wild beasts, the men in one court and the women in another. Each was confined in a separate cell with a small grated window, and with nothing but the bare floor to rest upon—while many, especially of the women, had not an article of clothing —yet they appeared to be sufficiently supplied with food, and mildly treated by their guardians; "and I think this gentleness of manner in the keepers was not assumed for the time, for the lunatics did not appear to fear them."—"I was ill prepared for the sight of such misery, and was leaving the court, when I heard a voice exclaiming in a melancholy tone of supplication, 'Stay, O my mistress; give me five paras for tobacco before you go.' I turned, and the entreaty was repeated by a very nice-looking old woman, who was very grateful when I assured her that she should have what she required; and the woman who was the superintendent gave her the trifle for me." This establishment was then, however, on the point of being broken up, as the patients were to be removed to another hospital, where they would be placed under the care of the pasha's French surgeon-general, Clot Bey.

"The Turkish is the only European language," says Mr Urquhart in his eloquent but fanciful work, the *Spirit of the East*, "which possesses, in the word *harem*, a synonyme for home, but it implies a great deal more.... To picture a Turkish woman, I would beg the reader, if possible, to fancy to himself a women without vanity or affectation, perfectly simple and natural, and preserving the manners and the type of her childhood in the full blossom and fructification of her passions and her charms." This is indeed the language of an enthusiast, in whose eyes all is light which comes from the East; but the winning grace and gentle courtesy of the Turco-Egyptian ladies of rank, as portrayed in Mrs Poole's interesting sketches of the domestic life of the hareems which she visited, go far to justify the character given of them by their eulogist. For her introduction to these, the *exclusive* circles of Cairo, as well as for the more than friendly reception which she there met with, Mrs Poole professes herself indebted "to the kindness of Mrs Sieder, the lady of our excellent resident missionary, who has gained the confidence of the most distinguished hareems," aided in no small degree, we have reason to believe, by the general estimation in which her brother was held among his Muslim acquaintance. In this novel species of social intercourse, Mrs Poole showed much tact, wearing the Turkish dress, which is admirably adapted to the climate, in her visits to ladies of the middle class, as well as at home; "but in visiting those who are considered the noble of the land, I resume, under my Eastern riding-costume, my English dress. In the Turkish dress, the manner of my salutation must have been more submissive [Pg 291] than I should have liked; while, as an Englishwoman, I am entertained by the most distinguished, not only as an equal, but, generally, as a superior." Thus, at the hareem of Habeeb Effendi, the ex-governor of Cairo, she was received at the door of the first apartment, on dismounting from the "high ass" on which all visits of ceremony must be paid, by the eldest daughter of the house, who herself disencumbered her of her riding-dress—an office left to slaves in families of rank, except in the case of a visitor of high distinction—and was then placed by her on the divan at the right hand of her mother, the first cousin of the

late Sultan Mahmood. The second daughter appeared soon after, and Mrs Poole proceeds to describe her dress. "She wore on her head a dark handkerchief twisted round a *tarboosh*, (red cap,) with a very splendid sprig of diamonds attached to the right side, and extending partly over her forehead. It was composed of very large brilliants, disposed in the form of three lutes in the centre, from each of which a branch extended, forming an oval shape at least five inches in length. High on the left side of her head, she wore a knot or slide of diamonds, through which was drawn a bunch of ringlets, which, from their position, appeared to be artificial; her tarboosh had the usual blue silk tassel, but divided and hanging on either side. Her long vest and trousers were of a dark-flowered India fabric; she wore round her waist a large and rich Cashmere shawl; and her neck was decorated with many strings of very large pearls, confined at intervals with gold beads. She was in one respect strangely disfigured—her eyebrows being painted with *kohl*, and united by the black pigment in a very broad and unbecoming manner. Many women of all classes here assume this disguise. Some apply the *kohl* to the eyebrows as well as the eyes, with great delicacy; but this lady had her eyebrows so remarkable, that her other features were deprived of their natural expression and effect."

The same graceful kindness which had marked the reception, was continued throughout the interview. After the usual refreshments of sweetmeats and coffee had been handed round by the slaves, the eldest daughter, throwing her arm round the neck of their guest, (the Oriental equivalent for walking arm-in-arm,) conducted her through the various apartments of the house; and was preparing, on her departure, to re-equip her with her riding-dress, when the younger sister remarked, "You took them off: it is for me to put them on." The friendship thus commenced with the amiable family of Habeeb Effendi continued uninterrupted during Mrs Poole's stay in Egypt; and the honours with which she was received were almost embarrassing—the chief lady, on her second visit, even resigning her own seat, and placing herself below her. The ladies of this hareem were particularly well informed. They had heard of the publication of Mrs Dawson Damer's "Tour," all were very curious to know what had been said of them, expressing much gratification on hearing the terms in which she had described them. Of the eldest daughter,[20] in particular, Mrs Poole speaks in language of the warmest personal regard:—"I have not met with her equal in Eastern female society, in gentleness, sweetness, and good sense; and, withal, she has decidedly a cultivated mind." She made a copy in colours of the portrait of the present Sultan in Mrs Damer's book, "which will doubtless excite great interest in every visiter; and, unless protected by a glass, it will perhaps, in the course of a few weeks, be kissed entirely away, like a miniature portrait of a Turkish grandee of which I was lately told." The political relations of the Porte with England and Russia frequently became the subject of conversation; and on one occasion, when the concession lately exacted from the Porte, of [Pg 292] allowing converts to Islam to return unmolested to their original faith—a concession of all others most galling to the Moslem pride—was brought on the tapis, this lady remarked, "with an earnestness of manner which interested me and my friend extremely—'It is but the fulfilment of prophecy! When I was a little child, I was taught that in this year great things would commence, which would require three years for their completion!' Surely she drew a beautiful conclusion," adds Mrs Poole, "and under circumstances of painful feelings to one strictly attached to the laws of her religion." But the allusion appears to have been a belief long current in the East, that a mysterious combination was involved in the number 1260, (the year of the Hejra which has just closed,) portending "the beginning of the end" of Islam, if not of the world; and of which this infringement of Moslem supremacy appeared to be the first manifestation.[21]

The advantages of the English costume were strongly evinced on Mrs Poole's presentation, by her friend Mrs Siedler, to the haughty Nezleh Hanum, the widowed daughter of Mohammed Ali, in her apartments at the Kasr-ed-Dubárah, a palace in the midst of Ibrahim Pasha's plantations on the banks of the Nile, which is the usual residence of the ladies of the Pasha's family. Mrs Dawson Damer has drawn a sufficiently unamiable picture of this princess, whose cruelty to her attendants she represents as emulating that displayed in his public character by her late husband, the Defterdar Mohammed Bey.[22] But nothing but the *patte de velours* was seen by the English stranger, who, though Nezleh Hanum was severely indisposed at the time of her visit, was, by her express command, shown into her bedroom, and received "with the sweetest smile imaginable;" while the youngest son of the Pasha, Mohammed Ali Bey, a boy nine years old, sat on a cushion at his sister's feet, conversing with the visitor in French; his mother, and other ladies, sitting on Mrs Poole's left hand. The day happened to be the fourth of the festival of the Great Beiram, when it was customary for those ladies who had the privilege of the *entrée*, to pay their respects to the princess. But to not one of those who presented themselves at this levee, did Nezleh Hanum deign to address a word in acknowledgment of their salutation, as they silently advanced, with downcast eyes, to kiss her hand or the hem of her robe, and then as silently withdrew, without once raising their eyes to her face. "This etiquette, I an informed, is not only observed during her illness, but at all times: and here I felt peculiarly the advantage of being an Englishwoman; for she kept up with me a lively conversation, and really treated me as an equal." On taking leave, a second cup of sherbet was presented—"This is always intended as a distinguishing mark of honour. Several ladies accompanied us to the door; and the treasurer followed me with an embroidered handkerchief from her highness. Do not think me egotistical, because I describe thus minutely my reception; I consider it important in a description of manners, especially as the receiving and paying visits is the everyday business of an Eastern lady."

This was not, however, the first occasion on which Mrs Poole had visited the Kasr-ed-Dubárah, as she had some months previously been present, in company with her invaluable chaperon, Mrs Sieder, at an entertainment there given by the Pasha's hareem; when she had formed the acquaintance of the mother[23] of Mohammed Ali Bey, and of another wife of the Pasha, "both young; the one a dignified and handsome person, and the other especially gentle and very lovely." At the time, she supposed that these were the *only* wives of his highness; but, on a subsequent visit to the hareem in the citadel, she was introduced to a third, the mother of a son named Haleem Bey—and she shrewdly conjectured that the full number of four was not incomplete. These ladies, with the daughter of Mohammed Ali, the widow of Toosoon, (a deceased son of the Pasha, whose son, Abbas, is the reputed successor to the pashalik,) and Abbas Pasha's fostermother, were the only persons at table, with the exception of the French guests—the widow of Toosoon Pasha, in virtue of her seniority, leading the way to the *salle-à-manger*, and taking the place of honour at "a very large round silver tray, covered with small silver dishes filled with various creams, jellies, &c., and most tastefully garnished with exquisite flowers; in the centre was a forequarter of lamb, on piláv. The lamb was succeeded by stew; the stew by vegetables; the vegetables by savoury cream, &c.; sweet dishes, most delicately prepared, succeeded these in rapid succession; and each was removed, and its place filled, when perhaps only tasted. Ladies attended close to our divan with fly-whisks; behind them about thirty formed a semicircle of gaily dressed, and in many cases beautiful women and girls; those near the door held large silver trays, on which the black slaves, who stood without, placed the dishes." During the repast, Mrs Poole frequently received morsels from the hand of Toosoon Pasha's widow—one of the highest compliments according to Eastern manners—and, before taking leave, she received an invitation to a grand marriage festival, which was shortly to take place in the hareem. The nuptials were not, however, celebrated during her stay in Egypt, the main difficulty being, as she was informed, *the choice of a bridegroom*!

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Though the costume of the Pasha's ladies did not differ materially from that already described in the hareem of Habeeb Effendi, yet, as the Kasr-ed-Dubárah may be considered as the centre of Cairo fashion, it would be unpardonable to omit some notice of Mrs Poole's observations (somewhat abridged) on this all-important subject. "The Turkish ladies wear the *yelek* (long vest) considerably longer than their height, forming a graceful train, which, in walking over a mat or carpet, they hold in front over the arm. The chemise is of silk gauze, fine muslin, or a very beautiful thin crape, with glossy stripes, which is made of raw silk in the hareems, and is cream colour: the sleeves are not confined at the wrist. The *shintiyan* (trousers) are extremely full, and generally of a different material from the *yelek*; the former being of rich brocade, large-patterned muslin or chintz, or sometimes of plain satin or gros-de-Naples. The *yelek*, on the contrary, is made of a material with a delicate pattern, generally a small stripe, whether of satin, India silk, or muslin. Ladies of distinction always wear Cashmere shawls round the waist, generally red; and those in Kasr-ed-Dubárah had a narrow edge of gold, with gold cords and tassels at the corners." The tarboosh and diamond ornaments are worn as before described; "but the front hair is cut short, and combed towards the eyebrows, which is extremely unbecoming even to a beautiful face, except when it curls naturally. The long hair is disposed in numerous small plaits, and looped up on each side over the handkerchief. The hair of the younger ladies and white slaves, in the Turkish hareems, is often worn hanging loosely on the shoulders; but no coiffure is so pretty as that worn by the Arab ladies, whose long hair, hanging down the back, is arranged in many small plaits, often lengthened by silk braid, and generally adorned with hundreds of small gold ornaments, resembling oval spangles, which harmonize better with the Eastern costume than any other fashion."

The hareems of the grandees are generally surrounded by lofty walls, as high or higher than the neighbouring houses; a vigilant *bowwab* or doorkeeper is stationed at the outer portal; and within this the eunuchs guard the curtains, heavy with golden embroidery, which cover the doorway leading to the interior; and woe to the intruder who should attempt to penetrate beyond the entrance! A closed door is never permitted in the hareem; but etiquette forbids the husband to enter when slippers laid before the doorway denote that his wife is receiving visitors—a method of exclusion which is said to be sometimes kept in operation for many days together. The scale of precedence among the inmates is regulated on a very different system from that of European society. Mr Urquhart has correctly remarked that "the precept, 'Thou shalt leave thy father and mother, and cleave unto thy wife,' has not been transcribed from the Gospel to the Koran: the wife in the East is not the mistress of the household; she is the daughter of her husband's mother," to whom the appellation of *hanum*, or chief lady belongs of right to the end of her life: and even if the mother be not living, the sisters of the husband take precedence of the wife, who is regarded by them as a *younger* sister. The first wife, however, where there is more than one, can only lose her pre-eminence of rank by the misfortune of being childless, in which case she gives place to one who has become a mother; but, among the higher classes, each wife has her separate apartments and attendants, and in some cases even inhabits separate mansion—all, however, within the bounding walls of the hareem.

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"In the great hareems, the hanum generally has four principal attendants, two of whom are elderly, and act simply as companions; the third is the treasurer, and the fourth is the sub-treasurer. The next in rank are those who hand pipes and coffee, sherbet and sweetmeats; and each of these has her own set of subordinates. Lastly rank the cooks and house slaves, who are mostly negresses." The position of these *white slaves*, among whom Mrs. Poole

"found the most lovely girls in the hareem, many of them fully justifying my preconceived ideas of the celebrated Georgian and Circassian women," may, perhaps, be best understood by a reference to the familiar pages of the Thousand and One Nights; the hareem scenes in which are probably drawn from those of Syria and Egypt at the period when those tales were written. "Though torn from their parents at an early age, they find and acknowledge fathers and mothers in those to whom they are sold; and, excepting in two cases, cheerfulness has appeared to reign among them"—and the authoress was a witness of the deep sympathy felt by the slaves of the wife of a Turkish grandee, who was confined in the state prison by order of the Pasha. The principal employment of these fair prisoners, independent of the preparation of sherbets and other household duties, consists in embroidery, "which is extremely beautiful, as superior as it is unlike to any fancy-work practised in England:—taste of a very remarkable kind is displayed in its execution, similar in many respects to that exhibited in the most elaborate decorations of Arabian architecture." Few, even of the ladies of rank, can read or write their own language—but there are some exceptions—the accomplished family of Habeeb Effendi has already been noticed; and Mrs Poole was acquainted with another instance, in which the daughters had learned, under the tuition of a brother who had been educated in Europe, to read and understand not only the literature of their own country, but the poets of Italy. The surveillance exercised over the young white slaves "can only be compared to that which is established in the convent. A deviation from the strictest rules of modesty is followed by severe punishment, and often by the death of the delinquent ... but if they conduct themselves well, they are frequently married by their masters to persons of high respectability; and the ceremony of the marriage[24] of a slave in the high hareems is conducted with extreme magnificence. Those, however, who from their personal charms have become the favourites of their master, and particularly those who have borne him a child, are seldom or never thus dismissed, and cannot legally be sold: having in this respect the advantage of the wife, who is always liable to be divorced without cause assigned, and at a moment's notice." [Pg 295]

In the hareems of the middle and lower classes, the same system of strict seclusion cannot, of course, be maintained as in the case of the "hidden jewels" (as they are called) of the grandees:—the women frequent the public baths, and are allowed to visit their neighbours without restraint; but shopping is generally prohibited, for reasons which may be gathered from the Thousand and One Nights:—and goods for sale are brought to the hareems by female brokers. The system of blindfold marriages is universal; and except among the lowest class, it is scarcely possible that the bridegroom and bride should get a glimpse of each other before their espousals—and the betrothals are generally made at a ridiculously early age. A lady gravely asked Mrs Poole whether one of her boys, thirteen years of age, was married—and she witnessed a marriage procession in which the almost infant bride, taking the whole affair as a good joke, thought proper to walk backwards before the canopy fanning her friends, instead of submitting to be fanned. The natural consequence of these early marriages is, that "among the lower orders some husbands are sad tyrants; they marry such little young creatures, that they are more like children than wives, and their inexperience unjustly provokes their husbands." An original sort of revenge was threatened in her hearing by a man irritated by the abusive language of a little girl, whose tongue was the plague of the neighbourhood—"When I have a little more money, I will marry you, and punish you every day." Mrs Poole indeed expresses her conviction, reluctantly forced upon her, that in the middle and lower classes,[25] both wives and female slaves are often treated with the utmost brutality; and she mentions two instances in her own neighbourhood, in which the death of women of the latter class was caused by the cruelty of their masters. In both these cases, however, the men were Copts—a people of whom (in spite of the efforts of the English Missionary Society to make them something more than nominal Christians) she was assured, by one who knew them well, "that their moral state is far worse than that of the Muslims, and that in the *conduct* of the latter there is much more Christianity than is exhibited in that of the former."[26] An anecdote, casually introduced, enables us to judge of the education which children receive on this point. On a visit to the wife of the keeper of the tombs of Mohammed Ali's family, a boy just able to walk was brought in, when "the chief lady called for a stick, that puss, who was quietly crossing the carpet, might be beaten for his amusement. I interceded for the cat, when she replied mysteriously, 'I like her very much —I will not hurt her.' Accordingly she raised her arm with considerable effort, and let it fall gently. She next desired one of her slaves to kneel, which the girl did most gracefully, and bent her head with an air of mock submission to receive the *kurbáj*, and the same farce was repeated. Though neither slave nor cat was a sufferer, the effect must have been equally bad on the mind of the child. Alas! for the slaves and cats when he is big enough to make them feel!"

The children, however, occasionally fare no better than the slaves; and Mr Lane was not seldom obliged, by the screams of the sufferers, to interfere to stop the cruelty practised in his neighbourhood, when "the answer usually returned was of the most civil kind, assuring us, with many salutations, that *for our sakes* the offender shall be forgiven." On one occasion an old woman, to punish her little grandson for a trifling theft, had employed the services of a professional *beater*, who had tied the child's legs and arms, and was beating him with a ponderous stick, while his grandmother cried, "again!" and only desisted on a peremptory remonstrance from Mr Lane; yet the same woman disturbed the neighbourhood with her lamentations every alternate Monday for the loss of her son, the little boy's father! It is [Pg 296]

perhaps hardly fair to cite instances of brutality like this, to which our own police-offices afford abundance of parallels, as examples of the national manners of Egypt; and Mrs Poole does full justice to the spirit of mutual aid which prevails among the poor in all Moslem countries, and teaches them "to bear each other's burdens." The women, especially those of the higher class, are admitted to be the "most affectionate of mothers." They are so possessed, however, by terror of the "evil eye," which they firmly believe may be cast on their children by an admiring word or glance, that the smallest allusion to them is hazardous. Mrs Poole was much amused by the agitation of an Arab lady, in conversation with whom she had congratulated herself that the strength of her eldest boy's constitution had preserved him from the ill effects of the heat. "In an instant she vociferated, 'Bless the Prophet! bless the Prophet!' and coloured deeply." And it was with difficulty that Mrs Poole could calm her, or convince her that the English apprehended no danger from the expression of their satisfaction in the welfare of those they love.

It is not easy for even the most experienced to avoid *contretemps* of this kind in the East, where even the ordinary observances of life seem to have been arranged on a system diametrically opposite to our own; and some amusing anecdotes are given of the *gaucheries* unconsciously committed by raw tourists from Europe. At the house of an Egyptian grandee, an European gentleman, on receiving the sherbet after pipes and coffee, which was handed to him first as a stranger, "looked at it for a moment, and then at the gaily-embroidered napkin hung over the arm of the slave who presented it; and following the impulse given, I conclude, by his preconceptions of Eastern habits of cleanliness, dipped his fingers in the sweet beverage, and wiped them on the napkin!" A less pardonable breach of etiquette, as it proceeded not from ignorance but want of good-breeding, was committed by two Franks, who, arranged in a motley mixture of European and Oriental costume, made their way into the Pasha's palace at Shubra, and, after rambling from room to room without meeting any one, at length entered the bedroom of the Pasha, who was nearly undressed! "Though taken by surprise, his Turkish coolness did not forsake him; calling for his dragoman, he said, 'Ask those gentlemen where they bought their tarbooshes?' 'At Constantinople.' 'And *there*,' rejoined the Pasha, 'I suppose they learned their manners. Tell them so.' Judging from this retort that their presence was not agreeable, the Franks saluted the viceroy, and withdrew."

As we profess to deal with Mrs Poole solely in her own peculiar province, as a delineator of female manners and female society in Egypt, we shall pass with brief notice her visit to the Pyramids, the account of which contains much valuable information, supplied (as she avows,) from the notes of her brother. The excursion, though at a short distance from Cairo, is not altogether unattended with danger, especially to ladies, from the attacks of the Bedawees; as appears from the remarks of some young men, the sons of a Bedawee sheykh at some distance, who had ridden over, as they admitted, in the hope of seeing the faces of the ladies of the party, and were much disappointed at finding them veiled. They had been much struck by the charms of a beautiful American whom they had seen a few weeks before; and one of then exclaimed, in speaking of her—"But the sword! the sword! if we dared to use it, we would kill that man," alluding to the lady's companion, whether her husband or brother, "and take her for ourselves."—"'Tis well for pretty women travelling in the East, that these lawless Arabs are kept under a degree of subjection by the present government," says Mrs Poole; and the anecdote affords an indication that, when the reins of administration are released by the death of the present Pasha, the overland route to India may not be quite so secure as it is at present. [Pg 297]

But there is another, a modern wonder of Cairo, which, of late years, has almost equally divided with the Pyramids the attention of Frank travellers. We allude to the sheykh Abdel-Kadir el-Maughrabi, in whose enchanted mirror of ink, poured into the palm of an unsophisticated Arab boy, men from all parts of the earth were compelled to appear before the tent of the Sultan, with its seven mystic flags, and submit to a description of their persons and dress, which would have satisfied the vigilance of the Russian police. The oracular sagacity of the *Quarterly Review* was unable to solve the mystery; and even Mr Lane, in his *Modern Egyptians*, hesitates whether to doubt or to believe; but the bubble (as we learn from Mrs Poole) has at last burst; and the two familiar spirits, Turshoon and Turyooshoon, stand revealed in the late Osman Effendi, interpreter to the British consulate. Since the death of this respectable personage, who usually acted as master of the ceremonies at his performances, the good fortune of the sheykh has totally deserted him, as he himself inadvertently admitted to Mr Lane, when he not long since accompanied two English travellers to witness the exhibition, which proved an entire failure; and since that time his attempts have been even more signally unsuccessful. Whatever may have been the means employed, there is no longer any doubt that Osman Effendi, who sat quiet and demure in a corner, without word or sign, was the prime agent in the deception; and with him the reputation of the last representative of Pharaoh's magicians has vanished for ever, like the visions in his own magic mirror.

The series of Mrs Poole's letters closes abruptly in April 1844, with the relation of one of her visits to the friendly harem of Habeeb Effendi; and no intimation is given either of the cause of the second cessation, or whether a second series may be hereafter expected. We hope that this may be the case; for, independent of the interest attaching to the subject, and the

difficulty of finding another equally qualified by opportunity and powers of observation to do it justice, the time must inevitably soon be past when it will be possible to depict the habitudes and manners of the Arab population in their integrity. Cairo is at present, with the single exception perhaps of Damascus, the most purely Arab city in the East; but the ruthless reforms of the Pasha, and the constant passage of the Franks on this new high-road to India, will erelong divest it of its distinguishing characteristics, and give it as hybrid an aspect as that of the Frank intruders into the Pasha's chamber. An English hotel has already started up; and Mrs Poole informs us, that "by a proclamation of the Pasha, the houses are to be whitewashed within and without; those who inhabit ruined houses are to repair or sell them; and uninhabited dwellings are to be pulled down, for the purpose of forming squares and gardens; *meshreebeyehs* (projecting first-floor windows) are forbidden; and *mastabahs* (the seats in front of shops) are to be removed. Cairo, therefore, will no longer be an Arab city, and will no longer possess those peculiarities which render it so picturesque and attractive. The deep shade in the narrow streets, increased by the projecting windows; the picturesque tradesmen, sitting with one friend or more before his shop, enjoying the space afforded by his mastabah—these will be no more; and while I cannot but acknowledge the great necessity for repairing the city, and removing the ruins which threaten the destruction of passengers, I should have liked these features retained which are essentially characteristic—which help, as it were, to group the people, and which form such admirable accessories to pictures."

PRACTICAL AGRICULTURE—STEPHENS' BOOK OF THE FARM, &c.

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The growing demand for information among the agricultural classes, makes the appearance of new books of a really trustworthy kind of greater national value at the present time than at any former period. Besides, as our knowledge is rapidly advancing, good books upon practical agriculture are becoming more difficult to write. They require from their authors a larger acquaintance with the newer branches of elementary science than many practical men can be expected as yet to possess. These considerations induce us to advert for the second time to the work now before us. We drew the attention of our readers to the first volume when it made its appearance; two other volumes completing the work having since been published, we feel ourselves under a kind of obligation to follow the author cursorily through the remainder of his book.

The Book of the Farm might be called *The Practical Farmer's Library*, since it contains full information upon almost every practical subject upon which the intelligent young farmer is likely to require assistance or advice. The scientific branch alone is not systematically discussed, though here and there useful scientific points are treated of and explained. But this was not to be expected in a really practical work; and the author, upon this branch, very properly refers his readers to the published works of Professor Johnston.[27]

The feature that struck us most in the perusal of the first volume, was the remarkably wide range of minutely practical information which the author possesses and embodies in his book. He describes every practical operation as if he had not only assisted at it on some former occasion, but as if he were actually performing it while he is describing it with his pen. This gives a truthfulness and self-evident accuracy to his descriptions, which are rarely to be met with in agricultural works, and which could not be expected from one who was not really familiar with the points of which he treats. He seems even to enjoy every labour he describes, to enter into the spirit of every operation to be performed—into the heart and fun of the thing as it were. He becomes an actual participator in the fact—a *particeps criminis*.

No matter whether it is the currying or the skinning of his horse—the shoeing or the riding—taking him to the field or to the tanner, Mr Stephens is equally ready and willing for all. He tells you with the same glee, how to shelter your sheep on the hill side, and how to cut their throats after the most approved fashion; how to lay on fat on your short-horns—what are the marks of their being ripe for the butcher—and how you can kill them in the *most Christian* way. He pets his sheep-dog and praises him, tells you how kindly you should treat him, what constant encouragement you should give to so faithful a servant, at what age he should be hanged, and how you can make most of his skin. He instructs you to tend your young lambs, he helps you to select a pet from the flock; he goes with you afterwards to the barn, helps you to kill and skin it, teaches you to score and cross it in the most approved style, cuts it up for you like an anatomist, selects the best joint for your own cook; sits down with you afterwards at your own table and carves it, and after he has helped you all to your general satisfaction, he is still connoisseur enough to keep the best bit of all for his own plate.

Besides this living spirit, which pervades all the descriptions of methods and operations, another excellence we have remarked in these volumes is the *kind* of opinions given upon practical points, in reference to which a difference of sentiment prevails among practical men. They are in general *safe* opinions—leaning always to the prudent side in cases of doubtful practice. If they appear, therefore, in some cases, not to come up to the notions of

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those lovers of change, who would improve agriculture as engineers make railroads—without regard to their cost or to the interest of the capital expended—they will appear to all sound men to be so much the better fitted to guide the rising farmers of the present day. These young men *must* possess more knowledge than their fathers, if they are to continue upon the land; but they will also soon disappear from the land, notwithstanding their knowledge, if a balance of profit at the end of the year be not considered an indispensable element in their system of husbandry.

The book, as we formerly stated, is divided into four parts, embracing in succession the proper operations to be performed in the four seasons, commencing with those of the winter.

To the greater part of the winter operations, as described and explained by Mr Stephens, we adverted in our former notice: there remains one topic, however, to which, from its great national importance, we must still turn for a little.

Among the various improvements which, in the dead season of the year, the farmer may undertake with profit to himself and advantage to his farm, is that of draining. Of this kind of improvement almost every farm in the country is more or less susceptible. But how should it be done, at what depth, and with what material? As to the depth, the young farmer who wishes to do his work well, will neither imitate nor rely too much on the practice of the district he comes from, or in which his own farm may happen to be situated. If so, he will, in Ayrshire—by the advice of the wise-acres in that county—put in his drains only twenty inches, or two feet, in depth; in Berwickshire he will sink them to three feet; and in Sussex he may be carried along with the rising tide to put none in shallower than four feet. He will not trust, we say, wholly to example. He will say to himself rather, what is the object I have in view, and what implements have I to effect it?

In draining he has one leading, one master object, we may call it, to attend to. He has to deepen his soil, that the roots of his crops may descend further—may draw their food from greater depths, and from a larger body of earth. The more completely he can effect this, the better will his work be done.

How deep will his crops send down their roots? In favourable circumstances his wheat and clover, and even his turnips, will descend to a depth of three feet. His operations, then, would be in some degree perfect, if he could so open, and drain, and doctor his land as to enable and induce the roots of his crops to go down so far as this.

But they will never, or rarely at least, descend lower than the level of the water in the bottom of his drains. He cannot, therefore, hope to make his soil available for the growth of his crops to a greater depth than that to which his drains descend. Three feet then, he will say, appears to be a reasonable depth for a *perfect* drain.

Again, drained land must be opened beneath by the subsoil plough, or by the fork, if the rains, and roots, and air, are to descend, and the full benefits are to be derived from the drains. With our existing implements—especially with the fork—the soil may be stirred to a depth of twenty-six inches. The top of the drain, therefore, should be at least this depth under the surface; and this, again, brings the whole depth of a perfect drain to within a few inches of three feet as before.

Then as to the material, it seems advisable to use either stones or tiles, according as the one or the other is the cheaper, provided always that the stones are properly broken, and carefully put in. The tide seems now to be running in favour of smaller tiles than have hitherto been generally used in Scotland, and even of pipe-tiles of a very small diameter. Our friend Mr Smith of Deanston has taken out a patent for a pipe-tile, with projecting fingers at the ends, which dovetail into each other, so as to unite the tiles together, and at the same time to keep them in their places. Should these pipes be found generally efficient, [Pg 300] the cost of draining will be considerably diminished, while the small space they occupy will afford greater facilities for deepening the soil.

But the economical considerations connected with draining, are as important as the practical methods to be adopted, both to the cultivator of the soil and to the country at large. We shall advert only to one of these.

In what light ought the expenditure of money in draining to be regarded by the practical man?

He ought to consider it only as a mercantile speculation, by which he may or may not make a profit, according to the degree of prudence with which it is undertaken. He has the usufruct of his farm for a certain number of years, with liberty to crop it in a certain way. By this he hopes to make a certain sum of money. But it is capable of improvement by draining, and he has liberty to drain if he likes. "Well," he says to himself, "I make a certain sum by farming my land as it is; I have here fifty pounds of ready money, could I make more profit if I were to lay this money out in draining it?—would it be a good speculation?" He calculates the cost of draining and the probable return of profit, and the result is apparently that he *can* make more profit by this use of his money than by any other way in which he could employ it. This being the result, the prudent man embarks in this safe speculation. He does not bury his money in his land; he does not give it away to the land to the loss of his family; he only lends it for a season, and for the benefit of his family. He has made his calculations badly, and has

only his own arithmetic to blame, if he does not get all his capital back from the land, with a handsome profit in addition, some years before his lease has expired.

Many tenants think the interest of the landlord should enter into their calculations, and some cherish or excite in their own minds ill feelings towards their landlords at the idea of leaving their drains in the land when they quit, and the land itself in better condition than when they entered upon their farms. But this feeling arises altogether from a want of familiarity on their part with the ordinary feelings of mercantile men and the transactions of mercantile business. The farmer's sole aim is to promote his own interest. If that interest is to be promoted by draining, let him do it immediately, and with all his heart; his own profit will not be a whit the less that the landlord comes in for a little profit too when the lease has expired. The builder who takes thirty or forty years' lease of a bit of land in the neighbourhood of London, is not deterred from planting houses upon it, by the reflection that at the end of his lease the houses will become the property of his landlord. Long before that time has expired, he hopes to have his principal and his profit both safe in his pocket. If he does not cherish these hopes, he is either a fool or a rogue.

On one other point connected with draining, we are anxious to quote Mr Stephens' own words. In reply to the question, is your land drained? we have so often received the answer —"Oh, sir, my land is dry, it does not require draining"—that we request the serious attention of such of our readers as are interested in the improvement of land, to the following passage:—

> "Land, however, though it does not contain such a superabundance of water as to obstruct arable culture, may nevertheless, by its inherent wetness, prevent or retard the luxuriant growth of useful plants, as much as decidedly wet land. The truth is, that deficiency of crops on apparently dry land is frequently attributed to unskilful husbandry, when it really arises from the baleful influence of *concealed* stagnant water; and the want of skill is shown, not so much in the management of the arable culture of the land, as in neglecting to remove the true cause of the deficiency of the crop, namely, the concealed stagnant water. Indeed, my opinion is—and its conviction has been forced upon me by dint of long and extensive observation of the state of the agricultural soil over a large portion of the country—that this is the *true cause of most of the bad farming to be seen*, and that *not one farm* is to be found throughout the kingdom that would *not be much the better for draining*. Entertaining this opinion, you will not be surprised at my urging upon you to practise draining, or at my lingering at some length on the subject, that I may exhibit to you the various modes of doing it, according to the peculiar circumstances in which your farm may be placed."—(Vol. i. p. 483.)

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With the substance of these remarks we entirely agree. We would only not put the point so broadly as to imply, that the want of draining was the only cause of the bad farming we see. We have, however, been over large tracts of Scotland, and we are quite sure that whole counties might be made to yield the double of their present produce by an efficient drainage, and proper subsequent management.

We pass over the very succinct and methodical description of the processes of threshing, winnowing, &c., and can note only one point out of the great mass of very interesting matter Mr Stephens has brought together, in regard to the composition, qualities, and uses of the different kinds of grain. The point to which we shall advert is the composition of oatmeal. Every country is naturally prejudiced in favour of its national food. We Britons look with real or affected disgust on the black rye-bread of the northern nations; and yet on this food the people thrive, are strong, healthy, and vigorous. The bread, too, is sweet to the taste. It is only disagreeable associations, therefore—connected in our minds with the darkness of the colour—that make us consider it disagreeable or unwholesome. In like manner, our Irish brethren are strong, vigorous, and merry, on their potato diet. Why should we condemn it as the lowest kind of diet, or pity those who are content to live almost wholly upon it? It is true that, from its being the main staff of Irish life, great distress ensues when a failure takes place in the potato crop. But such would be the consequence of a general failure in any kind of crop on which they might happen chiefly to rely. The cure for such seasons of suffering, therefore, is not to be sought so much in bringing about change of diet, as in introducing a better system of husbandry—an improved system of drainage especially—by which a general failure of any crop will be rendered a more rare occurrence. The spread of railroads will soon render it comparatively easy to transport even the bulky potato from one county to another, and thus to prevent the recurrence of famine prices.

But in South Britain the oatmeal of the Scottish peasantry—the national food—is looked upon with as much prejudice, and those who live upon it with as much pity, as the black bread-eaters of Germany and Sweden, or the potato-diggers of Ireland. But the health and strength of the Scottish peasantry, who live entirely upon oatmeal, is proverbial. On this subject, in speaking of the Scottish ploughmen, where the bothy system is practised—that is, where the single men all live together in a room or bothy provided for them, which serves them both for sleeping and cooking—-Mr Stephens has the following characteristic passage:—

> "The oatmeal is usually cooked in one way, as *brose*, as it is called, which is a

different sort of pottage to porridge. A pot of water is put on the fire to boil, a task which the men take in turns; a handful or two of oatmeal is taken out of the small chest with which each man provides himself, and put into a wooden bowl, which also is the ploughman's property; and on a hollow being made in the meal, and sprinkled with salt, the boiling water is poured over the meal, and the mixture receiving a little stirring with a horn spoon, and the allowance of milk poured over it, the brose is ready to be eaten; and as every man makes his own brose, and knows his own appetite, he makes just as much brose as he can consume. The bowl is scraped clean with the spoon, and the spoon licked clean with the tongue, and the dish is then placed in the meal-chest for a similar purpose on the succeeding occasion. The fare is simple, and is as simply made; but it must be wholesome, and capable of supplying the loss of substance occasioned by hard labour; for *I believe that no class of men can endure more bodily fatigue, for ten hours every day, than those ploughmen of Scotland who subsist on this brose thrice a-day*."—(Vol. ii. p. 384.)

The quantity of oatmeal allowed to the ploughman—*as his sole food*—is two pecks, or 17½ lbs. in a week, exactly 2½ lbs. a-day—or ¾ lb. for each meal—and yet it often happens that a hard-worked ploughman cannot consume the whole of this allowance. Speaking again of oatmeal *porridge*, Mr Stephens says, "there are few more wholesome meals than oatmeal porridge, or upon which a harder day's work can be wrought. Children of all ranks in Scotland are brought up on this diet, verifying the line of Burns, [Pg 302]

"'The halesome parritch, chief of Scotia's food.'"

As southern prejudices have a tendency to make their way northward, and, in the face of old experience at home, are leading many to undervalue the oatmeal, on which we trust our peasantry will long rely as their staple food, it is interesting to find that, on this point, science has at length come to the aid of reason and experience. Chemistry has already told us many remarkable things in regard to the vegetable food we eat—that it contains, for example, a certain per centage of the actual fat and lean we consume in our beef, or mutton, or pork—and, therefore, that he who lives upon vegetable food may be as strong as the man who lives upon animal food, because both in reality feed upon the same things in a somewhat different form. Now it appears, from analysis, that wheaten flour contains on an average not more than ten per cent of actual dry beef—of that which forms the living muscle of the animal that feeds upon it—with three per cent of fat, and fifty of starch. And because of this chemical composition, our southern neighbours think wheaten flour the most nourishing, the most refined, and the most civilized of all food.

But Professor Johnston, in the recent edition of his Elements,[28] tells us, that, from experiments made in the laboratory of the Agricultural Chemistry Association of Scotland, it turns out that oats are far richer in all the three things above named than the best wheat flour grown in any part of England—that they contain eighteen or twenty per cent of that which forms muscle, five to eight of fat, and sixty-five of starch. The account, therefore, between shelled oats (groats) and fine wheaten flour stands thus. One hundred pounds of each contain—

	Wheat.	Oats.
Muscular matter,	10 lbs.	18 lbs.
Fat,	3 ...	6 ...
Starch,	50 ...	65 ...
	——	——
	63 lbs.	89 lbs.

What do you say to these numbers, Mr Cockney?—You won't pity us, Scotch oatmeal-eaters, any more, we guess. Experience and science are both on our side. What makes your race-horses the best in the world, may be expected to make our peasantry the best too. We offer you, therefore, a fair bet. You shall take ten English ploughmen, and feed them upon two pounds and a-half of wheaten flour a-day, and we shall take as many Scotch ploughmen, and feed them upon the same weight of oatmeal a-day—*if they can eat so much*, for that is doubtful—and we shall back our men against yours for any sum you like. They shall walk, run, work—or fight you, if you like it—and they shall thrash you to your heart's content. We should like to convince you that Scotch parritch has some real solid metal in it.

We back the oatcake and the porridge against all the wheaten messes in the world. We defy your homemade bread, your baker's bread, your household bread, your leaven bread, and your brown Georges—your fancy bread and your raisin bread—your baps, rolls, scones, muffins, crumpets, and cookies—your bricks, biscuits, bakes, and rusks—your Bath buns and your sally luns—your tea-cakes, and saffron-cakes, and slim-cakes, and plank-cakes, and pan-cakes, and soda-cakes, and currant-cakes, and sponge-cakes, and seed-cakes, and girdle-cakes, and singing-hinnies—your short-bread and your currant-buns—and if there by any other names by which you designate your wheaten abominations, we defy and detest them all. We swear by the oatcake and the porridge, the substantial bannock and the brose —long may Scotland produce them, and Scotchmen live and fight upon them!! [Pg 303]

"The first great event in spring on a farm of mixed husbandry," says Mr Stephens, "is the calving of the cows." He then describes the symptoms, the preparations, and the treatment of the cow and the calf, the diseases to which they are respectively liable, and the treatment to which they ought to be subjected, in his usual clear, methodical, and remarkably complete manner. We have been struck with the kind tone which pervades the whole of this chapter, the gentle treatment he prescribes in all cases—indicating at once a practical acquaintance with the details of these operations, and a love also for the quiet and patient animals of which he is treating.

We should have quoted, had the passages not been too long, his description of the different modes adopted, apparently with equal profit, by the veal manufacturers for the London and Glasgow markets respectively. We should like to know the comparative profit of the French mode of feeding calves for the Paris market, *on cream and biscuits*. In his next edition, we hope Mr Stephens will instruct us upon this point also.

It is one of the merits of this book, and in our estimation a very high one, that method, order, and economy of time and labour are invariably recommended and insisted upon, in every process and at every season. But these points are especially insisted upon in his chapter *on the advantages of having field-work always in a forward state*. The following extract is long, but it contains such admirable advice, that we insert it for the sake of those who may never see the book itself, or have an opportunity of buying it.

After describing how every favourable day should be taken in preparing the land for wheat, beans, oats, potatoes, turnips, tares, or naked fallow, in their respective order, he continues:—

> "And when every one of all these objects has been promoted, and there is found little or nothing to do till the burst of spring-work comes, both horses and men may enjoy a day's rest now and then, without incurring the risk of throwing work back; but before such recreations are indulged in, it should be ascertained that all the implements, great and small, have been repaired for work—the plough-irons all new laid—the harrow-tines new laid and sharpened, and fastened firmly into the bulls of the harrows—the harness all tight and strong—the sacks new patched and mended, that no seed-corn be spilt upon the road—the seed-corn thrashed, measured up, and sacked, and what is last wanted put into the granary—the horses new shod, that no casting or breaking of a single shoe may throw a pair of horses out of work for even one single hour—in short, to have every thing prepared to start for work when the first notice of spring shall be heralded in the sky.
>
> "But suppose the contrary of all this to happen; suppose that the plough-irons and harrow-tines have to be laid and sharpened, when perhaps to-morrow they may be wanted in the field—a stack to be thrashed for seed-corn or for horse's corn in the midst of the sowing of a field—suppose, too, that only a week's work has been lost, in winter, of a single pair of horses, and the consequence is, that six acres of land have to be ploughed when they should be sown, that is, a loss of a whole day of six pair of horses, or of two days of three pair—suppose all these inconveniences to happen in the busy season, and the provoking reflection occurs that the loss incurred now was occasioned by trifling offputs in winter. Compare the value of these trifles with the risk of finding you unprepared for sowing beans or spring-wheat. Suppose, once more, that instead of having turnips in store for the cattle, when the oat-seed is begun in the fields, and that, instead of being able to prosecute that indispensable piece of work without interruption, you are obliged to send away a portion of the draughts to bring in turnips, which *must be brought in*, and brought in, too, from hand to mouth, it being impossible, in the circumstances, to store them. In short, suppose that the season of incessant labour arrives and finds you unprepared to go along with it,—and what are the consequences? Every creature about you, man, woman, and beast, are then toiled beyond endurance every day, not to *keep up* work, which is a lightsome task, but to *make up* work, which is a toilsome task, but which you said you could easily do, when you were idling your time in a season you consider of little value; and, after all, this toil is bestowed in vain to obtain the end you wish, namely, to prepare your crop *in due season*. You who are inexperienced in the evils of procrastination may fancy this to be an overdrawn picture—even an impossible case; but unfortunately for that supposition, it is drawn from the life. I have seen every incident occur which I have mentioned, both as to work being in a forward and in a backward state."—(Vol. ii. pp. 489, 483.)

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This one extract will alone illustrate the opinion we have already expressed, in regard to the soundness and safety of the advice on practical subjects, which our author ventures to give.

We pass over a hundred pages devoted to ploughing and sowing, and the selection of seed. On the last of which points our inclination would lead us to dwell—especially in reference to the steeping of seeds, a subject which at present engages so much attention, and upon which so much nonsense and mercantile puffing has been recently expended. But our limits restrain us.

Whether it is that our own predilections incline us more to those parts of his book, or that Mr Stephens writes these better—with heart and kindliness he certainly does write[29]—we scarcely know, but we certainly like all his chapter upon animals. *The lambing of ewes* is the subject of chapter fifty-four.

In all lines of life there are the skilful and the unskilful, and the former are always the fewer in number. In reference to shepherds, Mr Stephens says:—

> "No better proof need be adduced of the fewness of skilful shepherds, than the loss which every breeder of sheep sustains every year, especially in bad weather. I knew a shepherd who possessed unwearied attention, but was deficient in skill, and being over-anxious, always assisted the ewes in lambing before the proper time; and as he kept the ewes in too high condition, the consequence was, that every year he lost a number of both ewes and lambs; and in one season of bad weather the loss amounted to the large number of twenty-six ewes, and I forget of how many lambs, in a dock of only ten score of ewes. I knew another shepherd who was far from being solicitous about his charge, though certainly not careless of it, yet his skill was so undoubted, that he chiefly depended upon it, and his success was so eminent, that the loss of a ewe or lamb under his charge was matter of surprise. Of these two shepherds —the attentive and the skilful—it would appear that the skilful is the safer, and of course the more valuable, though it must be owned, that it is better to *prevent* evils by skilful attention, than to *cure* them by attentive skill; yet it is only by the union of both these qualities that a perfect shepherd can be formed."—(Vol. ii. p. 600.)

Perhaps some of our readers are acquainted with *Price on Sheep*, a book in which the treatment of the Leicester sheep is especially described. After commenting upon what this author says of the losses experienced in lambing-time by the southern breeders, Mr Stephens pays the following deserved compliment to the intelligent shepherds of Scotland:—

> "I would not have noticed these egregious blunders, said by Mr Price to be committed by shepherds in a low country like Romney Marsh, in Kent, so prominently, had not Mr Youatt adopted the sentiments of Mr Price in the very particulars quoted above, in his excellent treatise on the history and diseases of sheep. Were a shepherd of a Leicester flock in Scotland made aware that he was suspected of such ignorance of the nature of sheep, he would be quite ashamed; and so would shepherds even of the hill country, who cannot have so intimate a knowledge of every individual of their flock, usually occupying a wide range of mountain land, as their brethren of the profession tending flocks within much more limited bounds."—(Vol. ii. p. 602.)

Among the more immediate symptoms of lambing, there are two which have struck us as very interesting. We have put them in italics in the following quotation:—

> "The more immediate symptoms of lambing are when the ewe stretches herself frequently; separating herself from her companions; exhibiting restlessness by not remaining in one place for any length of time; lying down and rising up again, as if dissatisfied with the place; pawing the ground with a forefoot; *bleating as if in quest of a lamb; and appearing fond of the lambs of other ewes*."—(Vol. ii. p. 603.)

In regard to *pet* lambs—such as are brought up by hand because their mothers have died, and it has been impossible to mother then upon other ewes—the following observation shows their innocent simplicity:—

> "When the same person feeds the lambs, and this should be the dairymaid, the lambs soon become attached to her, and would follow her every where: but to prevent their bleating, and to make them contented, an apron or a piece of cloth, hung on a stake or bush in the paddock, will keep them together."—(Vol. ii. p. 611.)

After treating of the various risks which ewes and lambs are subject to, the final result for which a skilful shepherd should look, is thus stated:—

> "He should not be satisfied with his exertions unless he has preserved one-half the number of ewes with twin-lambs, nor should he congratulate himself if he has lost a single ewe in lambing. I am aware these results cannot always be commanded; but I believe an attentive and skilful shepherd will not be satisfied for all his toil, night and day, for three weeks, if he has not attained these results. The ewes may have lambed twins to greater number than the half, and yet many pairs may have been broken to supply the deficiencies occasioned by the deaths of single lambs. * * * In regard to Cheviots, it is considered a favourable result to rear a lamb for each ewe; and with blackfaced ewes, eighteen lambs out of the score of ewes is perhaps one as favourable. Cheviots yield a few pairs, blackfaced very few. The former sometimes require assistance in lambing, the latter seldom."—(Vol. ii. pp. 614, 615.)

An entire chapter is given to the *training and working of the shepherd's dog*. Like master like man, says the old adage—like shepherd like dog, says Mr Stephens:—

> "The natural temper of the shepherd may be learned from the way in which he works his dog among sheep. When you observe an aged dog making a great noise, bustling about in an impatient manner, running fiercely at a sheep and turning him quickly, biting at his ears and legs, you may conclude, without hesitation, that the shepherd who owns him is a man of hasty temper."—(Vol. ii. p. 625.)

But a well-trained dog has the following qualifications:—

> "Dogs, when thus gently and cautiously trained, become very sagacious, and will visit every part of a field where sheep are most apt to stray, and where danger is most to be apprehended to befall them, such as a weak part of a fence, deep ditches, or deep furrows into which sheep may possibly fall and lie *awalt* or *awkward*, that is, lie on the broad of their back and unable to get up, and they will assist to raise them up by seizing the wool at one side and pulling the sheep over upon its feet. Experienced dogs will not meddle with ewes having lambs at foot, nor with tups, being quite aware of their disposition to offer resistance. They also know full well when foxes are on the move, and give evident symptoms of uneasiness on their approach to the lambing ground. They also hear footsteps of strange persons and animals at a considerable distance at night, and announce their approach by unequivocal signs of displeasure, short of grumbling and barking, as if aware that those noisy signs would betray their own presence. *A shepherd's dog is so incorruptible that he cannot be bribed, and will not permit even a known friend to touch him when entrusted with any piece of duty.* * * * It is supposed that the bitch is more acute than the dog, though the dog will bear the greater fatigue. Of the two, I believe, that the quietly disposed shepherd prefers a bitch, and is careful in working her as little as he can when in pup. I may mention, that the shepherd's dog claims exemption from taxation; and I believe that a well-trained one costs at least L.3."—(Vol. ii. pp. 626, 627.)

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Nothing is said of the mutual attachment of the shepherd and his dog. Of this attachment we can never help thinking—when the subject of dogs is introduced—since we saw the look of mingled agony and consternation which showed itself on the face of one of our shepherd boys, when a horse had kicked and apparently killed it, and the joy with which he hugged it, while it licked his hands and face as it recovered.

Nothing strikes an American so much on coming to England—kindred though he be, not only in blood and language, but also in customs—nothing at least strikes him more than the beautiful thorn hedges with which our fields are at once divided, sheltered and adorned. And yet how much they are mismanaged—their perfection, usefulness, and durability lessened—by injudicious, in many cases by ignorant and barbarous, treatment! A most useful chapter is devoted to this subject, from which we shall make one or two extracts. First, of switching young hedges:—

> "Hedgers have a strong predilection to use the switching-bill. They will, without compunction, switch a young hedge at the end of the first year of its existence. No hedge ought to be touched with a knife until it has attained at least two years; because the great object to be attained by a new hedge is the enlargement of its roots, that they may search about freely for its support; and the only way it has of acquiring large roots is through its branches and leaves, which are the chief means of supporting the healthy functions of plants, or of even preserving them in life. Even beyond the age mentioned above, the pruning-knife should be very sparingly used, until the young hedge has acquired the height sufficient for a fence; and not freely then, but only to remove superfluities of growth, and preserve equality in the size of the plants.
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> * * * *
>
> Let the plant have peace to *grow* till it has acquired a considerable degree of natural strength—to acquire which state it will take a longer or shorter time according to the circumstances in which it is placed—acquiring it in the shortest time in deep sandy loam, the most *useful* of all soils, and taking the longest in poor thin clay on a tilly subsoil—let it, I say, have peace to *grow*, and let it be afterwards judiciously pruned, and I will give you the assurance of experience, that you will possess an excellent fence and a beautiful hedge in a much shorter time than the usual practice of hedgers will warrant."—(Vol. ii p. 564.)

Upon cutting down hedges the following remarks are excellent:—

> "Hedges are wofully mismanaged in the cutting in many parts of the country. Without further consideration than saving the expense of a paling to guard a new-cut-down hedge, or in ignorance of the method of making a dead-hedge from the refuse of the old, the stems of an *old* hedge are often cut over about

three and a half feet high, to continue as a fence. The consequence is just what might be anticipated from a knowledge of the habits of the thorn, namely, a thick growth of young twigs where the hedge was cut over, the ultimate effect of which is, a young hedge standing at three and a half feet above the ground upon bare stakes. The wise plan, therefore, to preserve the value of the old hedge is to cut it near the ground, and form a dead-hedge of the part cut off."—(Vol. ii. pp. 569, 570.)

We have seen hedges occasionally dying out by degrees on the road-sides, where the banks were cut close to the roots of the thorn plants. The following acute observation will in some cases, no doubt, account for it:—

"I observe that some farmers remove the hedge-bank behind a thorn-hedge, to make compost of; but such a practice is highly injurious to the hedge, even after it is grown up, by exposing its roots, which chiefly lie under the bank, to cold and frost. If a hedge is cut down whose bank has been treated in this manner, and no means are used to protect the roots when exposed on the removal of the branches, it is possible that a few nights of severe black frost may kill every root that lies nearest the surface. I have no doubt that particular plants of old hedges are killed in this manner, without the cause being suspected by the farmer."—(Vol. ii. p. 576.) [Pg 307]

The planting of potatoes, as we should expect in a practical work of this kind, is treated of in considerable detail and with much judgment. Upon seed-potatoes, which have these last two or three years attracted so much attention, we have the following passage:—

"I have no doubt, in my own mind, that were seed-potatoes securely pitted until they were about to be planted,—not over-ripened before they were taken out of the ground,—the sets cut from the crispest tubers and from the waxy end,—the dung fermented by a turning of the dunghill in proper time,—led out to the field, quickly spread, the sets as quickly dropped on it, and the drills quickly split in the manner represented in fig. 411, and described in (2411,) there would be little heard of the failure even in the driest season,—at the same time, the precaution of obtaining seed frequently from an elevated and late district compared to where the seed is to be planted, should not be neglected."—(Vol. iii. pp. 672, 673.)

These recommendations are correct, we believe, and judicious as far as they go; other things, however, are within the powers of the skilful farmer; but, to all, we would especially recommend a more careful construction of their potato-pits. This subject is again treated of in Vol. iii. p. 1121. The raising of seed-potatoes should be made more an object of special care than has hitherto been the case; for we doubt if the cure recently propounded as infallible on the faith of one or two successful experiments—that of leaving the potatoes covered up during winter in the field where they grew—will be in all cases followed by the wished-for results. We hope, however, that many will try it.

Of horses we could have wished to say something had our space permitted; but we can only refer to what is said of the rearing and intelligence of the horse towards the beginning of the second volume, and to the chapter on *breaking in young draught horses*, in p. 691 of the same volume.

We come now to the third volume, which commences the operations of summer—a season which brings with it new cares, especially to the dairy farmer, and where the turnip husbandry prevails. It is true that, in summer, when all his seeds are in the ground, the farmer has a little leisure during which he may leave his farm, but even then any excursion he makes ought not to be for mere pleasure. A true farmer will have his eyes about him wherever he travels, and will carefully study the merits of the rural customs of every district he goes to. There is much truth in the following remarks:—

"Summer is the only season in which the farmer has liberty to leave home without incurring the blame of neglecting his business, and even then the time which he has to spare is very limited. There is only about a fortnight between finishing the fallow, the turnip and potato culture, and hay-making, and the commencement of harvest, in which the farmer has leisure to travel. This limitation of time is to be regretted, because it is proper that he should take a journey every year, and see how farm operations are conducted in other parts of the kingdom. An excursion of this nature is seldom undertaken by a farmer, who is generally a man capable of observation, without acquiring some hints which may induce the adoption of a practice that seems good, or the rejection of one which is bad. Such a journey exhibits mankind in various aspects, and elevates the mind above local prejudices; and as husbandry is a progressive art, a ramble of a week or two through different parts of the country, cannot fail to enlighten the mind of the most experienced farmer much beyond any thing he can observe by always remaining at home."—(Vol. iii. p. 742.)

In his excellent chapter on the sowing of turnips, he quotes several instances of the successful preparation of land in the autumn—breaking up, harrowing, cross-ploughing, drilling, and dunging—for the turnip crop, and he adds the following opinion:—

"Were such modes of culture adopted in the south of England, I have no doubt certain and abundant crops of turnips would be raised, in spite of droughts and insects; and the slovenly practice of broad-cast culture would then give way to the more scientific mode of the drill system."—(Vol. iii. p. 747.) [Pg 308]

In the following passage he notices a curious but generally received fact regarding the effect of different quantities of bones; but we quote chiefly on account of another observation at its close, which may be interesting to our southern readers:—

"I have tried to raise turnips with different quantities of bone-dust, varying from twelve, sixteen, twenty, and twenty-four bushels to the imperial acre, and have found the crop improved up to sixteen bushels; but any quantity beyond that, even to twenty-four bushels, produced no greater effect on the turnips in the same field, and on the same sort of soil, than sixteen bushels. Nay, more than this, my late agricultural preceptor, Mr George Brown, when he farmed Hetton Steads in Northumberland, raised as good crops of turnips as sixteen bushels of bone-dust, with only eight bushels of bone-dust, combined with an indefinite quantity of sifted dry coal-ashes; and yet eight bushels of bone-dust, or an indefinite quantity of coal-ashes applied separately, produced a very poor crop of turnips. It is therefore unnecessary, in so far as the crop of turnips is concerned, to sow more than sixteen bushels of bone-dust alone, or eight bushels with coal-ashes, or perhaps street-manure. Both coal-ashes and street-manure, when proposed to be used with bone-dust, should be kept dry under cover, and sifted free of large lumps. * * *

"The very best mode of using bone-dust in small quantity, both for increasing the fertility of the soil and rearing a good crop, is to sow the seed along with it in drills already manured with farm-yard dung. The bone-dust secures a good and quick braird of the plant, and the dung supports it powerfully afterwards. This plan I would recommend to be pursued, particularly in England, on the land prepared for turnips in autumn; and were it practised, we need not despair of raising heavy crops of turnips, especially Swedes, on the strongest soils, and most certainly they would be obtained after thorough-draining."—(Vol. iii. pp. 748, 751.)

To the *drop*-drill as a means of husbanding manure, too little attention has hitherto been paid in Scotland. We strongly recommend, therefore, to the attention of the Scottish farmer, the following brief quotation:—

"The saving of manure, in the first instance, by the use of the drop-drill, appears to be considerable, since it has been frequently asserted that ten or twelve bushels of bone-dust per acre, will produce a braird equal, if not superior, to sixteen or eighteen bushels put in by the continuous mode. The subject is, therefore, of great importance, and calls for close observation; for if the drop system is really so important, it cannot be too widely adopted."—Vol. iii. p. 806.

We regret the necessity of passing over the remainder of this chapter on turnips. We merely extract the following mode of preventing the destructive attack of the turnip-fly, because, though the method has been heard of by many, it has been tried by comparatively few. Mr Stephens recommends

"To put the seeds for some time before they are sown amongst flour of sulphur, and sow the sulphur amongst them. The late Mr Airth informed me, that when he farmed the Mains of Dun, Forfarshire, his young turnip crops were often very much affected, and even destroyed, by these insects; but that, after he used the sulphur, he never suffered loss, though his neighbours did who would not use the same precaution, and that for as long as he possessed the farm afterwards, namely, fifteen years."—(Vol. iii. p. 772.)

It is also with regret that we pass over the making of butter and cheese, the chapter upon which we commend to the attention of our dairy farmers. The subjects of hay-making, liming and forming water meadows, we also pass; but we stop a moment at his chapter upon flax and hemp.

The culture of flax is now very much advocated both in Great Britain and Ireland; and we fear very erroneous notions are entertained and propagated regarding both the profit it is likely to yield to the farmer, and the effect it is fitted to produce upon the land. The following passage is not entirely free from objection, but it contains a great deal of truth and much common sense:— [Pg 309]

"It has been proposed of late, with a considerable degree of earnestness, to encourage the growth of flax in Britain. The attempt was made some years ago and failed; but in the present instance it is recommended with the view of raising flax-seed for feeding cattle in sufficient quantity to render us independent of foreign oil-cake, of which, no doubt, large quantities are annually imported, but to what extent I have not been able to ascertain. The *object* of the suggestion is laudable, but the *end*, I fear, unattainable; for if

> good *seed* is raised to make good oil-cake, or compounds with oil, the *flax* will be coarse, and flax of inferior quality will never pay so well as corn: and it should never be lost sight of, in considering this question, that to raise flax must bring it into competition with white crops, and not green crops, because to raise it as a green crop would be to deteriorate its quality by bringing it into immediate contact with manure; and, on the other hand, if it is raised without manure as a fallow-crop, it must deteriorate the soil materially—no species of crop being *more* scourging to the soil than flax, not even a crop of turnip-seed. There is, therefore, this dilemma in the matter—the quality of the flax or of the seed must be sacrificed. The seed separately will not pay the expense of culture. Seed is produced from six to twelve bushels per acre. Taking the highest at twelve bushels, that is, one and a half quarter, and taking it also for granted that it all will be fit for *sowing*, and worth the highest current price of 60s. per quarter, the gross return would only be L.4, 10s. per acre. The flax-crop varies in weight of rough dried fibre, according to season and soil, from three to ten cwt. per acre; and taking the high produce, five cwt. per acre of dressed flax, at the highest price of L.6 per ton, the yield will be L.31, from which have to be deducted the expenses of beetling, scutching, and heckling, and waste and loss of straw for manure, and the profit will not exceed L.8 per acre; but though *such* a profit would certainly repay the expenses of cultivation, yet it presents the *most* favourable view that can be taken, even with the sacrifice of the entire loss of seed—the loss, in fact, of the greatest inducement for renewing the culture of the plant. In Ireland the case, I believe, will be the same, though much of the soil of that country, being mossy, is more favourable to the growth of flax than that of England or Scotland; yet even there it will be found impracticable to raise good flax and good seed from the same piece of ground at the same time; and if the seed is not good, the oil-cake will be bad."—(Vol. iii. p. 1046.)

Among the arguments in favour of the extensive culture of flax, now urged by so many, we are sorry to see a scientific one lately put forth by our friend Dr Kane of Dublin, and which has been much vaunted and relied upon by himself, and by those for whose benefit the opinion was propounded. The proposal is, it will be recollected, to carry off the stalk of the flax crop, and to convert the seed into manure. This is the same thing as carrying off the straw of a corn crop, and eating or otherwise converting the grain into manure upon the farm. Every one knows that carrying off the straw will exhaust the land, as will also carrying off the stalk of the lint. But, says Dr Kane, I have analysed the *steeped* and *dressed* flax, and find that it contains very little of what the plant peculiarly draws from the soil. This is left for the most part in the pond in which the flax is steeped, or at the mill where the flax is dressed. Therefore, to carry off the flax is not *necessarily* to exhaust the soil. You have only to collect the *shows* of the flax mill, and pump out the water from the steeping hole, and apply both to the land, and you restore to it all that the crop has taken off.

Now there is a fallacy in supposing that all that is taken from the land would in this way be restored—one which the advocates of this non-exhausting view are of course not anxious to discover; but, supposing the result and conclusions correct, what are they worth in practice? It is only a little bit of fireside farming. What practical good has come out of it? Put all the steeping water upon the land! Have any of the members of the flax societies tried this? Then let them tell us how it is to be done—what it cost—what was the result and the profit of the application. They use this prescription as an argument to induce men to introduce an exhausting culture, and they take no means to introduce *first* a general employment of those [Pg 310] means by which it is said that the naturally exhausting effect of the culture may be prevented. What our friend Dr Kane has said and done is in perfect good faith; the form which his opinions have assumed upon paper, has arisen solely from the want of a sufficient knowledge of the usages and capabilities of sound and profitable practical husbandry. If we cannot persuade our farmers to collect and apply to the land the liquid manure of their farm-yards, when can we hope to persuade them to empty their flax-ponds for the purpose of watering their fields? Can we ever hope soon to persuade them to preserve and use up the thousands of tons of *shows* that are now yearly sent down the streams by which our flax mills are set in motion?

We are far from saying that flax or any other crop may not be grown without necessarily exhausting the soil—chemistry, we know, will by-and-by put all this within our power; but we are very much of Mr Stephens' opinion, that our English and Irish flax societies do not as yet clearly see their way to that end, and that unintentionally they will lead many to inflict a permanent injury upon their land, without any adequate compensation to themselves, their landlords, or the country.

We had marked the early cutting of corn in harvest as a subject of general importance to practical men, and that of the smearing of sheep, so interesting especially to our northern agriculturists; and we wished to confirm Mr Stephens' recommendations upon those points by some observations of our own; but we are compelled to leave the chapter which treats upon them to the private consideration of our readers.

We quote the following passage from the chapter on *fertilizing the soil by means of manure*, as containing much good common sense:—

"Dung is applied at the commencement of every rotation of crops with the fallow green-crops, and with bare fallow; and when applied at any other time, it is near the termination of a long rotation. A rule for the quantity of farm-yard dung to be applied according to the length of the rotation, as given by Dr Coventry, is, that five tons per acre are required every year to sustain the fertility of soil; and, therefore, land which is dunged every four years in a rotation of four courses, should receive with the fallow-crop twenty tons per acre; in a five-course shift, twenty-five tons; in a six-course shift, thirty tons, and so on. These quantities constitute, no doubt, a sufficient manuring to ordinary crops; but it appears to me to be reversing the order of propriety, to give land under the severest shift—a four-course one—the smallest modicum of manure, when it should receive the largest; for there is surely truth in the observation, that land grazed with stock becomes ameliorated in condition—actually increased in fertility. A six-course shift, therefore, having three years of grazing, should require less instead of more manure even at a time than a four-course one on land of similar quality."—(Vol. iii. pp. 1230, 1231.)

The chapter on the points of stock—cattle, sheep, pigs, and horses—would of itself have afforded us materials for an interesting article. Breeding and crossing of stock, both so necessary to be well understood by those who would breed for *profit*, are also ably discussed by our author; and it is only want of space which prevents us from quoting from this chapter.

But there are some kinds of live *cattle* which of themselves breed too fast even for Mr Stephens; and these he as anxiously instructs his readers how to exterminate. Among these are rats, in regard to the destruction of which the following passage will interest our readers:—

"Of all the modes I ever witnessed rats being killed, none equalled that of a Yorkshireman, of the name of John Featherston, by means of steel-traps. He had twenty-one small steel-traps, which he kept clean and bright. He soon traced the tracks of rats along the floor to a corner, or on the tops of walls, leading commonly by the corners of apartments to the partition wall, which they surmounted between it and the slates; the very place which I have recommended the filling up, to break off such communications. After he had discovered the different runs of the animals, he made a number of small firm bundles of straw, which he placed against the bottom of a wall where the run [Pg 311] was on a floor, and upon its top where the run was to the roof. He used seven traps at one place at a time, and a sufficient number of bundles of straw was used to conceal that number of traps at each place, employing the entire number of traps in three places, at a little distance from each other, and in different apartments. The traps were set, but not allowed to spring at first, and baited with oatmeal, scented with oil of rhodium, and placed in a row, with a little chaff over them, in the run behind the bundles of straw. The traps were baited for two days, the baits being replenished as soon as it was discovered, by inspection, that a bait disappeared. On the third day the traps were baited as before, but the restriction was removed from the spring, and then began the capture. In all the three days, people were prevented as much as possible from frequenting the apartments in which the traps were placed, and dogs were entirely excluded. Removing the check from the spring, from one set of traps after another, armed with short stout stick, and furnished with a bag slung from his shoulder, Featherston put himself on the alert, and the moment he heard the click of a trap he ran to it, removed the bundle of straw, knocked the rat on the head if alive, threw it out of the trap, set it again, replaced the bundle again, put the rat into the bag, and was again on the watch from one place to another. In the course of the third day, from morning to the afternoon, he had collected 385 rats in the bag, and allowing all the traps to have done equal execution, each had caught more than eighteen rats in the course of a single day. He bargained for 1d. a rat and his food, and in three days he earned his food and L.1, 12s. 1d.—such was his expertness. It was not supposed that all the rats were cleared off by this capture; but they received such a thinning, as to be comparatively harmless for years after. Featherston's first business, on the day following the capture, was to clean each trap bright before setting out on his journey; for he seemed to place greater reliance on the clean state of his traps than on any other circumstance —that the suspicion of the rats, I suppose, of the danger of the traps might thereby be allayed. The brown rat burrows in fields, and commits ravages on growing crops, whether of corn or turnips. I have seen many burrows of them in Ireland, and assisted at routing them with spade and terrier, but have never heard of their having taken to the fields in Scotland."

Farm book-keeping is a subject too little attended to by our practical men. In our own neighbourhood we know that keeping books is the exception—keeping none is the rule. The smaller farmers know the state of their affairs only by the money they have in their hands at certain seasons of the year. But, as better systems of husbandry spread, this lax method of carrying on business must be discarded. Husbandry is becoming more and more an experimental art. New trials must now be made, year after year, by those who would hope to

live and thrive; and it is only those who keep regular accounts of the outlay upon each trial, and the income from it, who can know what methods and manures they ought to adopt, and what to reject from a system of profitable husbandry.

Upon this subject Mr Stephens is entirely of our opinion, and he gives very copious examples of the way in which books ought to be kept.

Such is a hasty sketch of the contents of the book, in so far as the farming part of it is concerned. The way in which the work is illustrated by 608 woodcuts and 33 plates, by eminent artists, is as creditable to the publishers as the matter of the book is to the author.

To the full and accurate descriptions of agricultural implements—to the illustration of which many of these woodcuts and plates are devoted—we feel ourselves wholly unable to do justice. That they are all from the pen and pencil of Mr Slight, will, to those who know him, be a better recommendation than any words of ours.

There is only one other test to which, in criticising the work before us, we are entitled to put it. It contains much useful matter, but is it likely, is it fitted, to answer the end which the author had in view? His object, he says, was to put into the hands of young men desirous of learning practical farming, a manual from which, *being upon a farm*, they would be able to learn all that was necessary to fit them for the several successive stations to which the industrious son even of a farm-labourer may fairly hope to rise. This we think he has accomplished, and in that graphic and living way which has all along led us into the persuasion that Mr Stephens must himself have "played many parts," and entered into the feeling and spirit of them all. [Pg 312]

When he speaks of the shepherd and his dog, and of driving stock to market, he seems to look back with much satisfaction, almost with regret, to the time when he himself served as a drover, and took his cattle to the South over the cold Northumbrian moors. He delights to linger by the way, and tells you where you will still get the best *gill* on your road, and how it will be safest for you to make the last glass you take into toddy, before you go to bed. We think he must often have taken up his night's quarters at Tommy Robson's on the Reed Water, on his travels by Watling Street to the Stagshaw Bank Fair.

Then he changes the scene for us. He is a ploughman for the time. He tells how he managed his horses, guided his plough, turned over his furrows, mended his harness, and how three times a-day he fed heartily and well upon his oatmeal brose, and was healthy and strong in limb, happy in mind, and free from care. We question if he is heartier or happier now.

Next we find him writing like one who has been promoted to the rank of grieve or farm-steward. He has assumed the tone and look of a man who has responsibility upon his shoulders—who has graver duties to perform, and from whom more is expected. He tells us how he manages his men, apportions their hours of labour, and distributes to each his appropriate quantity and time of work. The scene shifts, and we see him in the market selling his corn. He wants threepence a bushel more, and he will hold out till he gets it. His sample is good, for his land has been well managed, and his grain well cleaned; he knows what his article is worth, as things are going in the market, and he will be an old corn-merchant who takes him in.

Or he has stock to sell, and there he goes into the whisky shop to finish his bargain. You heard him ask ten shillings more than he meant to take? That was because he knew the buyer was a higgler, and would have left him at once had he refused to come down in his price. Now they are gravely discussing the point over the gill-stoup. They are within half-a-crown now. Another gill will close the bargain. It is finished; the buyer is pleased; and our grieve is five shillings richer than if the bargain had been closed briefly and in the open air.

He is not a bad writer for a practical man who enables you, in a book upon farming, to call up successive transactions in a manner so vivid as this.

Next, he wishes to become a farmer on his own account, and he looks about for a farm that will suit him. On this subject he has an excellent chapter in his third volume. He has been faithful to his master, and now he acts honourably towards his equals:—

> "Here," he says, "let me mention at the outset, that it is considered amongst farmers a dishonourable act to look at a farm, until you are, in the first place, assured that it is in the market. To do so, until you certainly know that the tenant in possession is to leave it, or at any rate, until it is advertised in the public prints, or otherwise declared to be in the market, whether the possessing tenant wishes to take it again or not, is an unfeeling act, and regarded as equivalent to telling him that you wish to take the farm over his head. Such an act would be as unbecoming as to intrude yourself into a house in town, which you think would suit you, to look at its internal arrangement, before you are aware the possessing tenant is leaving it, by the usual announcement of the ticket."—(Vol. iii. p. 1304).

But having obtained possession of a farm, he enquires, can I now make money for myself—

quickly but honourably—in a way that will be at once creditable to myself, beneficial to my landlord, and of advantage to my country?

Two points Mr Stephens insists upon as indispensable to the making of money in this creditable way. The tenant must keep his land clean, and he must farm it high. Those who make most money in each district—their natural prudence being alike—are those who are kindest to the land. Use me well, says the soil every where, and I will use you well in return. [Pg 313]

In other parts of his work he rises to the station of a land-steward. He discusses, in a clear and judicious manner, large agricultural questions—he writes with the gravity and thoughtfulness of one whose business it is to superintend and regulate extensive improvements, and to look after the proceedings and modes of farming of a large body of tenantry. This, indeed, we hope and trust will be the case with many of those who carefully read, learn, and inwardly digest the lessons and precepts of his book; for in whatever capacity it may be their lot to minister to the welfare and progress of agriculture, they will find aid and assistance and counsel from the *Book of the Farm*.

It is, indeed, in very many cases of much importance that a better instructed race of men should be entrusted with the immediate management of the larger estates of the country. We have met with many skilful and intelligent members of this class, many able to understand, and advise, and superintend the most enlightened improvements, and to conduct them to a prosperous and economical issue. But the mass of these men in our island is not up to the knowledge of the time; too many of them are almost entirely ignorant of the most elementary principles of agriculture. How, indeed, can it be otherwise, when a landholder is contented to place this delicate management in the hands of his retired butler, or his failing groom, or even of his solicitor or attorney, who has been bred up to a totally different profession? If law and medicine require separate schools and training, so do farming and the management of estates, if they are to be farmed to a profit, or managed with economy and skill.

But the purpose of our *book* does not end with the mere practical man. It professes, and is fitted, to instruct the proprietor too. How much have the landlords yet to learn? Which of them has ever, at school or college, had an opportunity of obtaining any instruction in regard to what was to be the occupation and support of his after life! Some do indeed, when they settle on their estates, apply themselves, by reading and otherwise, to make up their deficiencies, and to fit themselves for the new and useful sphere in which they are called to move. But in broad England, how few are the landlords who know the principles on which their land ought to be cultivated—who feel an enlightened interest in the prosperity and real advancement of agriculture—who understand how to set a useful, and prudent, and enlightened example to their tenantry! If knowledge such as that contained in the book before us require to be diffused among the humble walks of agricultural life, it is no less necessary, we are assured, among those who frequent its highest places.

But a spirit not only of improvement, but of eager searching after knowledge, has sprung up among the entire agricultural body. From our own experience we say this; for we have seen with delight the eager eyes of listening audiences, for whole hours, fixed upon a single speaker, who was attempting zealously and simply, to instruct them. And it is those of the agricultural body who already know most, among whom this eagerness is observed to be most intense. They have tasted of the value of the new lights which recent science especially has thrown upon agricultural practice, and they are eager for the acquisition of more.

We are proud to say, that the first decided proof of this desire for higher knowledge has been manifested among the farmers and proprietors of Scotland. The *Agricultural Chemistry Association of Scotland* is their work. Through this association they have professedly attached chemistry and geology and physiology to the car of practical agriculture; and under the guidance of these sciences, the art of culture will not long lag behind her sister arts, for which these sciences have already done so much. We have before us a list of the members of this patriotic association. In this list we find the names of nearly every man in Scotland who is at all known to agricultural fame. If there be a few whose names we miss, the reason probably is, that they hardly yet know much of its existence; for it has only just finished its first year of active life. The new list of another year will contain the names of all who are really alive to the wants and capabilities of our national agriculture. [Pg 314]

We are sincerely desirous for the credit and advancement of Scottish agriculture. We are, therefore, anxious that no means should be left untried to keep up the perhaps artificially high character which the natural intelligence and shrewdness of the Scottish nation has gained for the practical farmers of the country. Granting, what we have ourselves seen, that there is much good farming and well-farmed land to the north of the Tweed, we cannot deny there is also much neglected land and much unskilful tillage. Though much has been improved in this end of the island, there is far more still almost in a state of nature. Hitherto the high-roads of the country have gone through such pleasant places as lie between the Pease bridge and Edinburgh; but the railroads now projected will lay open the waste and neglected tracts of country to southern eyes, and the agricultural reputation of Scotland may suffer a rude shock in English estimation. We are not the less good patriots while we agree with Mr Stephens, that there is a greater breadth of skilfully farmed land in England than in Scotland, and that the germ of all, or nearly all, our improvements, has been drawn from the South. Give England her due, and Scotland has still much to be proud of in picking

up a germ here and a germ there, and unfolding and developing these germs under her own colder sky, and, almost against nature, conquering for herself fruitful fields and a high agricultural reputation.

But England and Ireland having awoke to new exertions in improving their soil, we in the North must open our eyes too. We must, if possible, keep the name we have acquired. If our practice is faulty, let us amend it—if our science is defective, let us enlarge it. "Science with practice," is the well-conceived motto of the Royal Agricultural Society of England; such a motto, we hope, all Scottish farmers will adopt. Let them conjoin the science of the books of Johnston with the practice of that of Stephens, and they may still hope, as a body, to occupy the foremost rank among the agriculturists of Europe.

STANZAS.

With every joy we haste to meet,
  In hopefulness or pride,
There comes, with step as sure and fleet,
  A shadow by its side;
And ever thus that spectre chill
  With each fair bliss has sped,
And when the gladden'd pulse should thrill,
  The stricken heart lies dead!

The poet's brow the wreath entwines—
  What weight falls on the breast!
Upon the sword where glory shines,
  The stains of life-blood rest.
Lo, where the rosiest sunbeam glows,
  There lies eternal snow!
And Fame its brightest halo throws,
  Where death lies cold below.

J. D.

LORD MALMESBURY'S DIARIES AND CORRESPONDENCE.[30]

[Pg 315]

In a late number of this Magazine we took occasion, under a different title, to notice the two first volumes of this highly interesting work. We have seen how Lord Malmesbury conducted himself, in his diplomatic capacity, at the different courts of Europe under the *ancien régime*. It is difficult for the men of this generation—whose historic era, traditionary or remembered, commences with the outbreak of the French Revolution—to realize in imagination the exhausted, broken, and unhealthy state of Europe during the middle, and towards the end, of the last century. Balance of power there was none. The leading continental states, when not in actual arms, looked upon each other with eyes of the most bitter jealousy. When they did combine, it was for some unholy purpose, such as the partition of Poland; and no sooner had they brought down their quarry, than, like the *Lanzknechts* of old—to use no more brutal simile—they began to bandy words and blows for their relative proportions of the spoil. Good faith was a thing unknown either to prince or to minister. To trick an ally was considered almost as meritorious a deed as to undermine or defeat an enemy. In short it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to point out any period when public morality was at so low and pitiable an ebb.

In some respects the older continental states—leaving France, for the present, out of the question—were less to blame than the newer powers, who were then struggling forward with the keenness of fresh competitors, and claiming a recognition of importance which had never been accorded them before. In the first class we would rank Austria, Holland, and Sweden; in the second, Russia and Prussia. The Muscovite, unequalled in extent of territorial possession—exhibiting much of barbaric splendour with but little of real civilization—sought to extend his unwieldy power still further, and to gain a position within the heart of Europe by extending his conquests towards the west. Prussia, circumscribed in territory, organized herself as a military state. To this one end all other considerations were, in the first instance, sacrificed; but when it was attained, she withdrew the mask, and

exhibited herself in her real character—the most unscrupulous of neighbours, the most fickle and perfidious of allies. Environed with small and defenceless states, she never lost an opportunity of aggrandizing herself at their expense, no matter what amount of mutual treaties had intervened. Even defeat she could turn to her account, by purchasing peace with an enemy upon such terms as surrendered half of a neighbouring territory to the invader, and secured the remainder to herself. Even when her interest called upon her to unite with other European powers against a common foe, she refused to act upon her own resources, and, unless subsidized, remained sullen and inactive at home. In this situation was the Continent at the outbreak of the French Revolution.

The success of the Republican arms in France during the year 1793, of which the capture of Toulon was the crowning point, naturally created in the minds of the British ministry the liveliest apprehension and alarm. England alone, of all the European states, was in a sound and healthy condition. Her finances were unimpaired, her resources large, her credit almost unbounded. William Pitt, the greatest minister whom this country has ever known, was then at the helm of public affairs. The nation—though some individuals had not escaped the taint—was opposed to the principles of the French Republic, and disgusted with its attendant atrocities. Our insular position, and our acknowledged supremacy of the seas, were sufficient safeguards against a direct attack; but the immediate danger lay with the [Pg 316] Continent. Amidst all the strife of faction and democracy, France was progressing towards conquest. Rumour told of armies—undisciplined, perhaps, and ill-appointed, but officered by men of undoubted talent, and inspired by an enthusiasm which carried all before them—crowding towards the eastern frontier of France, and hanging there like a thundercloud, portentous of coming devastation. What was there to meet this tide of threatened invasion? Nothing save a heptarchy of tottering states, weak in themselves, without concert, and without coalition—discontent amongst the lower orders, dissatisfaction with the things that *had been*, and an evident leaning towards the things that *might be*—the new doctrines and the new revelation. For it is well to remark, that whatever any state might have gained by treachery or violence, did demoralize, but certainly did not better the social condition of the people. The wind had set in from the west, and was carrying across Europe, even to the boundary of the Borysthenes, sparks and flakes of fire from the great conflagration of France. There was no lack of fuel to maintain an extended combustion, and those whose duty it was to quench it, were unprepared or unwilling for the task.

The result of the operations of the allied forces upon and within the frontier of France, is well known. After some success, the sole consequence of which was to increase the jealousy which already subsisted between the Austrian and the Prussian, the Republican army succeeded in driving back the enemy, and establishing themselves upon the Rhine. It was at this moment, when the danger was at its height, and all Germany, besides Holland and the Netherlands, was exposed to the terrors of invasion, that Frederick William of Prussia, actuated by a policy at once base and suicidal, announced his intention of withdrawing his troops from the ranks of the confederacy, in total violation of the defensive treaty of 1787. It is somewhat difficult now, notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject, to get at the real grounds of this disgraceful proceeding. The principal alleged cause was the exhausted state of the Prussian treasury, which, it was said, rendered it absolutely impracticable for the king to maintain in the field, *without subsidy*, the contingent of troops which he had solemnly bound himself to furnish for the general defence of the Continent. It nowhere appears that any exertion was made to recruit the Prussian finances. By the partition of Poland, that State had acquired the accession of a large and most valuable territory, worth something surely by way of mortgage, or if not, at least a ready magazine of supplies. But all this availed nothing. Prussia professed herself ready to take whatever subsidy England, or any other power, might furnish towards the maintenance of her troops—otherwise they were not to reckon longer upon her co-operation and support. This proposition was made broadly, shamelessly, and without any diplomatic circumlocution. "Jacobi, Prussian minister, (at London,) gave in a kind of memorial, expressive of his Prussian Majesty's intention not to grant the succours we had asked for, and declining all general interference in the war, *without being largely paid*." So much for defensive treaties!

At this crisis, the British ministry—fully impressed with the paramount importance of isolating, in so far as might be, the republican contagion within the confines of France, and preventing it from spreading further—requested Lord Malmesbury, as the fittest and most experienced diplomatist whose services they could command, to proceed on a special mission to the court of Berlin, and attempt by every means in his power to recall the king from his false and unnatural position. So great seemed the necessity of accommodation, that England was inclined to accede, perhaps too much, to the demands of her ally, rather than allow the war upon which so much depended to be so meanly and pitifully abandoned. The following extract from Lord Grenville's instructions will show the spirit which actuated our ministry. "If the *alleged distress* of the king of Prussia's *treasury* is wholly *feigned*, it will in that case be evident, that the determination of the king of Prussia is taken rather to break [Pg 317] his alliance with the maritime powers, and to risk the dangers which may result from the final establishment of the Jacobin principles in France, than to contribute to the indemnification which Austria has in view. In that case, all attempts at other arrangements must be useless, and nothing will remain to be done, except to insist on the succours being furnished; and, in case of non-compliance with that demand, to prepare the declaration necessary to be given in for the purpose of annulling the defensive treaty. If, on the other hand, the pecuniary difficulties which are stated *have a real existence*, the disposition to co-

operate further in the war may still exist; and, in that case, some advantage might be derived from the adoption of such arrangements as might enable his majesty to contribute towards removing those difficulties, and securing the king of Prussia's co-operation in the war, but without departing from the just claims resulting from the existing treaty." The reciprocal feelings of Austria and Prussia are thus significantly noticed in another part of the same document. "With respect to Austria, I must observe to your lordship, that the utmost jealousy prevails between the two courts of Vienna and Berlin; that the former has certainly been deceived by the extent given to the late acquisitions of Prussia in Poland; and that the latter is unquestionably desirous of checking, at least by indirect means, the plans of indemnity which the emperor is now pursuing towards France." With Holland and Austria, Lord Malmesbury was ordered, in all his negotiations with the Prussian court, to keep himself in intimate concert; in fact, it seems to have been expected, that if these powers went cordially along with England, Prussia durst not adopt a step which would have exposed her to summary chastisement. It might have been well if such a threat had been intimated directly; but England had not yet learned to appreciate her own unbounded resources, and to rely with confidence upon herself. Afterwards, as at Copenhagen and elsewhere, she adopted the true method of dealing with a false ally, or a suspected neutral. At the beginning of the war, she transacted with other states on the belief that they were actuated by the same honourable feelings as herself—that they regarded treaties as inviolable—that they were ready, for the general good, to sacrifice something of private interest. It is needless to say how often and how cruelly she was deceived!

Before setting out on his mission, Lord Malmesbury had a personal interview with George III., and received from him, verbally, some private instructions, which are most worthy of preservation. Far too little justice has been done to the manly intellect of that king. Stubborn he may have been, and wedded to opinions which, in this age at least, may not be favourably regarded by the million; but this, at least, we can fearlessly say—that every thought, every sentiment, every action of his life, bore the impress of a high and noble mind —that he was an Englishman in the best sense of the word, bold, and resolute, and sincere; and those who value the free and just constitution of this country and its greatness, have cause to bless Providence that so faithful a sovereign occupied the throne during a period of anarchy which threatened to revolutionize the world, to uproot the Christian faith, and to engulf Europe, perhaps irrevocably, in the horrors of a Reign of Terror. How clear and king-like is the following language! "A few clear words are better, perhaps, than long instructions. I believe that the king of Prussia is an honest man at the bottom, although a weak one. You must first represent to him, that if he allows his moral character the same latitude in his explanation of the force of treaties, as he has allowed it in other still more sacred ties," (referring to his marriage,) "all good faith is at an end, and no engagement can be binding. You must then state to him how much his honour is engaged in joining in this business, in not giving up a cause in which he had begun so nobly. Then you should apply to his interest, that the event of the war must either fail or succeed; that if he withdrew himself from the number of coalesced powers, in either case he would suffer from leaving them. In [Pg 318] the first case, (the fate of the war,) he perhaps would be the first to feel the consequences of suffering this *Tartarian horde* to overrun Europe. In the second, if we succeed, he certainly might be sure, that not having contributed his share to the success would put him, in respect to the other powers, in a situation of consideration and want of consequence, and that he would not be consulted or referred to in the general system of Europe, when that became a matter of discussion. That if you fail in referring him to these three great points, his *integrity*, his *honour*, and his *interest*, it will be certain nothing can be done; and although I have the greatest confidence in your skill and abilities, yet I shall rest assured in that case that *no* skill nor any ability would be equal to success."

Thus instructed and accredited, Lord Malmesbury set off for Berlin by way of Holland. He found the Dutch in considerable anxiety at the state of the campaign, and ready to co-operate with England in any measure for maintaining the alliance intact. At Frankfort, the monetary market of Germany, he ascertained that the amount of treasure still left in the Prussian treasury was estimated at forty-one or forty-two millions of dollars; so that the plea of poverty advanced upon the part of the king was evidently false. Immediately on his arrival at Berlin, he obtained an interview with Frederick William; and the replies of that king to the remonstrance of the British minister are abundantly curious. He disclaimed all idea of lukewarmness or indifference to the results of the war, was loud in his profession of amity to Great Britain, but wound up with the anticipated excuse—"You will, I am sure, believe me when I tell you, *on the faith of an honest man*, (and for being one, I hope the king your master will give me credit,) I have not in my treasury enough to pay the expenses of a third campaign. Those I have incurred since my accession are not unknown to you. You also know that the late king strained the resources to their highest pitch; that I cannot raise a new tax on my subjects; that to attempt it would drive them to the worst consequences; and that the nature of the Prussian monarchy is such that it cannot bear a loan. In short, that *without my allies come to my assistance, and afford me pecuniary support*, I shall be compelled to stop short in the war.

"I have not exhausted my treasure in idle and useless expenses; it has been employed in forwarding measures which related to the general interests of Europe, as well as to the particular ones of Prussia. It cannot be those of England to see me degraded and sunk; and this certainly, *joined to my high notion of your national character*, leaves me without apprehension as to the consequences of the declaration I make, which I repeat to be the sole

and real cause of my apparent backwardness in continuing the war."

It is now clear, far beyond cavil or doubt, that this sovereign's estimate of the national character of the English, was much akin to Major Dalgetty's appreciation of the Dutch —"They are the best paymasters in Europe." Dalgetty, however, had one merit which we fear that history must deny to the King of Prussia. He gave his service for his employer's money, and was scrupulously true to his articles. Frederick William, on the contrary, was bent upon receiving a subsidy, whilst, at the same time, he or his ministers were attempting to negotiate a private treaty with France. These facts come out most glaringly in the Malmesbury papers. The envoy seems to have felt all along that he was treading on the most slippery ground, that no reliance could be placed upon the faith or integrity of the court with which he now had to deal; and yet circumstances were of so pressing a nature, that he dared not, while the smallest chance of success remained, abandon the progress of the negotiation. The sentiments of the King of Prussia with regard to his nearest neighbour, may be understood from the following entry in Lord Malmesbury's diary:—"*Dec. 28, 1793.* Supper at Prince-Royal's. King told me of bad news from Wurmser's army—that he had lost two battalions and twenty-one pieces of cannon. *He seemed rather pleased with this bad news*; but admitted that it would do harm by raising the spirits of the Jacobins." In a note [Pg 319] appended to this passage, it is added, that "this feeling of hatred towards Austria was shared by every minister at Berlin, and every officer in the Prussian army, and rendered all our efforts to combine effectually the two nations against the French unavailing."

The prospects of the Allies became daily more gloomy. Wurmser, the Austrian general, was driven back, the blockade of Landau raised, and this moment was selected by the Prussian king and his ministers to force a subsidy under the significant threat of an entire withdrawal of his army, which for the present remained in a state of suspicious inactivity. Russia at this juncture came forward to interfere. The Prince de Nassau, a spurious dignitary and favourite of Catharine, arrived at Berlin with a communication for Frederick William, urging him in the strongest manner to act in concert with his allies, and representing very forcibly that the partition of Poland, and the engagements he contracted for his share, obliged him to continue the war, and that his own declarations and manifestoes from the first, by his own confession, made him a principal in it. Notwithstanding this good advice, the Empress cautiously abstained on hinting at pecuniary succours, being probably aware that a Russian subsidy would answer his majesty's purpose as well as one from England. Early in the year 1794, the Duke of Brunswick resigned the command of the Prussian forces. He was succeeded by Marshal Möllendorff—a soldier of some reputation, but old, testy, and pragmatical.

After much time wasted in preliminaries, and continued threats on the part of Prussia to withdraw immediately from the alliance unless subsidies were forthcoming, Lord Malmesbury was empowered to make the following proposals: Two millions sterling were to be given to the King of Prussia to bring 100,000 men into the field. Of this sum England was to furnish two-fifths, or £800,000; Austria and Holland, each one-fifth; and the remainder was to be considered as an advance from Prussia, to be reimbursed by France at the restoration of peace. Munificent as this proposal may appear—and it really was so when the relative situation of the parties is considered—it did not at first sight appear large enough to satisfy the craving appetite of Frederick William, who, in a private interview with Lord Malmesbury, had the assurance to demand for the proposed succours no less a sum than *twenty millions* of dollars, without reckoning the "bread and forage!" The firm conduct and resolute tone of Lord Malmesbury, seem at last to have convinced the rapacious monarch that in grasping at too much he might lose all; and, after a great deal of shabby negotiation and bargaining, a settlement was nearly effected on the original terms. Austria, however, positively declined to become bound for any part of the subsidy—we doubt not for sufficient reasons. Holland, in more alarm, was willing to contribute her share; but so many impediments were thrown in the way of a settlement by the machinations of the French party at Berlin, that Lord Malmesbury found it indispensable to quit that court and conclude the negotiation at the Hague. He was accompanied thither by the Prussian minister, Haugwiz—a man whose character for honesty must be left to the verdict of posterity—and on the nineteenth April 1794, a treaty was concluded between Prussia, Holland, and England, by which the former power was bound to furnish an army of 62,000 men, under a Prussian commander-in-chief, to be subsidized by the other states, and to serve against their common enemies. The maritime powers agreed to pay his Prussian majesty £50,000 per month to the end of the year, £300,000 to put the army in motion, and £100,000 on its return home. All conquests made were to be at the disposal of the maritime powers.

Thus did Prussia, vaunting herself to be peculiarly the military power of Europe, sell the services of her army for hire, with as little reservation as ever did the mercenary troops of Switzerland or Brabant. The very idea of such an individual transaction carries with it something degrading; as a state-bargain, it is humiliation. One quality only can be brought [Pg 320] forward to redeem the sellers of their national armies from contempt, and that is the most scrupulous fidelity to the cause of the parties from whom they have accepted their hire. There is no treachery so base as the desertion of a paid ally.

Immediately after the treaty was signed, Lord Malmesbury was recalled to London "for information." The advantage which was taken in the absence of this clear-sighted and able diplomatist, may be gathered from subsequent events. We doubt however, whether, had he

remained on the spot, he could have counteracted the evils, which appear to us more the result of a preconceived intention to betray, than the sudden consequence of a plot, or the predominance of a new hostile party in the court or cabinet of Berlin. On the 27th of May, the first instalment of the subsidy, £300,000, was remitted from the British Treasury. About the same time, Lord Malmesbury returned to Holland, and renewed his entreaty, through Haugwiz, that the Prussian army might be put in motion. This was positively refused, until advice was received of the payment of the subsidy at Berlin. Frederick William had removed to Poland to look after his ill-gotten possessions. His minister, Haugwiz, very shortly retired to Berlin, and never returned. Möllendorff, in command of the army, peremptorily refused, in the face of the treaty, and of the apparent commands of his master, to leave the Rhine, and take up his position in the Low Countries—in short, he would obey no orders, and did all in his power to thwart and counteract the Austrian. Meanwhile, the French advanced in irresistible power. On the 26th of June they were victorious at Fleury—a battle which established the reputation of General Jourdain, and settled the fate of the Netherlands. In Flanders, Moreau defeated Clairfait, and took Ypres. General Walmoden evacuated Bruges. The Duke of York was obliged to abandon Tournay and Oudenarde to their fate, and retired upon Antwerp on the 3d of July.

This was a period of great anxiety to Lord Malmesbury; for although there are many occasions wherein even the ablest diplomatist must fail, more especially when there is a total absence of good faith on the other side, yet the crisis was so alarming as to impress him with the sense of more than usual responsibility. The following extract from his diary will show his opinion of the Prussians:—"June 26. To Keyserlautern, Prussian headquarters—repetition of the same language—great, but shabby art and cunning—ill-will, jealousy, and every sort of dirty passion. The marshal proposes a memorial to us, which we decline receiving, and he dispatches his first aide-de-camp, Meyerinck, to the King of Prussia, with his account of what we had said. (N.B.—It appears that these were exaggerated, and calculated to do mischief, and embroil the negotiation.") Shortly afterwards, he writes thus to the Duke of Portland:—"I must thank you on a separate sheet for your few confidential lines. If we listened only to our *feelings*, it would be difficult to keep any measure with Prussia. But your opinion and that of Mr Pitt, is one of sound political wisdom, and I am well pleased it has prevailed. *We must consider it as an alliance with the Algerines*, whom it is no disgrace to pay, or any impeachment of good sense to be cheated by."

The ministry of Great Britain, however, found it necessary to come to an immediate and explicit understanding with the Prussians, who, though utterly useless and inactive, continued with the utmost punctuality to draw the monthly subsidy. A good opportunity was afforded by the conduct of the Prussian minister at London, who, with unparalleled effrontery, took upon himself to complain of the manner in which the late treaty had been executed with reference to the disposition of the forces. Lord Grenville's reply was decided. If the treaty had not hitherto been punctually executed, it was notorious to all Europe, that the failure had not been on the part of England. The British resident at Berlin was further desired to intimate, "that the continuance of the liberal subsidy granted by his majesty will depend solely on the faithful execution of the engagement taken by Marshal Möllendorff, [Pg 321] and on the efficient service of the Prussian army under his command." This announcement led to a conference between Baron Hardenberg on the part of Prussia, and Lord Malmesbury and Baron Kinckel as representing Great Britain and Holland. Hardenberg began with the usual assurances of the continued good wishes and intentions of his king, who, he said, had been deceived by a cabal, but who would, *so soon as the Polish war was over*, return to Berlin, and then every thing would go well. He further proposed that Lord Malmesbury should return to Berlin, and resume his negotiations there.

> "This was said to Kinckel and me with a clear and evident view to prevail on us to renew the subsidy treaty, as the term of its expiration draws near, and as the court of Berlin is uneasy at our negotiations at Vienna, and apprehensive of the event of an attack on Warsaw. It was too thinly veiled not to be seen through. I therefore answered, that I was fearful *the evil was done*; that if the king and his ministers had acted up to the sentiments M. Hardenberg now mentioned, or even if I saw a sincere disposition of doing it now, by Möllendorff's army *really acting*, it certainly would be good grounds to hope, but that this was not the case.
>
> "Hardenberg employed every argument, and every *trick*, within the narrow compass of his means, to persuade me they were earnestly anxious to unite with us, and disposed to rectify their past behaviour; but I remained firm, and absolutely declined giving in to a belief of it.
>
> "This led him to say *that we could not do without the Prussians*, and that we *must* continue the subsidy; that, therefore, it was wisest and best to do it in the manner the most useful and conciliatory. I replied, that without deciding on this strong question of *necessity*, I could not but observe that, by stating it as an argument, he brought his court on a level with the lowest German prince, and supposed it to be actuated by principles like those of the dey of Algiers; and that, if *necessity* was to decide the measure, it required no negotiation, it would do itself, and I felt myself by no means in a rank to conduct *such* a business."

On the 1st of October, instructions arrived from England to suspend the subsidy; and on the 25th of the same month, Baron Hardenberg, on the part of Prussia, declared the treaty at an end, which was followed by a direct order from the king to withdraw his army altogether. On the 2d of November, Lord Malmesbury received his recall.

We have been induced to dwell somewhat minutely upon this singular negotiation, because its details have never yet been placed with sufficient clearness before the public. We are now, for the first time, admitted, through the medium of the Malmesbury papers, to a sight of the hidden machinery, by means of which the colossal panorama of Europe was made so ominously to revolve. Much is there, too, of importance, and useful for the future, in the portraitures of national bad faith and individual worthlessness which appear throughout the whole transaction. Prussia was fortunate in her subsequent miseries. These, and these alone, have made the pen of the historian, and the tongue of the orator, slow to denounce the enormous measure of her perfidy. Throughout the whole of this negotiation, on the result of which the destinies of Europe for a quarter of a century were doomed to depend, there is not one single bright spot of candour or of honesty to relieve the darkness of the picture. In comparison with such treachery, Pennsylvanian repudiation is venial. The subsidy, out of which England was swindled, was for the most part applied to the further subjugation of Poland—the troops, for which she had contracted and paid, were used as an impediment to, and not in furtherance of, her designs. The language employed by the Prussian minister, Hardenberg, at his last interview with Lord Malmesbury, was that of a sturdy freebooter, who, far from seeking to conceal his real character, takes glory in his shame, and demands a compulsory tribute for what he is pleased to denominate protection. It may be said that Prussia afterwards redeemed her error. We cannot see it. To the last she remained a gripping, faithless, avaricious power; and could she have coexisted equal with France, there is not a shadow of a doubt that she would have surpassed that country in her [Pg 322] appetite for acquiring plunder. In 1806, under a different monarch, she made peace with Napoleon on the condition of acquiring Hanover, the hereditary dominions of the occupant of the British throne. It was only when the fact became evident that she was utterly mistrusted throughout Europe; that no state, even the most insignificant, could place any reliance upon her assurances; when, through her own conduct, France made no scruple of using her as a contemptible tool, and her old allies regarded her with looks of menace—that Prussia made a virtue of necessity by attempting to restore her independence. Even then her repentance was incomplete. Lord Morpeth, when sent, before the disastrous battle of Jena, on a special mission to the Prussian headquarters, found Frederick William III. so distracted between the option of a British subsidy on the one hand, and the cession of Hanover on the other, that, with the genuine feelings of an Englishman and a man of honour, he could scarce restrain his indignation in the presence of the vacillating king. In our mind, the videttes of Pichegru's army had a truer estimate than our own cabinet of the value of such an alliance, when they thus expressed themselves at the outposts:—"Englishmen, go home: you have no business here; you are too honest to be leagued with the Austrians and Prussians. They will soon leave you in the lurch; and as to the Hessians, the Landgrave will turn them all over to us to-morrow, if the Convention offers him a ducat a-day more than you now pay him!" Yet Austria is not chargeable with deceit—who will dare hereafter to say the like for Prussia?

Lord Malmesbury did not return immediately to England. At Hanover he received another mark of the confidence of his royal master, in a commission to demand the Princess Caroline of Brunswick in marriage for the Prince of Wales. This mission was conferred upon him directly by the king, and no discretionary power was given to offer information or advice either to the court or the government. It does not appear that the subject was ever mentioned to Lord Malmesbury before his credentials arrived; certain it is that he had no communication with the person most deeply interested in the alliance, and therefore no means of ascertaining his wishes or his motives. The Prince of Wales had never seen his cousin. Probably, beyond the false impression conveyed by a portrait, he knew nothing of her; for the little court of Brunswick was rarely visited by the English, and the military occupations of the Duke kept him almost constantly from home. It must ever be matter of deep regret that more prudence was not employed in the conduct of this unhappy business. Royal marriages are at best precarious; for there is too often a larger ingredient of policy than of affection in the alliance. This one needed not to have been a matter of policy. Neither the illustrious bridegroom, nor the kingdoms over which he was afterwards to rule, could derive any advantage from a more intimate connexion with the diminutive state of Brunswick. It is, therefore, almost incomprehensible that no precautions were taken, and no investigations made, before the prince was finally committed. Surely some one might have been found worthy to play the part of a Buckingham to the successor of Charles—some intimate of the prince, who, acquainted with his tastes and inclinations, might have visited Brunswick as a stranger, and, without betraying the actual nature of his mission, might have acquired a sufficient knowledge of the manners and character of the princess to frame an adequate report. Common prudence should have suggested this; but there is too much reason to fear that the match was the result of motives little creditable to other members of the royal family of England, and was not expected by them to secure the ultimate happiness of either party. This, at least, was the opinion of Lord Malmesbury, a shrewd observer, and well versed in the domestic politics of St James's. He says—"She (the princess) talks about the Duke of Clarence, whom she prefers to the Duke of York, and it struck me to-day, for the first time, that he originally put her into the prince's head; and that with a view to plague

the Duke and Duchess of York, whom he hates, and whom the prince no longer likes, well knowing that the Princess Caroline and Duchess of York dislike each other; and that this match would be particularly unpleasant to her and the duke." Again, "Princess Caroline asks about the Duke of Clarence—says she believes he was the person who first mentioned her to the prince.—N.B. My own private ideas and feelings on this remark." [Pg 323]

Endowed by nature with a good heart and some quickness of apprehension, this princess was as uneligible a personage as could possibly have been selected for so high a dignity as that of consort to the future king of Great Britain. Her education had been wretchedly neglected. She was vain, giddy, and imprudent; addicted to the society of persons infinitely beneath her rank, whom she treated with unbecoming familiarity; totally ignorant of the world and its usages, and withal something of a *bavarde*. She stood in awe of her father, who was an austere person, and, it is said, treated his children habitually with much severity. For her mother she had no respect, and did not scruple, when she could find an opportunity—which occurred but too often—to turn her into ridicule. Her conversation was that of a thorough gossip—her manners those of a flirt. She was disposed to be liberal, not from generosity, but from absolute carelessness—a fault which she extended to her person. Lord Malmesbury's first impressions of her are by far the most favourable; and yet it will be seen from these, that mediocrity was the utmost limit of her charms. "The Princess Caroline much embarrassed on my first being presented to her—pretty face—not expressive of softness—her figure not graceful—fine eyes—good hand—tolerable teeth, but going—fair hair and light eyebrows—good bust—short, with what the French call *des épaules impertinentes*." Her personal habits may be gathered from the following passages of the Diary:—

> "Argument with the Princess about her toilette. She piques herself on dressing quick; I disapprove this. She maintains her point; I, however, desire Madame Busche to explain to her that the Prince is very delicate, and that he expects a long and very careful *toilette de properté*, of which she has no idea; on the contrary, she neglects it sadly, and is *offensive* from this neglect. Madame Busche executes her commission well, and the Princess comes out the next day *well washed all over*."
>
> "Princess Caroline had a tooth drawn—she sends it down to me by a page—nasty and indelicate."
>
> "I had two conversations with the Princess Caroline; one on the toilette, on cleanliness, and on delicacy of speaking. On these points I endeavoured, as far as was possible for a *man*, to inculcate the necessity of great and nice attention to every part of dress, as well as to what was hid as to what was seen. (I knew she wore coarse petticoats, coarse shifts, and thread stockings, and these never well washed, or changed often enough.) I observed that a long toilette was necessary, and gave her no credit for boasting that hers was a *short* one. What I could not say myself on this point, I got said through women; through Madame Busche, and afterwards through Mrs Harcourt. It is remarkable how amazingly on this point her education has been neglected, and how much her mother, though an Englishwoman, was inattentive to it."

Such were the personal habits of the future Queen of England, who, in this normal virtue, fell infinitely beneath the level of a daughter of a British tradesman. It is plain that Lord Malmesbury has left much unsaid; but enough there is to show that, in every way, she was unfitted to be the wife of the most fastidious prince in Europe. In point of morals, the examples afforded her at the court of Brunswick were of the worst possible description. Conjugal fidelity seems to have been a virtue totally unknown to the German sovereigns. The following, according to Lord Malmesbury, were the existing *liaisons* of Frederick William of Prussia. "The female in actual possession of favour is of no higher degree than a servant-maid. She is known by the name of Mickie, or Mary Doz, and her principal merit is youth and a warm constitution. She has acquired a certain degree of ascendancy, and is supported by some of the inferior class of favourites; but as she is considered as holding her office only during pleasure, she is not courted, though far from neglected, by the persons of a higher rank. The two candidates for a more substantial degree of favour are Mdlle. Vienk and Mdlle. Bethman." Of the Emperor Leopold we are told the following anecdote:—"Kinckel said that Bishopswerder told him, that Lord Elgin, when in Italy, would have succeeded in making a triple alliance for the purpose of general peace and tranquillity, when he was with the Emperor Leopold at Florence, if he had not run too much after Madame Lamberti, (Leopold's mistress,) and by that means displeased and soured him." The father of the Princess was not one whit better than his royal brethren. His mistress, Mdlle. de Hertzfeldt, lived at court, and was on intimate terms with the rest of the family. She appears to have been a clever woman, and well acquainted with the character of the Princess. Lord Malmesbury, who had known her formerly, made no scruple of applying to her for information. "In the evening with Mdlle. de Hertzfeldt—old Berlin acquaintance, now Duke's mistress—much altered, but still clever and agreeable—full of lamentations and fears—says the Duke has been cruelly used—abuses the king of Prussia—she always thought him a *bête*, and not a *bonne bête*—talks of the *Illuminés* and their sects—her apartment elegantly furnished, and she herself with all the *appareil* of her situation. She was at first rather ashamed to see me, but soon got over it." Her advice regarding the future treatment of the [Pg 324]

Princess is so interesting that we give it entire.

> "Je vous conjure, faites que le prince fasse mener, au commencement, une vie retirée à la Princesse. Elle a toujours été très genée et très observée, et il le falloit ainsi. Si elle se trouve tout à coup dans le monde sans restriction aucune, elle ne marchera pas à pas égaux. Elle n'a pas le cœur depravé—elle n'a jamais rien fait de mauvais, mais la parole en elle devance toujours la pensée; elle se livre à ceux a qui elle parle sans reserve, et de là il s'ensuit (même dans cette petite cour) qu'on lui prête des sens et des intentions que ne lui ont jamais appartenus. Que ne sera-t-il pas en Angleterre—où elle sera entourée de femmes adroites et intriguantes, *auxquelles elle se livrera á corps perdu*, (si le Prince permet qu'elle mène la vie dissipée de Londres,) et qui placeront dans sa bouche tels propos qu'elles voudront, puisqu'elle parlera elle-même sans savoir ce qu'elle dit. *De plus, elle a beaucoup de vanité, et quoique pas sans esprit, avec peu de fond*—la tête lui tournera si on la caresse et la flatte trop, si le Prince la gâte; et il est tout aussi essentiel qu'elle le craigne que qu'elle l'aime. Il faut absolument qu'il la tienne *serrée*, qu'il se fasse respecter, sans quoi, *elle s'égarera*. Je sais que vous ne me compromettrez pas—je vous parle comme à mon vieux ami. Je suis attachée cœur et âme au Duc. Je me suis dévouée a lui, *je me suis perdue pour lui*. C'est le bien de sa famille que je veux. Il sera le plus malheureux des hommes si cette fille ne reussit pas mieux que son aînée. Je vous repète, elle n'a jamais rien fait de mauvais, mais elle est sans jugement, et on l'a jugée à l'avenant. *Je crains la Reine. La Duchesse ici, qui passe sa vie à penser tout haut, ou à ne jamais penser de tout, n'aime pas la Reine, et elle en a trop parlé à sa fille.* Cependant, son bonheur depend d'être bien avec elle, et, pour Dieu, repetez lui toujours cette maxime, que vous avez déjà plus d'une fois recommandée."

The education of the Princess had been most lamentably neglected.

> "Letter from the Prince—well satisfied, and approves of what I have done—positively refuses to let Mademoiselle Rosenzweit come over. She was to be a sort of *reader*. King writes on the subject to the Duchess; both she and the Duke press it. I insist upon it, and it is settled that she is not to accompany the Princess. Duke takes me aside, and says that the only reason why he wished her to be with the Princess was, *that his daughter writes very ill, and spells ill, and he was desirous that this should not appear*. Affected to be indifferent about this refusal, but at bottom hurt and angry. Suspects the Queen, whom he and the duchess hate."

Perhaps no ambassador, ever sent upon such a mission, was placed in more embarrassing circumstances than Lord Malmesbury. He was entreated on all sides to undertake a kind of tutelage of the Princess; to prepare her mind for the future life she must lead; to warn her of [Pg 325] her faults, and school her as to the behaviour which became a Princess of Wales. It was quite plain that even her own relatives, and those who regarded her most partially, had little expectation that the marriage would prove auspicious or happy; and that their doubts arose, not from any rumours of the bridegroom's instability, but from their knowledge of the character of the bride. To act the part of Mentor, under such circumstances, required much delicacy and tact, both of which qualities Lord Malmesbury possessed in an eminent degree. More, however, was requisite in order to make them effectual. It was impossible, in a hurried and limited period, to repair the fatal effects of years of indolence and neglect. Lord Malmesbury could merely warn, but the task of improvement was hopeless. What he did, however, was well done. From his courteous manners, and kindly tone of conversation, he speedily became a great favourite with the Princess, and sometimes—as we have already seen—used his personal influence with success. Yet this familiar intercourse, while it certainly heightened his estimation of her good qualities, impressed Lord Malmesbury with the thorough conviction that the Princess was in no way qualified to maintain her future rank. She made him her confidant in certain passages of her history, which it would have been far wiser to have concealed:—"Dinner and concert at court; Princess out of humour; very nonsensical confidence about Prince of Orange; cannot be committed to writing; must recollect it, as well as my answer and advice." And again—"After dinner, long and serious conversation with the Princess on her manner of calling women by their plain name; of saying 'ma chère,' 'mon cœur,' &c.; and of *tutoying* when talking to them in German; she takes it right; prepare her for a still more serious conversation on the subject of hereditary Prince of Orange."

We must state, in justice to the Princess, that all the lectures of Lord Malmesbury—and they were neither few nor trifling—were taken by her in extreme good part. Indeed, his lordship appears at one time to have been apprehensive that he was gaining too much influence over his future mistress, and that caution was necessary on his side.

> "The Princess Caroline asked me, with an apology, as for *une question indiscrette*, whether I was to be *her Lord Chamberlain*? On my saying I knew nothing of it, she was very gracious, and expressed a strong wish it should be; and added, that she feared it would not be good enough for me, and that I would decline it. I told her any situation which placed me near her would be flattering to me, but that these situations were sought for by many persons

who had better claims than myself; and that, besides, I never solicited any thing, and could not expect that such an office would be offered to me without my asking for it. She again (and apparently in earnest) expressed her wish that it should be, and said it would be of infinite use to her to have a person near her she was used to, and whom she had confidence in."

On another occasion, when the Princess renewed her desire, Lord Malmesbury is more significant—

"She again urges me to accept a place about her court at my return. I avoid an explicit answer, but earnestly entreat her not to solicit any thing on my behalf; *I had the Duke of Suffolk and Queen Margaret in my thoughts*!"

When Lord Malmesbury's years and grave functions are considered, the touch of vanity, which in this latter paragraph peers through his diplomatic caution, is somewhat amusing.

An anonymous letter, which arrived from England, led to the following conversations:—"At dinner I found the Duchess and Princess alarmed, agitated, and uneasy at an anonymous letter from England, abusing the Prince, and warning them, in the most exaggerated terms, against Lady ----, who is represented as the worst and most dangerous of profligate women. The Duchess, with her usual indiscretion, had shown this letter to the Princess, and mentioned it to every body. I was quite angry with her, and could not avoid expressing my concern, first, at paying *any* attention to an anonymous letter, and secondly, at being so very imprudent as to bruit forth its contents. The Duke, on being acquainted with it, thought as I did, but was more uneasy than he ought. Mademoiselle Hertzfeldt again talks to me as before about the Princess Caroline. "Il faut la gouverner par la peur, *par la terreur même*. Elle s'émancipera si on n'y prend pas garde—mais si on la veille soigneusement et sevèrement, elle se conduira bien." The King of England, in a letter to the Duchess, says —"Qu'il espère que sa nièce n'aura pas trop de vivacité, et qu'elle menera une vie sédentaire et retirée." These words shock Princess Caroline, to whom the Duchess very foolishly reads the letter. [Pg 326]

"Princess Caroline shows me the anonymous letter about Lady ——, evidently written by some disappointed milliner or angry servant-maid, and deserving no attention: I am surprised the Duke afforded it any. Aimed at Lady ——; its object to frighten the Princess with the idea that she would lead her into an affair of gallantry, and be ready to be convenient on such an occasion. This did *not* frighten the Princess, although it did the Duke and Duchess; and on my perceiving this, I told her Lady —— would be more cautious than to risk such an audacious measure; and that, besides, it was *death* to presume to approach a Princess of Wales, and no man would be daring enough to think of it. *She asked me whether I was in earnest.* I said such was our law; that any body who presumed to *love* her, was guilty of *high* treason, and punished with *death*, if she was weak enough to listen to him; so also would *she*. *This startled her.*"

The following is Lord Malmesbury's own summary of her character, sketched at a favourable moment:—

"If her education had been *what it ought*, she might have turned out excellent; but it was that very nonsensical one that most women receive—one of privation, injunction, and menace; to believe no man, and never to express what they feel, or say what they think, *for all* men are inclined to entrap them, and all feelings are improper; this vitiates or *abrutis* all women—few escape." (Surely this censure is too sweeping.) "On summing up Princess Caroline's character to-day, it came out to my mind to be, that she has quick parts, without a sound or distinguishing understanding; that she has a ready conception, but no judgment; caught by the first impression; led by the first impulse; hurried away by appearances or *enjouement*; loving to talk, and prone to make missish friendships that last twenty-four hours. Some natural, but no acquired morality, and no strong innate notions of its value and necessity; warm feelings, and nothing to counteract them; great good humour, and much good nature—no appearance of caprice—rather quick and *vive*, but not a grain of rancour. From her habits, from the life she was allowed and even compelled to live, forced to dissemble; fond of gossiping, and this strengthened greatly by the example of her good mother, who is all curiosity and inquisitiveness, and who has no notion of not gratifying this desire at any price. In short, the Princess, in the hands of a steady and sensible man, would probably turn out well, but when it is likely she will meet with faults perfectly analogous to her own, *she will fail*. She has no governing powers, though her mind is *physically* strong. She has her father's courage, but it is to her (as to him) of no avail. *He* wants mental decision: *she*, character and tact."

This mission of Lord Malmesbury extended over a period of nearly five months. An abortive attempt was made to conduct the Princess to England by the way of Holland; but the inroads of the French into that country rendered the expedition highly dangerous. In fact, by this time the fate of Holland was sealed. One of the severest winters ever known had opened a natural and universal bridge to the invaders over the most effective barriers of the country. All was flight, terror, and confusion. The envoy returned with his royal charge to Hanover,

there to await intelligence of the arrival of the British fleet at Stade, as the passage by the Elbe alone seemed practicable. During this anxious period, Lord Malmesbury received several letters from the Prince of Wales, which are given in his correspondence. These are well worthy of attention. Although a strict grammarian might find fault with their construction, there is no appearance of any thing like indifference on the part of the Prince. On the contrary, he seems to have awaited with extreme anxiety the arrival of his consort, and to have been much vexed and annoyed by the delay which intervened. The following is [Pg 327] an extract from his first letter, dated 23d November 1794, and written shortly after Lord Malmesbury's arrival at Brunswick:—

> "I have desired Captain Hislop to give you an ample and thorough account of the steps I have taken towards the expediting every thing on this side of the water, as well as with my brother the Duke of York, to whom I have written also by Hislop; and as to what is now necessary to forward the completing every thing at Brunswick, I must leave that to you, hoping that you will make every exertion possible to put the Princess in possession of her own home as near the 20th of the ensuing month as possible; for every thing that can create delay at the present moment is bad on every account, but particularly to the public, whose expectations have now been raised for some months, and would be quite outrageous were it possible for them to perceive any impediment arising to what they have had their attention drawn to for so long a time; besides the suspense, and the naturally unpleasant feelings attendant upon suspense, which I myself must be subject to, and the very honourable, fair, and handsome manner in which the Duke and Duchess have both conducted themselves to me in this transaction; their having also, in their last letters, both to the King and me, said that the Princess was ready to set off instantly. In short, all these reasons make it necessary for me, my dear lord, to desire you to press your departure from Brunswick at as short a date as possible from the receipt of this letter."

In another communication of a later date, (21st February 1795,) the Prince thus expressed himself:—

> The accounts you are so good as to give me of the temper and resignation with which the Princess is so good as to bear with the interruptions in her journey, is more than I fancy any one would venture to say of me from hence, as, I assure you, all the mismanagements, procrastinations, and difficulties that I have met with in the conduct of that business on this side of the water, have totally put patience (a virtue, you well know, that our family in general are not much endowed with) out of the question.
>
> "I hope you will make this plan," (that of the embarkation and landing,) "acceptable to the Princess as well as the Duchess, as you must be well acquainted with my impatience; and I beg you will assure them both, that there is no sort of respect, state, and attention that shall not be shown to the Princess the moment she sets her foot on our dear little island. I am convinced you will heartily concur with me in my anxious endeavours, through this, or even any other means, to bring your voyage to as expeditious and happy a termination as possible. I write to the Duchess of Brunswick by the same courier, which letters you will have the goodness to deliver into her hands yourself. I cannot help once more reiterating my thanks to you, my dear lord, for your judgment and caution through all these late occurrences."

On the 28th of March the embarkation was effected, and, after a prosperous but foggy passage, the royal squadron entered the Thames. It was destined, however, by management or mismanagement—for we know not which to call it—that the jealousy of the Princess should be awakened from the very first hour she landed in Great Britain. The lady, regarding whom the anonymous letter above referred to was written, and whose *liaison* with the Prince of Wales was the subject of public scandal, had been selected as one of the Ladies of Honour to meet the Princess on her arrival. This was neither more nor less than a premeditated insult, and Caroline must have felt it as such. We can exempt no one from the censure attachable to such a proceeding. Even if it can be supposed that the general rumour was unjust with regard to the nature of that connexion, its mere publicity should have prevented the Prince from subjecting his bride to such society, at least at so early a period. But we apprehend that no such palliative can be urged. Under these circumstances, it was the clear duty of the King to have interfered, and, in his double capacity of uncle and father-in-law, to have prevented this affront from being offered to the unprotected Princess. Altogether, it was a scandalous arrangement, and Lord Malmesbury felt it as such. The following extract speaks volumes as to the feelings entertained by the haughty favourite towards the wife:—

> "*Sunday, April 5.*—At eight the Princess got into the royal yacht (Augusta)— [Pg 328] pleasant and prosperous sail to Greenwich, where we arrive at twelve o'clock. The King's coaches not yet arrived, owing, as I have since heard, to Lady ——not being ready. She, Mrs Aston, and Lord Claremont, came to meet the Princess. We waited at least an hour for the carriages, and were very attentively, but awkwardly, received by Sir W. Pattison, governor of the

hospital, and his two sisters. Lady —— very much dissatisfied with the Princess's mode of dress, though Mrs Harcourt had taken great pains about it, and expressed herself in a way which induced me to speak rather sharply to her. She also said, *she could not sit backwards* in a coach, and hoped she might be allowed to sit *forwards*. This, (though Mrs Harcourt was servile enough to admit as a reason,) as it was strictly forbidden by the King,"—[it *does* seem, therefore, that some such difficulty had been apprehended, and the probable conduct of Lady —— discussed!]—"I most decidedly opposed, and told Lady ——, that, as she must have known that riding backward in a coach disagreed with her, she ought never to have accepted the situation of a lady of the bedchamber, who never ought to sit forward, and that, if she really was likely to be sick, I would put Mrs Aston into the coach with the Princess, and have, by that means, the pleasure of Lady ——'s company in the carriage allotted to me and Lord Claremont. *This of course settled the business*; she and Mrs Harcourt sat backward, and the Princess sat by herself forward. There was very little crowd, and still less applause, on the road to London, where we arrived, and were set down at St James's (the Duke of Cumberland's apartments, Cleveland Row) about half-past two."

The long-expected, and probably dreaded interview was now to take place. We may search the whole annals of marriage in vain for such another.

"Immediately notified the arrival to the King and Prince of Wales; the last came immediately. I, according to the established etiquette, introduced (no one else being in the room) the Princess Caroline to him. She very properly, in consequence of my saying to her that it was the right mode of proceeding, attempted to kneel to him. He raised her, (gracefully enough,) and embraced her, said barely one word, turned round, retired to a distant part of the apartment, and, calling me to him, said—'Harris, I am not well; *pray, get me a glass of brandy*!'

"I said, 'Sir, had you not better have a glass of water?' upon which he, much out of humour, said with an oath—

"'No; I will go directly to the Queen,' and away he went.

"The Princess, left during this short moment alone, was in a state of astonishment; and, on my joining her, said—'Mon Dieu! est-ce que le Prince est toujours comme cela? Je le trouve très gros et nullement aussi beau que son portrait.'

"I said his Royal Highness was naturally a good deal affected and flurried at this first interview, but she certainly would find him different at dinner. She was disposed to further criticisms on this occasion, which would have embarrassed me very much to answer, if luckily the King had not ordered me to attend him."

Little comment is required upon such a scene. In charity, we shall suppose that the Prince at the first glance was grievously disappointed with the personal appearance of his bride—that he had formed some exaggerated estimate of her charms, and that the reaction was so strong as to create instantaneous antipathy. A more favourable hypothesis we cannot form; any other must resolve itself into preconcerted insult. Still, this is no justification for conduct which was at once mean and unmanly. There she stood—the daughter of a sovereign prince—his own near kinswoman, whose hand he had voluntarily solicited—young, and not devoid of some personal beauty. Other defects he had not time to observe, and surely, on such an occasion as this, they were not conspicuously prominent. Could any man, with a spark of chivalrous feeling within him, have permitted himself to manifest such tokens of disgust in the presence of a woman, who was to all intents and purposes his wife, and whom he then for the first time beheld? Some there were, wearing before him the princely plume of Wales, who would rather have forfeited that honour than offered insult to a female and a stranger—but the spirit of the Henrys and the Edwards was not there. An interview of a minute's duration—brandy—and an oath! Rare prospects for the felicity and continuance of the future Hymen!—Let us follow Lord Malmesbury through the subsequent scenes. [Pg 329]

"The drawing-room was just over. His Majesty's conversation turned wholly on Prussian and French politics, and the only question about the Princess was —'Is she good-humoured?'

"I said, and very truly, 'That in very trying moments I had never seen her otherwise.'

"The King said, 'I am glad of it;' and it was manifest, from his silence, he had seen the Queen *since* she had seen the Prince, and that the Prince had made a very unfavourable report of the Princess to her. At dinner, at which all those who attended the Princess from Greenwich assisted, and the honours of which were done by Lord Stopford as Vice-Chamberlain, I was far from satisfied with the Princess's behaviour. It was flippant, rattling, affecting raillery and wit, and throwing out coarse, vulgar hints about Lady ——, who was present, and,

though mute, *le diable n'en perdait rien*. The Prince was evidently disgusted, and this unfortunate dinner fixed his dislike, which, when left to herself, the Princess had not the talent to remove; but, by still observing the same giddy manners and attempts at cleverness and coarse sarcasm, increased it till it became positive hatred.

"From this time, though I dined frequently during the first three weeks at Carlton House, nothing material occurred; but the sum of what I saw there led me to draw the inferences I have just expressed. After one of those dinners, where the Prince of Orange was present, and at which the Princess had behaved very lightly and even improperly, the Prince took me into his closet, and asked me how I liked this sort of manners. I could not conceal my disapprobation of them, and took this opportunity of repeating to him the substance of what the Duke of Brunswick had so often said to me, that it was expedient *de la tenir serrée*, that she had been brought up very strictly, and if she was not strictly kept, would, from high spirits and little thought, certainly emancipate too much. To this the Prince said—'I see it but too plainly; but why, Harris, did you not tell me so before, or write it to me from Brunswick?'

"I replied that I did not consider what the Duke (a severe father himself towards his children) said, of sufficient consequence; that it affected neither the Princess's moral character nor conduct, and was intended solely as a communication which I conceived it only proper to notice to his Royal Highness at a proper occasion, at such a one as now had offered; and that I humbly hoped his Royal Highness would not consider it as casting any *real* slur or aspersion on the Princess; that as to not writing to his Royal Highness from Brunswick, I begged him to recollect I was not sent on a *discretionary* commission, but with *the most positive commands* to ask the Princess Caroline in marriage, and nothing more; that to this sole point, respecting the marriage and no other, these commands went; any reflections or remarks that I had presumed to make, would (whether in praise of, or injurious to her Royal Highness) have been a direct and positive deviation from those his Majesty's commands. They were as *limited* as they were *imperative*. That still, had I discovered notorious or glaring defects, or such as were of a nature to render the union unseemly, I should have felt it as a bounden duty to have stated them, but it must have been *directly to the King*, and to no one else. To this the Prince appeared to acquiesce; but I saw it did not please, and left a rankle in his mind."

We have heard some blame attributed to Lord Malmesbury, in certain quarters, for not having communicated to the Prince his own impressions of the bride. We are inclined to think this censure undeserved, and to look upon his own defence, stated above, as perfectly satisfactory. Even if he had considered it his duty to make any such representation—which it was not—he must have done it at great personal peril. The whole odium—if the marriage had been broken off—would have been attributed to him. Had it gone forward, the coldness of the Prince would inevitably have been set down as the effect of his interference. If he had been trusted with a discretionary commission, much more would have been left in his power; but the marriage was, in point of fact, quite concluded when he received orders to repair to Brunswick. With regard to the Princess, he acted throughout as a sincere and judicious friend in warning and in counselling her. He drew no glittering or extravagant pictures to lead her imagination astray. He prepared her to find the Court of London rather a place of [Pg 330] ordeal, beset with many snares and difficulties, than the site of luxury, ease, and indulgence. He did his best to tutor her on the delicate topics of deportment, manners, and conversation; and if he failed, it was only because his counsel was required too late. It is said that the Prince never forgave Lord Malmesbury for his share in this negotiation. If the fact be so, the Prince was both unjust and ungenerous; for it is questionable if there was one, among the other servants of the Crown, who could have discharged so arduous a duty with half the discretion of this accomplished and wise diplomatist. It should be remembered too, by those who have adopted a different view, that Lord Malmesbury had little opportunity, *at the first*, to investigate the character and habits of the Princess. He was in daily expectation of his recall, and his time, as his diary shows, was greatly occupied with the stirring public events of Europe. Except himself, there was no experienced English statesman on the Continent qualified to give advice at a period when communication with home was hopeless. He therefore became, as it were, the adviser-general to our ambassadors, our army, and the friendly states of Holland and of Austria. He was the only man capable of unravelling and detecting the tortuous policy of Prussia, and almost every moment of his time was engrossed by these stupendous labours. It was only upon the journey home—broken and protracted as it was—that he had the full opportunity of ascertaining, by the use of his own faculties, the faults and imperfections of the Princess, and surely it was then by far too late to interfere.

Lord Malmesbury was present at the nuptials. There was little gaiety on the occasion—none certainly in the heart of one—if not both—of the principal actors in the scene.

"I should have said that the marriage ceremony took place late on the evening of Wednesday, the 8th April, at St James's Chapel-Royal. The ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, (Moore.) The usual etiquette

observed—we had assembled in the Queen's apartment; from thence to the usual drawing-rooms, (very dark.) The procession, preceded by the heralds and great officers of the court, (amongst whom I was ordered to attend,) walked to the Chapel—very crowded. Prince of Wales gave his hat, with a rich diamond button and loop, to Lord Harcourt to hold, and made him a present of it. After the marriage, we returned to the Queen's apartment. The King told me to wear the Windsor uniform, and have the *entrées*. The Prince very civil and gracious; but I thought I could perceive he was not quite sincere, *and certainly unhappy; and as a proof of it, he had manifestly had recourse to wine or spirits*." Lord Malmesbury remarks in conclusion—"It is impossible to conceive or foresee any comfort from this connexion, in which I lament very much having taken any share, purely passive as it was."

Such is the secret history of the commencement of this ill-starred union, which was destined at a future, and even more perilous period, to form one of the most dangerous points of discord between the crown and people of these realms. At the lapse of half a century, the appearance of these documents is valuable, for they throw light upon many passages which otherwise could only have been dimly conjectured. Since then, society in the higher circles has undergone considerable reformation. More amalgamation and friendly intercourse is yearly taking place among the different courts of Europe; and we hail those reunions with joy, as the best securities not only of the private happiness of those whose welfare must always be important to their people, but of the general peace and federal prosperity of the world.

The topics upon which we have dwelt in this article, are so interesting, that we have occupied our space without exhausting one half of these valuable volumes. They contain, besides, Lord Malmesbury's negotiations with the French Directory at Paris in 1796, and at Lille in 1797, with much of the private history of Mr Pitt during the period of the Addington Administration. We may perhaps, on a future occasion, recur to these; at present we shall conclude by heartily recommending this work to the perusal of every one who desires to become thoroughly acquainted with the diplomatic relations of the times.

GERMAN-AMERICAN ROMANCES.

[Pg 331]

The Viceroy and the Aristocracy, or Mexico in 1812.

Part the Second.

The two great colonizing nations of Europe, England and Spain, have displayed a striking difference in their mode of treating the countries which discovery or conquest has at various periods placed under their rule. The constant aim of England has been to civilize the aborigines, and elevate their moral character; to teach them the arts of life, and to attach them to their rulers by the impartial administration of justice. The prosperous state of British India, and the ease with which that vast empire is governed and controlled by an insignificant number of Europeans, prove the wisdom of the liberal and humane policy applied by Great Britain to her Indian subjects.

The colonial system uniformly pursued by Spain has been widely and fatally different. The establishment of her transatlantic colonies was accomplished by the indiscriminate slaughter and plunder of the unoffending natives. Disguise it as he may, cruelty is a distinguishing characteristic of the Spaniard; and this moral phenomenon in the character of a people, certainly not destitute of noble and chivalrous attributes, may probably be traced, partly to the large admixture of Arabian blood in the Spanish population, and partly to the long enduring and paramount authority of a priesthood remarkable for its intolerant spirit, and for its savage abuse of unlimited power. This propensity to deeds of cruelty and oppression was nourished during the long contest with the Moors. Abundant evidence of it may also be found in Spain's European wars, and especially during the long and noble struggle of the brave Netherlanders against the reckless and blood-thirsty soldiery of the Duke of Alva. But the crowning atrocities of Spain were perpetrated in her American possessions, and more particularly in Mexico, the richest and most important of them all.

Assuming that the whole of Spanish America was a gift to the king of Spain from God's vicegerent on earth, the Roman pontiff, and under the plea that it was their especial duty to establish his creed, the Spaniards did not hesitate to accomplish this end by the most lawless and cruel means. Their unbounded greed of gold led to further oppressions on their part, and sufferings on that of the Indians; and even the arbitrary, and for the most part unjust, enactments of the Consejo de las Indias, a council established for the government of Spain's colonial possessions, were outheroded and overstepped by the cruel and mercenary individuals to whom their enforcement was entrusted.

Fearing the eventual day of retribution, every cunning device was practised to keep down the numbers of the unfortunate natives, and to retard the growth of their intelligence. By a royal decree, not a town or village could be founded, nor even a farm-house built, except in the vicinity of a garrison, convent, or mission. The Spaniards wanted dollars, not men, and could they have worked the rich mines of Guanaxato, Monte Real, and elsewhere, with bullocks instead of Indians, would gladly have seen the whole native population of Mexico exterminated. But when the storm, which for a time had been averted, at length burst forth, they gave a loose to their hatred of the unfortunate Mexicans. The rebellion, premature in its outbreak, and crushed in its first great effort, was carried on under various leaders, and with varying success, until it terminated in the final downfall of the Spanish rule. The massacres and cruelties perpetrated during the eleven intervening years, were beyond conception horrible; far exceeding in extent and atrocity any thing recorded in European history. The fearful night of St Bartholomew, the tortures of the Inquisition, the persecutions in the Cevennes, and later, the horrors of the French Revolution, sink into insignificance, [Pg 332] when compared with such wholesale massacres as those of Guanaxato and Guadalajara, and with the sweeping destruction wrought by the Spaniards throughout Mexico.

"Such and such towns and villages have disappeared from the face of the earth," was no uncommon phrase in the reports and despatches of the Spanish commanders—a phrase fully borne out by facts. Prisoners, of both sexes and all ages, were murdered in cold blood, whole districts laid waste with fire and sword, until not a human being or habitation was to be seen, where previously a flourishing and numerous population existed. In a despatch of the royalist general Morillo, dated Bagota, June 1816, he stated that, in order to cut at the root of the rebellion, he had declared all persons rebels who knew how to read and write, and that such were, on detection, immediately to be put to death. Accordingly, six hundred of the most notable persons in Bagota, both men and women, guiltless of all other crimes but education, were strangled, and their bodies suspended naked from gibbets. Nothing but the weariness of the executioner and his aids, put an end to this horrid butchery.

We cannot better illustrate the state of things above referred to, than by laying before the reader some farther extracts from *The Viceroy and the Aristocracy*. For this purpose we will select the early portion of the second volume, previously connecting it by some brief details with the two chapters given in our last Number.

The five-and-twenty young noblemen who witnessed the treasonable dramatic performance described in the second chapter of the book before us, are sentenced, as a punishment for their offence, to serve in the army under Calleja, the captain-general of Mexico. This is announced to their parents, who are all Creoles of the highest rank, at a drawing-room held by the viceroy Vanegas, where we are introduced to a certain Count San Jago, who, as well on account of his wealth and influence, as by his high qualities and superior intelligence, ranks first amongst the Mexican nobility, and enjoys great consideration at the viceregal court. His nephew, Don Manuel, and his adopted son, the Conde Carlos, were among the spectators of the pasquinade in which King Ferdinand's private pastimes had been so cuttingly caricatured, and they are included in the sentence passed on all those who have thus offended. This sentence excites great indignation amongst the Mexican nobility, who see in it a gross violation of their *fueros* or privileges. There is no option, however, but obedience. The Count San Jago, who ardently desires the freedom of his country, and even maintains a secret understanding with some of the rebel chiefs, rejoices in the punishment awarded, deeming that the introduction of these young men into the army may pave the way to Creole ascendancy. The immediate expulsion of the Spaniards from Mexico is not desired by him, or by the majority of the Creoles, as it would throw the chief power into the hands of the Indians and castes, who are totally unfitted to wield it. The count procures a captain's commission for Carlos, and would willingly do the same for his nephew; but Don Manuel, although a Creole by birth, is a Spaniard in heart, despises his own countrymen, and resolves to proceed to Spain and take part in the struggle against the French. An attachment has existed between him and the Countess Elvira, sister of Carlos; but this has recently been succeeded, on the side of Manuel, by a violent passion he has conceived for the viceroy's sister-in-law, Donna Isabella, a haughty beauty, who only encourages the young Creole so far as it accords with the views of Vanegas, some of whose designs would be promoted by the absence from Mexico of the Count San Jago's nephew and heir. Blinded by his passion, Manuel obeys the impulse artfully given to him by Donna Isabella, resists the remonstrances of his uncle and the tears of Elvira, and insists upon proceeding to Spain, which his imagination paints as the fountain-head of chivalry and heroism. Count San Jago sees through his motives, but does not choose to constrain his inclination; and Manuel sets out, [Pg 333] with a train of attendants befitting his rank, for the sea-coast, where he is to embark for the mother country. His adventures upon the road form a striking episode, to a certain extent independent of the rest of the book, and with which we will continue our extracts.

Chapter the Eighteenth.

"What are you
That fly me thus? Some villain mountaineers?"
Cymbeline.

About a day's journey from the capital, rises that mighty chain of mountains called the Sierra Madre, which, after connecting the volcanoes of Mexico with those of Puebla, takes an inland and northerly direction, hiding within its bowels, near Monte Real and Guanaxato, that boundless mineral wealth which excites so strongly the wonder of the naturalist. The most important mountains of Mexico are portions of this chain, which gives to that country a character so original, so wildly picturesque and truly sublime, yet so cheerful and smiling, that the eye of the beholder ranges with alternate rapture and surprise from point to point of the immense landscape, vainly endeavouring to comprehend in one frame the wonderfully-contrasted materials of the picture before him.

The flanks of these mountain ridges are thickly clothed with lofty oak and pine, while the dwarf oak and the mimosa cover the shoulders; and their rocky summits, bare of all vegetable life, are composed of granite and porphyry. Terrific craters yawn on every side of these sombre dark-brown masses, which appear to be still teeming with those tremendous revolutions, that have given to this country its remarkable configuration. Luxuriant crops of wheat and maize cover the mountain slopes; the lower levels delight the eye with the endless variety and brilliant colours of their exotic plants; while, still lower, the tough agave darts forth its sharp and giant leaves, like so many sword-blades, and the plains are intersected by vast barrancas,[31] exhibiting that wonderful opulence of tropical fertility, which is ever at work in their deep and shady hollows. From these ascend the roar of rushing streams, invisible to the eye, but mighty in their influence; every slope they wash yielding a prodigality of vegetable ornament, which the most glowing fancy would find it difficult to paint. The flowering shrubs are linked together and covered by numberless creepers, studded with brilliant blossoms, forming continuous garlands of flowers, which climb on the roots to the crown, and conceal thousands of conzontlis, cardinal birds, and madrugadores, within their shady recesses.

It was a bright and sunny afternoon. The snowy regions of the mighty Orizava,[32] and of the mightier Popocatepetl, hitherto resplendent as burnished silver, now began to exhibit flickering tints of rose-colour, which, deepening on their eastern sides into golden-yellow and bronze, reflected every moment some fresh variety of hue. The shadows of Mount Malinche and his brethren began to stretch over towards Tlascala. Deep silence prevailed throughout the entire district, broken only by the scream of the ring eagle, or the hollow howl of the coyote.[33]

On one of the mountain ridges stretching eastward from San Martin, and over which Cortes first penetrated into the valley of Tenochtitlan, two men had stationed themselves, with their backs to a mass of porphyry rock, that rose, like a fragment of some mighty castle, above a yawning barranca of prodigious depth. The lank, straight hair, and red-black complexion of these men, indicated them to be Zambos. Their dress consisted of sheepskins, fastened round their shoulders by thongs of hide, and of some ragged under garments of a coarse black woollen stuff; their heads were covered by the broad-brimmed straw hats universally worn by the Indians and castes; machetes, or long knives, were stuck in their girdles, and heavy clubs lay on the ground at their feet. To judge from their countenances, neither of the men were in a particularly good humour. Whilst one of them stood upright, and seemed to be acting as a vedette, the other lay stretched upon the turf in a sort of sullen half slumber, until his companion, weary of his watch, threw himself down in his turn; whereupon the other arose, muttering and grumbling, to take his share of duty. For some time not a word was exchanged between the two sentries. [Pg 334]

"*Maldita cosa!*" at last exclaimed the Zambo who was on his legs. "By the holy Virgin of Guadalupe, if this lasts another week, if we are to be thus tracked and hunted like caguars, may the devil seize me but I"——

"I?"—interrogated his companion.

"Will say *adios* to you; and Mexico's freedom may take care of itself."

"Wish you a pleasant journey, Señor," replied the other yawning. "Do you see yonder birds? They are waiting for you."

And he pointed to a flight of zepilots, or Mexican ravens, with sharp claws and hooked beaks, which had just then alighted on the cliffs above their heads.

"*Caramba!* Calleja would soon settle your business. A dangle at a rope's end, with the hangman on your shoulders, and that before you could light a cigar, or empty a glass of pulque."

"*Tonterias*, nonsense!" replied the grumbler. "My ahuitzote[34] is not yet come."

"It may not be far off though. You might fall into the hands of Señor Bustamente, from whom, if I remember right, you borrowed ten of his best mules, and in your haste forgot to take off their burdens."

"*Basta*—enough!" retorted the other Zambo, who appeared to be tired of the conversation; and taking a piece of dirty paper out of his girdle, he placed upon it a minute quantity of chopped tobacco, and rolled it into the form of a cigar. This he smeared over with saliva, and then laying it upon a fragment of rock, drew his machete, laid that upon the cigar, and walked off in the direction of an adjacent thicket.

The second Zambo had watched with envious eyes these preparations for the enjoyment of a luxury which, to Mexicans, is more necessary than their daily bread. No sooner had his companion turned his back, than he drew from his pocket two pieces of achiote wood,[35] and rubbing them together with astonishing rapidity, obtained fire in as short a time as it could have been done by the more usual agency of flint and steel. Taking possession of the cigar, he lit it, and had just begun to inhale the smoke with all the gusto of a connoisseur, when the rightful owner of the coveted morsel emerged from the thicket with two fragments of dry wood in his hand.

"*Maldito gojo! Picaro! Infame!*" vociferated the aggrieved Zambo, on beholding his cigar in the wrong mouth. The smoker had very prudently secured his comrade's machete, and now began to fly before the angry countenance of his enraged comrade.

"*Paciencia, Señor!*" cried he, dodging about and panting for breath. "Patience, most excellent sir! I will return you ten cigars, nay, a hundred, a thousand—so soon as I can get them."

"*Que te lleven todos los demonios de los diez y siete infiernos!*" screamed the other, who had [Pg 335] seized his club and commenced furious pursuit of the robber. Both of them ran several times round the huge block of porphyry, but the distance between them was diminishing, and there seemed every probability that the thief's love of tobacco would cost him dear, when a thundering "*Halto!*" from the thicket, brought both Zambos to a dead stop.

"*Que es esto?* What is this?" cried a voice.

"*Mi Général—no—perdon—capitan!*" stammered the pursuer; "he has stolen my cigar."

The captain himself now issued from the copse, walked gravely up to the thief, took the half-consumed cigar from his mouth, and placed it in his own; then, stepping forward to the edge of the barranca, he listened a few moments, pointed down into the yawning chasm, and drew himself quickly backwards. His movements were imitated by the Zambos, who gazed for a short space on the windings of the barranca, through which meanders the old road to Cholula, made by Cortes, and then sprang back with the exclamation, "*Mulos y arrieros!*"

From among the windings of the above-named road, which is scarcely passable even for mules from the depths of ravines, and from amidst rocks and precipices, the pleasant tinkling of bells now ascended through the clear elastic air to the mountain summit on which the three men were posted. Presently the mules became visible, apparently no bigger than dogs, clambering slowly up the steep and rocky path; then were heard the long cadences of the muleteer's rude but not unmusical song; and at last the active figures of the muleteers themselves, with their fantastical garb and five hundred buttons, the variegated accoutrements of the mules, with their worsted plumes, and tufts, and frippery, and many-coloured saddle-cloths, and even the trabucos that were slung behind the saddles, were all distinguishable. There was a wild picturesqueness in the appearance of the cavalcade as it wound its way over the seemingly perpendicular rocks, while the rough sonorous song, accompanied by the sound of the bells, came creeping up the mountain side. Suddenly a figure detached itself from the party, as if weary of the circuitous route it was taking, and, with extraordinary activity and daring, commenced a more direct ascent. Springing from cliff to cliff, the adventurous climber seemed to find pleasure in his breakneck pastime, and continued his course without a pause till he reached the second shelf of the barranca, which was riven by a deep and wide crevice. High over his head a gigantic eagle was wheeling and circling, floating upon the air, now darting down towards him, and then again shooting upwards, sporting, as it seemed, with an anticipated prey. The young man, for such those above could now discern him to be, drew breath for a few seconds, cast a glance upwards at the kingly bird, and then, with one fearless spring, cleared the chasm. With unabated vigour he bounded from rock to rock, and at length reached a rocky projection immediately below the platform. Grasping the trunk of a dwarf oak, he climbed nimbly up it, and let himself drop from the branches on the plateau itself.

"*Diabolo!*" muttered the two Zambos, who had witnessed the young man's hazardous progress with that mute admiration and sympathy which the exhibition of bodily strength and activity is apt to excite, especially amongst half-civilized men—"*Diabolo!* He has more lives than a cat!" And with the words they slunk into the thicket.

It was no other than Don Manuel himself who had made this daring, and, as it appeared, unnecessary display of his aptitude for the life of a mountaineer—a display the more perilous, as his rich and fantastical riding dress was any thing but favourable to it. He wore a Guadalajara hat, of which the brim, full six inches broad, was completely covered with gold lace, while above the low crown was displayed the blood-red cockade adopted by loyally disposed Mexicans. His jacket was abundantly decorated with gold embroidery, and garnished with the fur of the sea otter; his breeches, of scarlet cloth, were open at the knee, where they were terminated by green and yellow ties; the whole costume was profusely [Pg 336] laced with gold, and loaded with silver buttons. His legs, below the knee, were protected by leather *botines* or gamashes, fastened by silk ribands of various colours, and finally losing themselves in a pair of old-fashioned, high-quartered shoes. Spurs only were wanting to complete the riding-dress, which was more remarkable for richness than good taste, and evidently after the fashion of a previous century.

Casting a careless glance at the perilous path by which he had arrived, the young man then fixed his gaze upon the magnificent panorama spread out before him. In front were the blooming plains of Cholula, and beyond them those of Puebla de los Angeles, with their corn and maize fields, and agave plantations, divided by hedges and alleys of cactus, and dotted with the cane-built and banana-shaded Indian hamlets. To the right, springing out of the rugged porphyry ridge, the summits of which, alternately wood-crowned and naked, were glowing in the afternoon sun, arose the snowy head of the Itztaccihuatl, shedding such a flood of light and brilliancy in its isolated magnificence, that the eye vainly strove to sustain the glare. To the left towered the gigantic Popocatepetl, high above the mountain world around, a misty crown of cloud clinging to its summit; while farther to the south-east, shot up the star of Mexican mountains, the Orizava, rising like some mighty phantom into the clear blue ether, of which the quivering vibrations seemed to bring the enormous mountain each moment nearer to the beholder. Finally, in rear of Don Manuel, the thickly wooded Malinche, with its masses of forest trees and its stupendous barrancas, frowned in dark and solemn shadow.

The extraordinary contrast of the most magnificent vegetation, then just bursting out in all the green and blooming freshness of the season, with the severe grandeur of the most sublime Alpine scenery, fettered the young man for some moments in speechless admiration. He was roused from his reverie by a slight rustling behind him, and turning his head quickly, he gave a spring which, if less perilous than many of those he had recently made, was yet at least as useful in extricating him from a dangerous position.

"*Picaro!*" shouted one of the Zambos, whose machete had harmlessly stabbed the air, instead of piercing, as was intended, Don Manuel's heart.

"*Maldito Gachupin!*" cried the other, who had swung his club with a like innocuous result.

The attack of the two bravoes was made so suddenly and unexpectedly, that Manuel had barely time to jump aside. With wonderful coolness and presence of mind he sprang to the shelter of the rock, at the same moment throwing his hands forward so suddenly that one of the Zambos, in his hurry to escape, nearly ran over his companion. A brace of pistols, which the young man had drawn from the breast of his jacket, were the cause of this sudden change in the tactics of the bandits, who now retired hastily into the thicket. Don Manuel gazed after them for a few moments, and then again approached the edge of the barranca, from the top of which the mules were now no longer very distant. Not a word had escaped him during the short scuffle, and to judge from the cool indifference he had manifested, the occurrence was one of neither a rare nor extraordinary nature.

The nephew of the Conde de San Jago had not long relapsed into contemplation when he was again disturbed by a loud *halto!* proceeding from the same thicket from which it had been already shouted to the Zambos, and the next instant the patriot captain issued forth with levelled carbine. No ways discomposed, the young don raised a pistol.

"Down with your gun, or I fire!" cried he.

"Indeed," said the captain, "you should be a bold cock, to judge from your crow."

"You will soon find out what I am," replied the young man dryly.

"*C—jo!*" quoth the captain, and removed the carbine from his shoulder.

The appearance of the patriot or rebel officer, whichever he may be styled, although less bandit-like than that of the two Zambos, was not calculated to inspire much confidence. His [Pg 337] face was shadowed, indeed concealed, by a thick mass of black hair, which hung down over forehead, cheeks, and neck, and allowed scarcely any part of his countenance to be visible, except a pair of coal-black eyes of somewhat oblique expression. Although not of a particularly strong build, his frame was muscular, and apparently inured to hardship. He wore a round, high-crowned, Guadalajara hat, encircled by a gold band, in which was stuck a large miniature of the Virgin of Guadalupe. A second portrait of that venerated patroness was hung round his neck by a blue and white riband. His cloak, of fine cloth, and laced with gold, had been much worn and ill-treated, as had also his hose and his red velvet jerkin; on his feet he wore shoes, through which his toes had forced themselves a passage, and instead of the usual gamashes, his legs were bound round with sheepskin. Spurs, full six inches long, and with rowels of the same diameter, were affixed to his heels. His arms consisted of a carbine, a machete, and a rusty dragoon sabre.

The young Creole measured this personage with an indifferent glance, and a smile of disdain for a moment played round his mouth; but then, as if he did not deem the object worthy of further notice, he let his pistol fall carelessly by his side, and turned his back negligently upon the new comer.

"*Todos diabolos!*" exclaimed the captain after a moment's pause, and apparently indignant at the contempt with which he was treated. "Whence come you, and whither are you going? What is the object of your journey? Answer me, young sir, and that quickly. *Soy un gran capitan! Llevo las manos y tiembla la tierra!*"

"Probably one of the leaders of the self-styled patriot army," said the young Creole, in a tone of scorn, in reply to this pompous announcement.

"Even so, señor," returned the other, suddenly changing his own manner of speaking to a sort of humorous sneer—"commander of a division of the patriot army, presently in headquarters at Puebla."

"Headquarters!" repeated Manuel with infinite disdain. "Your authority extends far and wide, it would appear," added he, with a glance at his interlocutor's dilapidated shoes.

"It does so," answered the other, in the same humorous but somewhat malicious tone. "Nevertheless, my wardrobe, as your excellency doubtless perceives, has somewhat suffered in the service of the rebel cause, and as your señoria will probably have an earlier opportunity than I shall of providing yourself with another pair of shoes and gamashes, I would crave of you to condescend so far as to seat yourself upon that stone and divest yourself of those you now wear, for the behoof and advantage of the unworthy capitan before you, who will otherwise be compelled to dispossess your worship of them in a less amicable manner."

The *gran capitan* waited a few moments after making this demand, but then observing that the young Creole took no steps towards obeying his orders, he stamped impatiently upon the ground, and exclaimed in a stern peremptory tone,

"Off with them, and quickly! Your shoes and your gamashes!"

"You will find my shoes too tight for you, I expect," replied Don Manuel, raising a pistol. The Metis, on his side, covered the young nobleman with his carbine.

"Keep still, Jago," cried Don Manuel sharply, "or I will so shoe you that you shall remember Manuel M——to the very last day of your life."

The patriot officer pushed aside the hair which hung over his forehead and eyes, gazed at the Creole for a few seconds in great astonishment, and then, letting his gun fall, ran towards him with outstretched arms.

"*Santa Virgen!*" exclaimed he—"By the blessed Redeemer of Atolnico! May I never see heaven if it is not the very noble señor Don Manuel, nephew of his excellency Count San Jago, the first cavalier in Mexico, and son of the not-quite-so-noble but still very-tolerably-noble Señor Don Sebastian, and of the Gachupina, Señora Donna Anna de Villagio, and *cortejo* of the greatest angel in Mexico, and consequently in the whole world, the Countess Elvira!"

This characteristic and thoroughly Mexican apostrophe was accompanied by vehement gesticulation on the part of the Metis, in whose expressive and variable countenance a strange mixture of fun and irony, with reverence for the illustrious persons he was speaking of, was discernible. He was interrupted in his tirade by Don Manuel. [Pg 338]

"Have you done?" said the latter.

"Not yet," replied the captain. "May the Virgin of Guadalupe for ever deprive me of those comforts to Mexican palates, Havannah cigars and aguardiente, if I can guess what so noble a señor as yourself is doing on such a rugged path as the old Camino de Cortes, instead of taking the usual road by Otumba."

"I can tell you the reason," replied Don Manuel. "Our friends have commissioned me to have you hung, and that as soon as possible."

"Indeed!" said the captain with a sly smile; "and would you be good enough, just for the joke's sake, to tell me the names of those friends? I might, perhaps, find an opportunity of returning their kindness."

As he spoke he advanced a step towards the Creole, in a sort of familiar way.

"Keep your distance!" cried the young man. "None of your hypocritical caresses! We know each other."

"Hardly, señor," replied Jago, shaking his head. "If you knew me you would, perhaps, speak in another tone. But truly, now, should I not have been a very simple Jago to have passed my life as driver of your mules, or perhaps of the *gente irracionale*, as you call the poor devils of Indians? Ah! your worshipful uncle is a right noble and powerful caballero, speaks little but thinks much, and does more, and has his hand over all Mexico and the *madre patria*, and perhaps a step further; but believe me he would speak to Jago in a very different manner from that adopted by his nephew, the son of the tolerably-noble señor Don Sebastian. The count is a very noble gentleman; but when he made over one of his finest estates to your father, he committed a blunder that cost him three hundred able-bodied Indians. Ha ha!" continued the man, raising his sombrero from his head and setting it on again, a little on one side; "you cannot forgive poor Jago for having walked off with the three hundred Indians, who suddenly took a fancy to leave the peaceable hacienda of Don Sebastian, and follow the great Hidalgo, after the example of your very humble servant. But only think now; for three hundred lean oxen, which your worshipful father was kind enough to give to a like number of those poor devils, they had to toil a whole year; and, by the blessed Virgin, St Christopher did not sweat more when he carried the infant Jesus through the flood! It happened to those poor Indians just as it did to St Christopher. The longer they toiled the heavier grew the

load; and as they had not the thews and sinews of the saint, they at last sank under the burthen. So far from being able to pay for the oxen, they got every year deeper into your tolerably-noble father's debt. Can you wonder, then, that they threw aside spades and baskets, and joined the army of Hidalgo?"

However galling the patriot captain's observations were to the young nobleman, the latter could not help being struck by their justice.

"Do you think we are dogs, señor?" continued Jago. "You are a *blanco*, a white, not one of our rulers certainly, but of as pure blood as any of then. *You* have never felt the *infamia de derecho*[36] weighing upon you, following you like your shadow, and worse, for *that* at least leaves one during the rains; and yet *my* father was as good a father as any Spaniard's could be, and my mother as good a mother. But what was the use of that? Jago is a Metis. He is infamous, and his children's children after him."

The man had touched briefly, but acutely, upon the wrongs of the two classes composing the great majority of the Mexican population, and his words seemed not to have been without [Pg 339] their effect upon the young Creole, who replied in a less harsh tone than he had hitherto employed—

"If Mexico is to be delivered by you, and such as you, then is she lost indeed."

Jago caught at the word.

"Delivered!" he repeated sarcastically. "In spite, then, of your aristocratic blood, you feel that a deliverance is wanted? Yet the world says, that for six months past you have become a worse Gachupin than the Spaniards themselves."

Don Manuel cast a furious glance at the Metis.

"Aha! that stings!" continued the latter. "What! have they played you a trick too? But *misericordià* with your nobility, who quailed before the rising sun of freedom, and deserted your own country to aid the tyrants who oppress it. When such was the case, the time was come for the people to assert their rights; and assert them they did, as you know."

"And a fine reward they got for so doing," retorted the youth.

"Our day will come yet," returned the captain. "You are *caballeros*, very gentle and noble men, and we are only *gavilla*, knaves and serfs—therefore have ye hung and shot us, struck us down like oxen, and trampled us under foot, used us worse than snared wolves. Poor Hidalgo!" continued he in a more gentle tone, "you little thought, twelve months before, how you would be peppered by the damnable Gachupins. They rubbed his hands and his poor bald head with brick-dust, slipped a *san benito* over him, and sent him straight into paradise, where, doubtless, he is now giving concerts, with his musicians and the blessed St Cecilia. Allende ought to be there, too; but he is a soldier, and perhaps they would not let him in amongst the eleven thousand virgins. But enough of this. May we venture humbly to enquire of Don Manuel, what brought him upon this lonely *marques-camino*? Has your young excellency, perchance, a fancy to take up arms for Mexico and freedom's sake?"

"By the Holy Virgin, Jago, you are an impudent scoundrel, and deserve a beating, for daring to suspect a caballero of such base dispositions."

The Metis smiled scornfully.

"You have chosen the other side, señor," said he, "instead of remaining neutral, which would have been best for you. Ah! beams from bright eyes! Aha!"

"Scoundrel!" cried the youth with menacing tone and gesture, "if your tongue"——

"Speaks," interrupted Jago, "what every guachinango[37] in Mexico sings over his pulque. But love blinds, they say. May I beg to know what you are doing on this road?"

"Mind your own business," replied the angry nobleman, turning his back haughtily upon his interrogator, who gazed at him for a moment with a look of comical astonishment.

"Now, by my poor soul!" exclaimed the captain, "that is an amount of pride which, if divided into a million of doses, would stock every Creole in Mexico with the drug! But listen to me, young sir. All things have their time, says the proverb, and some two years back this behaviour might have been very suitable from your worship towards Jago the arriero; but times are changed since a certain cura, named Hidalgo, hoisted the standard of Mexican liberty. Ah! your nobility, always excepting the very noble Conde San Jago, display their courage in tertulias and ballrooms, in intrigues and camarilla conspiracies; but when it came to hard knocks they crept out of the way, and left the poor priest of Dolores to help himself. Hidalgo did not understand such tricks, and began in right earnest. You should have seen Hidalgo—you would never have thought him the man he was. A short, round, little fellow, with a sanguine smile and lively eyes, and a complexion as olive-green as the Madeira bottles he was so fond of. His head was bald; he used to say his bedstead was too short, and had rubbed all his hair off; but in spite of that, and of his threescore years, he had the [Pg 340] sinews of a caguar and the strength of a giant; always on horseback, and a splendid rider, for he had been a lancer in the *presidios*, and had had many a fight with those devils of Comanches. Ah, Hidalgo! you deserved a better fate!" concluded the patriot captain in a

saddened tone.

The young Creole had listened with some interest to this short but graphic sketch of the remarkable man who first, with unexampled boldness, raised the banner of Mexican liberty, and who, as well through the originality of his private life, as through his political virtues and failings, had become an object of idolatry to his friends, and of unappeasable hatred to his opponents. Just as Jago finished speaking, Don Manuel's servants and muleteers made their appearance upon the platform.

Chapter the Nineteenth.

"I long
To hear the story of your life, which must
Take the ear strangely."
The Tempest.

"Welcome, Alonzo, and Pedro, and Cosmo, in the quarters of freedom!" cried Jago to the servants, as, with outstretched hand, he advanced a few steps to meet them. "A welcome to ye all!"

"*Maldito herege!*" cried Alonzo, bringing his carbine to his shoulder. "Dog! do you dare"——

The other servants joyfully took the proffered hand. The arrieros bowed before the man who had so lately been one of themselves, with marks of deep reverence, which were only stopped by a significant sign from their *cidevant* comrade.

"Always the same man, Alonzo," said the captain with a contemptuous laugh; "just fit to say '*beso las manos a su señoria*,' and to cringe and bow before counts and marquises. But it is ill speaking with dogs of that kind," added he, as he again turned to the young nobleman. "Yes, señor," he continued, "Hidalgo was a true man. He it was who first put me out of conceit with slavery of all kinds. 'Tis just sixteen months and three weeks to-morrow, since the shell burst. Hidalgo was keeping the tertulia with his musicians—it was nine in the evening. In came Don Ignacio Allende y Unzaga, as white as ashes; he had ridden for dear life from Valladolid, where Iturriaga, in order to secure his place in heaven, had consigned his sworn brothers to destruction, by confessing every thing to Father Gil, who in his turn had confessed to the Audiencia. The corregidor of Valladolid had been immediately arrested as one of the heads of the conspiracy, and luckily this had reached the ears of Allende and Aldama, who hastened to horse, and came as fast as spur and whip could bring them, to take counsel of the only man who could help them in their extremity. And counsel he gave them. He and the captain deliberated for one hour, and then out he came, brisk and bold, and declared himself ready for the fight. Off he started to the prison, put a pistol to the jailer's head, and compelled him to give up the keys and set loose the prisoners. Allende went to the houses of the Gachupins and took away their money, giving them acknowledgments for it. All this was done without blood being spilled. Only one Gachupin, who behaved roughly to Hidalgo, had been slightly wounded. The Indians, Metises, and Zambos, rallied round their cura, and away they all went to Miguel el Grande and Zelaya, where an infantry regiment and four squadrons of cavalry joined them. On to Guanaxato, where another battalion came over. *Todos diabolos!*" continued Jago, "Hidalgo had now more than fifty thousand men at his back; but what were they? Three thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry among a legion of Indians. The soldiers were lost amid the brown multitude, like flies in a pail of pulque. The fifty thousand Indians were shoeless and half-naked, armed with clubs and slings, or at most with machetes, which might do well enough to cut up *tasajo*,[38] but were a deal too short to be measured with Spanish bayonets. Capital fellows were they for plundering and murdering, but ill fitted for a fight. In Miguel el Grande, in San Felipe, in Zelaya, the Gachupins had been cut off to a man. That would not have mattered much, but the *gente irracionale* had included the Creoles with the Spaniards. In Guanaxato, it was still worse. I joined Hidalgo just in time for that dance. We were received with open arms by the Léperos and Indians, but the Creoles and Gachupins had shut themselves up in the Alhondega. This was the first resistance our mad mob had met with, and they rushed like raging savages to attack the granary. They were right well received, and a desperate fight began. At last a giant of a *tenatero* found an enormous flat stone, put it on his head as he might have done his sombrero, and held it on with his right hand, while with a lighted torch in his left, he set fire to the door of the Alhondega. A way was soon opened to the assailants, who rushed in over the smouldering fragments of the door. In a few minutes fourteen hundred Spaniards and Creoles, with wives and children, were stabbed, struck down, and torn in pieces. The Indians waded in blood and treasure. The latter they brought out by baskets full; and the fools might be seen changing doubloons for copper money, taking them for half-dollar bits.

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"About four thousand Indians had joined us out of the city, and thirty thousand out of the district, of Guanaxato. Hidalgo was at the summit of his glory. A council of war had named him generalissimo; Allende was his second in command; Ballesa, Ximenes, and Aldama, lieutenant-generals; Abasala, Ocon, and the brothers Martinez were brigadiers. Hidalgo sang a *Te Deum*, and divided the army into regiments, each of a thousand men, and gave

regular pay; to the officers three dollars a-day, the cavalry one dollar, and the rest half a dollar. He himself appeared in field-marshal's uniform, blue with white facings, the medal of the Virgin of Guadalupe upon his breast. It would have been wiser, however, to have named him archbishop, and made Allende general-in-chief. Hidalgo was a capital priest, but a thorough bad general, and could not even maintain discipline in his army. In his first anger at the Creoles for keeping aloof from the revolution, he had included them in the cry of '*Mueran los Gachupinos!*' and now his eighty thousand Indians had taken their cue from him, and murdered, and ravaged, and burned, wherever they came, like incarnate devils. In this manner, the Creoles had been rendered our inveterate enemies—more the pity. My late mother used always, when she went on a pilgrimage to Guadalupe, to burn two tapers, a white and a black one—the first for the blessed Virgin, the second for the devil. 'There is no knowing,' she used to say, 'what one may come to.'"

The interesting nature of Jago's narrative, and his originality of manner, had by this time riveted the attention of Don Manuel and his attendants.

"When we left Guanaxato," continued the ex-muleteer, "we were more than eighty thousand men, but only three thousand four hundred of us were armed. The *gente irracionale*, in their mad rage, had destroyed even the muskets of the Gachupins. Our numbers, however, still kept increasing, and Hidalgo continued his march in triumph. On the 27th October we were in Tolucca. On the 28th we met Truxillo at Las Cruces, and scattered him and his fifteen hundred men to the winds of heaven. Two days later we were in sight of Mexico."

The captain paused. His delivery during the latter part of the narrative had been hurried and broken; he was evidently much excited by the recapitulation of the stirring scenes in which he had mingled. With visible effort he resumed—

"Ah, Mexico, *estrella del mundo*! Well might thy beauty and brilliancy dazzle the judgment of the poor cura. Hidalgo seemed to lose his head. Instead of marching at once upon the city, [Pg 342] he sent General Ximenes with a summons to it to surrender. Ximenes, the greatest poltroon that ever disgraced an epaulet, came back with the most exaggerated stories of the formidable preparations that were making to receive us. This disconcerted Hidalgo; and on the top of that out came a whole regiment of priests and shavelings, sent by the Viceroy, and they talked to Hidalgo about hell-fire and such like, till he swore it would be the most frightful sacrilege to deliver up Mexico, the seat of our holy religion and of all piety, to the *gente irracionale*. Moreover, we learned that Callija had beaten Sanchez at Queretaro, and effected a junction with Cadena. Holy Virgin!" groaned Jago. "Hidalgo acted like a madman. Instead of taking possession of Mexico with his hundred and ten thousand Indians and four thousand troops of the line, which he might have done without opposition, he ordered a retreat, after we had been a whole day staring at the city like gaping idiots. Vanegas was already on the start for Vera Cruz with his two thousand men. Allende, all of us, begged, prayed, entreated; but it was of no use—retreat we did, and at Aculco ran right into the jaws of Calleja and Cadena.

"I was in Allende's division," continued Jago. "That chief sent General Ximenes with a despatch to Hidalgo, and I was ordered to attend him. His excellency, Hidalgo that is to say, was stationed on the hill of Aculco, surrounded by his staff; and close beside him were the fourteen cannons that composed our whole artillery. It was on the 7th of November. We were scarcely fifty paces from Allende and his aide-de-camps, when Ximenes turned to me and handed me the despatch, which was written on an agave leaf.

"'Go,' said he, 'and deliver this to General Hidalgo.'

"I stared at him in astonishment.

"'But, General'——said I.

"'But me no buts. I served ten years in his majesty's troops and never used the word. Away with you.'

"The style had altered. Our oppressors and enemies were suddenly converted into his majesty's troops. I said nothing, however, but went forward with the despatch, while the general turned back. To say the truth, he looked rather knocked up—and no wonder, for it was the rainy season, the roads were dreadfully bad, our marches had been long and fatiguing, and time for rest scanty. Perhaps, too, he had no stomach for the bullets of the Gachupins, who now appeared advancing like walls of polished steel from the direction of Aculco. It was curious to observe the astonishment and childish delight of our Indians, who for the first time in their lives beheld an army drawn up in rank and file, with its artillery and cavalry. They danced and jumped about for joy; and soon began to use their slings, and hurl showers of stones at the Spaniards, who had halted, evidently startled and intimidated by our numbers. But the stones and arrows whistled about their ears, and there was nothing for it but to fight. As I was riding across, at full gallop, to Hidalgo's position, the Spanish skirmishers spread themselves out along the cactus hedges and over the aloe fields, and puffed and popped away. The firing soon became warm, as more miquelets and caçadores joined in it; and from out of every ditch and hollow, from behind each bush and tree, the bullets came whistling. Suddenly, in the background, there glared a dozen streams of fire, looking white in the broad daylight, and accompanied by a light grey smoke, and down went few score of Indians, never to stand up again in this life. The infernal music became each

moment louder. The smoke was thickest and the fire hottest around the rising ground on which Hidalgo had stationed himself, with our regiments of Zelaya and Valladolid in his front, the Reyna and Principe cavalry covering the flanks. As I approached the hillock, a body of ten thousand Indians, furious at the murderous fire kept up by the enemy's artillery, rushed forward like a herd of wild buffaloes, bearing down all opposition by their mere mass and weight. The foremost had already reached the guns, and as they had never before in their lives seen such things, what did the poor devils do but take off their straw hats and try [Pg 343] to stop up the mouths of the cannon! Just then up came a regiment of the enemy's cavalry, dashed amongst them, and scattered them like chaff. All was confusion on this part of the line; but our troops in front of the hillock still stood firm and unbroken.

"'Where is he?' enquired a Spanish major, who at that moment rode up beside me, leaning forward in his saddle, his feet firm in the stirrups, his hand clutching his charger's mane. I knew not whom he meant; but he had scarcely uttered the words when he slid gently off his horse into the dust. A bullet had struck him—his race was run. My horse was nearly dead with fatigue. I jumped off and got upon that of the Spaniard. Scarcely was the exchange effected, when I heard a harsh high-toned voice, like that of a gallinazo, issuing from the centre of a cloud of smoke.

"'*Adelante!* Forward!' it cried.

"I knew the tones; they were those of Mexico's destroying angel. I gave my horse the spur; but I was already in the middle of the enemy's lancers, who swept me along with them as a whirlwind does a feather. On a sudden there appeared through the smoke the horses' heads and glittering sabres of the patriot cavalry. There was a crash—a few dozen pistol-shots—a hundred thousand curses; the Spaniards had charged and broken through them.

"'*Adelante!*' again screamed the sharp screeching voice. '*Adelante! Muera la gavilla! Por la honra de su Magestad, y de la santissima Virgen, y del Redentor de Atolnico!*'

"A Spaniard always thinks first of his king, then of the Virgin, and in the last place of his God; and Calleja is a true Spaniard. He was deadly pale, and seemed rather to hang than sit upon his saddle; from his right wrist dangled his sabre; his left hand held a rosary and a relic of some kind, which he kissed repeatedly, while his face was horribly distorted with rage and anxiety.

"The regiments of Zeluya and Valladolid stood like walls; when a man fell, one of the officers sprang from the centre of the square to supply his place.

"'*Adelante, soldados, por la honra de su Magestad!*' croaked Calleja, who was foaming and writhing with fury. At that moment up came another swarm of at least ten thousand Indians from the left wing, eager to seek safety behind the soldiers from the murderous fire of the artillery. The regiment of lancers wheeled to the right, allowed the Indians to pass, and then, lowering their lances, drove the defenceless mob upon the bayonets of their own friends. In an instant the squares were broken. *Adios, Mexico!*

"The cries of rage of the patriots, and the shouts of triumph of our foes, still ring in my ears. Thanks to the goodness of my horse, I escaped the slaughter that ensued: and, taking the road to Guanaxato, soon found myself with Allende, the only one of our generals who had not lost all judgment and presence of mind. But he was no longer the same man; a ghost, a skeleton, was he; the last eight days had turned his hair white. He still hoped, however, to make head against the enemy and save Guanaxato. With five thousand Indians, and eight hundred recruits, he gave them battle. We fought like lions over their whelps—but all in vain! The odds were too great. Hidalgo in his panic had already fled to Guadalajara, and left us in the lurch. We were obliged to follow.

"Four days after the battle of Marfil, Allende said to me—'Jago, for God and the saints' sake, go back to Guanaxato, and see how it fares with the unfortunate city! Go, Jago, for heaven's sake, go!'

"His hair stood on end, and the sweat broke out on his forehead, as he spoke. I understood what was passing in his mind, and shuddered. Taking fifty mounted Indians with me, I set out, though I would as soon have gone to hell itself. Guanaxato had received us on our advance with open arms; fourteen hundred Gachupins had fallen at the storming of the Alhondega. After that, its fate was no longer doubtful. But I had not expected any thing so bad as I found.

"Allende had ordered me to use haste, and I obeyed his orders. On the second day after leaving him, we rode into Burras, four leagues from Guanaxato. A solitary Zamba showed [Pg 344] herself like a spectre at the door of the venta. She was the first human being we had seen during our two days' march, and the only one in the whole village.

"'All is quiet, señores,' said she in a hollow shuddering tone, pointing with her meagre hand towards the neighbouring *cañada*, or gully. I looked into it. Holy God! it was blood red; filled with a crimson slime. It was running with gore.

"'For three days past,' grinned the Zamba, 'it runs thus.'

"I threw away the glass of aguardiente she had brought me, for it smelled of blood. Thousands, hundreds of thousands of gallinazos, coyotes, and zepilots, were arriving from all

quarters, and prowling, running, and flying in the direction of the unfortunate town.

"It was a cool November morning on which we approached Guanaxato; the air was clear and transparent, the heavens were a bright blue; over the cañada there floated a cloud of light greyish vapour that extended a full league; here and there, this vapour seemed to assume a reddish tinge, and then a steam like the smoke of burning sulphur gave such a look of chaos to the atmosphere, that it seemed as if the devils of all the seventeen hells had been roasting beneath. Now and then a flame flickered out of the vapour; it was a foul and revolting spectacle.

"It was over the suburb of Guanaxato, Marfil by name, and over Guanaxato itself, the rich city of 60,000 inhabitants, that this long bank of exhalation hung like a pall. What the place resembled when we entered it, I can hardly say, for Calleja had been there, and had sat in judgment on the devoted town. In city and suburb, in the mines and founderies, all was hushed; not a blow of a hammer was heard, not a wheel was turning; no footsteps nor voice broke the unnatural stillness. We entered the suburb, and the signs of the festival of blood began to multiply themselves; dead bodies became more plentiful; here and there the cañada was choked up with them; while, in other places, broken baggage waggons, dead mules and horses, were lying in picturesque confusion. Wolves and carrion birds were tearing and rending the bodies of the unfortunate patriots. From one wall near the entrance of the town a hundred Indians were hanging; a little further on, a like number had been literally torn in pieces as if by wild horses, and their heads and limbs lay scattered about, so frightfully mangled that even the coyotes turned aside and left them. A fine feast day must that have been for Calleja, thought I—but pshaw! we had as yet seen nothing.

"The bridge over the cañada had been broken down, but a new one replaced it; the piles consisted of human bodies, upon which boards were laid. We were now in the city itself. Truly, they had made clean work of it. Of the thousands of houses that had nestled themselves along the banks of the stream, nought remained but fragments of blackened wall and smoking timber. Among these ruins were other things, fat stinking things, stumps and shapeless masses, which lay scattered, and in some places piled up, amid the reeking embers. We took them at first for stones and pieces of rock; but we were mistaken. They were the roasted carcasses of Guanaxato's wretched inhabitants—hideous lumps! the feet, hands, and heads burnt away, the bodies baked by the fire. In many of the huts, or at least on the places where the huts had stood, heaps of these bodies had burnt together in one pestilential mass, and now emitted an unbearable stench. Not a living human creature to be seen, but thousands of wolves and vultures; although even these neither snarled nor screamed, but seemed almost as if they felt the desolation by which they were surrounded. My Indians did not utter a word; our mules scarcely dared to set their feet down; they pricked their ears, bristled up their manes, refused to advance, stayed, and some even fell. No wonder. Their path lay over corpses!

"We reached the Plaza Mayor. It was there that Calleja had held his chief banquet, and wallowed with his Spaniards in Mexican blood. We waded through a red slime which covered the whole square to the depth of six inches; the bodies were heaped up like maize [Pg 345] sacks. In the Alhondega we found a thousand young girls in a state—God be merciful to our poor souls! The Gachupins had first brutally outraged, and then slain them, but slain them in a manner—*Jesus, Maria, y José!* Can it be true that Spaniards are born of woman? Señores! on the market-place alone, fourteen thousand Mexicans, young women, matrons and children, and men both young and old, had been butchered with every refinement of cruelty. It would have taken too much powder to have shot them, quoth Calleja, and forsooth the rebels were not worth the outlay.

"We had seen enough," continued Jago, over whose cheeks burning tears were now running, while his voice was choked with rage. "It was not the first time we had seen bloodshed, and our stomachs could bear something, but this was too much. We turned back to Guadalajara more dead than alive.

"What followed is scarce worth relating. We strove to make another stand, brought down forty-three cannons from San Blas, and fortified ourselves at the bridge of Calderon; but all in vain! The angel of death had marked us for his prey; Guanaxato had quenched our courage; we were no longer the same men. At one moment there seemed still a chance of victory and revenge. Our Indians, who fought like tigers, although without order or discipline, made a desperate charge upon Calleja's army. The whole line gave way; the fight was won. At that very instant an ammunition-waggon blew up; the Indians thought that Satan himself was come amongst them, were seized with a panic, and took to flight; the Gachupins plucked up courage; a fresh regiment, which Calleja had kept in reserve, charged vigorously. All was over.

"It was plain that Hidalgo's star had set. He fled, poor fellow! was betrayed and delivered up by his own countrymen. But *basta!* The account was closed for the year one thousand eight hundred and eleven."

Chapter the Twentieth.

"Even as they fell, in files they lay;
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain,
Such was the fall of the foremost slain."
Siege of Corinth.

The patriot captain's animated narrative had not failed to make a lively impression on his hearers, at the same time that it worked a remarkable change in his own appearance. Strongly excited by the recollections it called up, the disagreeable and rather mean expression of his tawny physiognomy vanished, his forehead seemed to expand, and a sarcastic and scornful smile that at times played over his features gave him an air of superiority to his hearers, as, with that extraordinary flexibility of organ that is to be remarked in southern nations, he narrated the various stirring events of the first patriot campaign; the struggles and sufferings of his countrymen, the unbounded cruelty and excesses of their ruthless oppressors. There was a pause when he finished speaking, which was shortly broken by the report of a musket in the adjacent wood. Jago started, and listened. A second and a third report followed.

"*Misericordia! Los Gachupinos!*" shouted the captain, springing upon a fragment of rock, and rolling his eyes wildly around. "They are upon us! Run, Mateo, Hippolito! See what they are, and whence they come. Run, I say! Have you lead at your heels?"

The two Zambos set themselves in motion, but presently paused, and seemed unwilling to proceed. Jago drew a small silver whistle from his girdle, and blew it with all the power of his lungs.

"The saints be with us," he exclaimed, "and thou in particular, blessed St Martin! If they come from the direction of Tesmelucos, then are we peppered and salted. Holy Virgin of Guadalupe! A silver candlestick and ten wax tapers, an inch thick, so soon as I can obtain them, if thou wilt deliver us from this strait!" [Pg 346]

He was interrupted in his ejaculations by the sound of a volley of small arms from the wood, and the next instant a herd of half-naked Indians, Metises and Zambos, with scarcely any clothing but sheepskins round their bodies, and straw-hats upon their heads, rushed out from under the trees, closely pursued by the dragoons of the regiment of España, who began to gallop along the edge of the plateau, and surround the open space on all sides. The arrieros, at the very first beginning of the firing, had placed their mules and themselves in safety behind the rock, concealed in the thicket of dwarf-oak and pines. Jago had spoken once or twice to them and to the servants in a low and urgent tone, but his whisperings produced no visible effect.

"*Por todos santos!*" cried he to his Indians, "to the right, children, *Nombre de Dios!* or you are all lost. *Jesus Maria!* they do not hear!"

The unfortunate patriots, who had been surprised during their siesta, now came running out of the wood in great numbers, with the remainder of the squadron of dragoons at their heels. Upon finding themselves cut off from the path down the barranca, they set up a frightful howl, and dispersed to the right and left, vainly endeavouring to escape the troopers, who formed line, and, with furious sabre-cuts, and loud shouts of "Viva el Rey!" drove the fugitives before them like a flock of sheep.

Don Manuel, who remained beside his mules and attendants, had at first witnessed this inhuman hunt with more curiosity than sympathy; but when the dragoons began to cut and slash among the defenceless Indians, the scene evidently became painful to him; his eyes flashed, his cheeks glowed, his features expressed the utmost indignation and anger.

The Indians were caught as in a trap; precipices on the one side, an implacable and bloodthirsty enemy on the other. Each moment dragoons made their appearance out of the wood by ones and twos, driving more fugitives before them. At last, when the latter found themselves pressed together in one dense body, they made a desperate effort to break through their enemies and gain the entrance of the barranca. But the dragoons saw their object, and hastened to frustrate it. Strengthening their ranks on that side, they completely surrounded the Indians, and commenced an indiscriminate and barbarous slaughter. The more the victims sought to escape their persecutors, the more dense became their mass, and the more fatal the blows of the Spaniards. There were between five and six hundred of the patriots. On a sudden, and as if by a general impulse, the unfortunate wretches threw themselves upon their knees, raised their clasped hands, and, in heart-rending tones, sued for mercy.

"*Cuartel! par el amor de Dios, cuartel!*"

"*Buen viage à los infiernos!*" was the savage reply of the dragoons, and heads and hands fell in all directions.

"Infernal villains!" exclaimed Don Manuel, overcome by his indignation at the barbarity of the soldiery. And hardly were the words spoken, when, by an incontrollable impulse, he raised the pistols he still held in his hands, and fired them at the dragoons; then hurrying to one of the mules, he snatched another brace from the holsters attached to the saddle.

"*Por el amor de Dios! Por la santissima madre!* Think of your mother, think of the count, of Elvira!" implored Alonzo, throwing his arms round his young master.

"Stand off!" shouted the youth fiercely; "or by the living God I shoot you on the spot, sooner than let this inhuman butchery continue."

Pushing the servant violently from him, he sprang forward and discharged his two other pistols. Two dragoons fell from their saddles.

"Holy virgin!" exclaimed the old serving man, "he will be the ruin of himself, of his family, of all of us. But it is too late to back out. Take good aim, Pedro, Cosmo." And the three men fired their carbines, while Jago and the muleteers, hastily following their example with their trabucos, half a dozen of the Spaniards bit the dust.

A short pause ensued. The shots from the thicket had come like a thunderbolt upon the [Pg 347] inhuman dragoons and their victims. The latter stared for a few seconds wildly around them, as if uncertain whence came the unexpected succour. Their indecision was put an end to by Jago.

"*Abajo con ellos!*" shouted he in a voice of thunder. "Down with the dogs!"

And at the word, the Indians, rousing from their apathy, threw themselves upon the dead and wounded Spaniards, wrested their weapons from them in spite of the murderous blows of the other dragoons, and in their turn assumed the offensive. Don Manuel's blood was now thoroughly heated with the fight. Every shot that was fired at this elevation of ten thousand feet above the sea, rolled and rattled its echoes round the hills in long-continued thunder, and added to the din and excitement of the scene.

"Are you loaded?" cried the young nobleman, as he shot down the first man of a detachment which was advancing to attack the new foe in his ambush. Servants and muleteers followed his example, five more saddles were emptied, and immediately the Indians threw themselves upon the fallen, regardless of wounds, and seized their sabres and carbines. The fight grew more furious in proportion as the sides became more equal.

"Thanks be to God and to your Señoria, our time is come!" murmured Jago. And with the cry of "Death to the Gachupins!" he sprang from his cover, and fell with a tiger's leap upon the dragoons. The latter began to lose ground; for while twenty patriots, now well armed, found them occupation in front, hundreds of others attacked them on the flanks and in rear, climbing upon the cruppers of the horses, clasping the riders round the body, and dragging them from the saddle. Even the wounded twined their bleeding and mutilated limbs round the horses' legs, and made their sharp teeth meet in the very muscle of the brutes, till the groans of pain of the latter were heard mingling with the cries of the combatants. It was a frightful group; the Indians were become incarnate fiends. The dragoons had no room to use their weapons; they could scarcely move; men and horses were intertwined with Indians, who clung to them like so many anacondas. Hardly ten minutes had elapsed, and there were not thirty men left on their horses.

Don Manuel had beheld with horror this outbreak of Indian fury. Springing forward he shouted to the patriots, in a loud voice, to desist.

"Death to the traitor!" cried the Spanish commandant, who was still fighting desperately at the head of the remnant of his squadron. "*Muera!*" repeated he, as he fired off his last pistol at Manuel. He missed him, and had just raised his sabre to repair the badness of his aim, when a blow from a club brought horse and rider to the ground.

"Hold your hands!" cried the young nobleman. "Hold, and give quarter!"

"*El tiempo de la mansedumbre se ha pasado!*" muttered Jago and his Indians. "The day of mercy is long gone by."

"By the eternal God, I will split the skull of the first who strikes another blow!" shouted Manuel.

But his endeavours to suspend the slaughter were fruitless. His voice was drowned amid the furious yells of the Indians. At that very moment the vesper bells from Cholula came sounding up the mountain, and those of the various villages of the plain chimed in with an indescribably peaceful and soothing harmony.

"Ave Maria!" exclaimed a hundred Indian voices. "Ave Maria!" repeated Metises and Zambos; and all, friends and foes, let their blood-dripping hands sink, and bending their wild, excited gaze upon the earth, clasped and kissed the medals of the Virgin of Guadalupe which were hung round their necks, and in tones of musical monotony began to pray—"Ave Maria, audi nos peccadores!" All heads were bowed, all hands folded; and, kneeling upon the corpses of the slain, these raging foes implored, in humble formula, forgiveness for themselves and their erring fellow-creatures.

The shades of evening had spread themselves over valley and plain; in the barranca it was already darkest night; but the mountains of the Sierra Madre still glowed in the red rays of [Pg 348] the setting sun, their snow-capped summits flaming aloft like gigantic beacons. At the same time multitudes of eagles and vultures rose upon the wing, mingling their screams with the

groans of the dying and the agonized cries of the wounded. Every circumstance seemed to unite to render the scene in the highest degree sublime and horrible.

The bells ceased ringing, and scarcely had the echoes of their last chime died away, when the Indians arose from their devotional posture, gazed at each other for a moment with lowering and significant glances, and then, without uttering a word, sprang upon the few remaining dragoons with an eager rage and greed of blood, that scarcely seemed human. In a few seconds not one of the Spaniards was left alive. To a man they had been stabbed and strangled by their inveterate and unappeasable foes.

The principal incident of the preceding chapter is, we apprehend, of peculiar dramatic merit and boldness of conception. A young nobleman, whose predilections and prejudices are strongly enlisted on the side of the oppressors, has the better feelings of his nature roused into action by the cruelties he sees inflicted on the oppressed, and, forgetful of selfish interests, strikes boldly in on the weaker side. The moment of excitement over, a reaction takes place, the stronger, perhaps, on account of the cruel reprisals exercised by the uncivilized Indians, and still more ferocious half-castes; and while the patriots are rifling the dead bodies of the dragoons, and their chief is reading some papers he has found in the pocket of the Spanish commandant, Don Manuel bitterly deplores the act of precipitation that has blasted all the hopes of his love and ambition.

While the various actors in the scene are thus employed, Jago's practised ear detects a faint murmur and rattle in the barranca, occasioned by the approach of another squadron of cavalry under command of the Conde Carlos. The dragoons, alarmed by the firing, have left their horses below and slung their heavy boots over their shoulders, in order to arrive more speedily to the assistance of their comrades. By a skilful disposition of his Indians, the patriot captain surrounds the Spaniards before they emerge from the difficult road up the barranca, and while they are panting and exhausted with the steep ascent. This is effected in spite of a desperate attempt of Don Manuel to warn them of their danger. At the moment, however, that they are, to all appearance, about to be exterminated by a volley from the patriots, Jago cries out to hold and give quarter, for that they are Creoles and friends. Count Carlos, with a cry of "Viva el Rey!" rushes forward to charge the foe, but his men hang back, and resist all his efforts to make them advance. Jago gives him proofs of the destruction of the other squadron, and offers him and his men their lives, and honourable treatment as prisoners of war. These conditions the Conde is compelled to accept; but, previously to doing so, he demands whose word is plighted to him for their due fulfilment. Jago descends the rocky path, and whispers a few words in his ear, the effect of which is to make Carlos start back and salute the patriot captain with far more respect than a young aristocrat could have been expected to show to a mule-driver.

Considering that neither Spain nor Mexico are very safe countries for Don Manuel after what has occurred, Jago offers to have him put safely on board an English or American vessel; but the young man is too much agitated to decide upon any thing. Preparations are now made to leave the scene of the recent conflict, previously to which, however, many of the dragoons join the ranks of the patriots. To this Count Carlos objects, as contrary to the conditions.

"It is the men's own wish," replied Jago in a jesting tone. "We fight for liberty, Conde, and it were hard measure to refuse it to our new allies."

And smiling significantly, he lifted up his voice and sang—

"Amigos, la libertad
Nos llama a la lid,
Juremos por ella
Morir como el Cid!"

"Good God!" exclaimed the count, "that voice! Pedrillo!"

Before Carlos has recovered from his surprise at recognising the voice of the masked cavalier who played so important a part in the earlier scenes of the book, the patriots divide into three parties, and set off in as many different directions, singing in chorus the song which their leader had commenced. Carlos and Manuel find themselves separated alike from each other, and from the mysterious and Protean patriot captain. We shall attach ourselves to the fortunes of Don Manuel, and extract the chapter which records his night march, and terminates this episode. [Pg 349]

Chapter the Twenty-third.

"Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind,
All human dwellings left behind;
We sped like meteors through the sky,

When with its crackling sound the night
Is chequer'd with the northern light."
Mazeppa.

In the same wild and abrupt manner in which the song had commenced, did it suddenly cease as the party entered the forest, the intricacies and ravines of which it required all their attention to thread with safety. No more torches were left alight than were absolutely necessary to find the way over and along the dangerous fissures and precipices which met them at every turn. Here and there were still to be seen traces of the paths hewn in the rock by the unspeakable labour of Cortes' infatuated allies—paths by which that daring adventurer had brought his handful of men, his horses and guns, over the Sierra, and which had recently conducted the Spanish major and his squadron to their less successful coup-de-main. Hours were consumed in clambering up and down this rough and dangerous ground, and not a word was uttered by the patriots until they arrived in a valley at a considerable distance below the platform they had left. A shrill whistle was then heard, followed by a wild howl resembling that of the caguar, whereupon the party halted a short time, and then again started off at a rapid pace. Their path now led through lofty woods and tangled thickets, overgrown with a mantle of creeping plants, so closely entwined and intricate, that they might well have deterred the most daring hunter from attempting to force a passage. The stunted oaks and pines had been replaced by palm and tamarind trees, the sharp cold had given way to a moderate degree of warmth. Over the adjacent ravines, billows of mist were floating, and from time to time were wafted towards the wanderers by a puff of the night breeze, rendering the darkness that surrounded them yet more intense. Now and then Indians emerged, with rapid but silent step, from the clefts and passes of the mountain, and joined the party; others left it and disappeared with the same noiseless dispatch. No voice was heard, no command given; there was every appearance of the blindest obedience, without any visible chief.

Hitherto our young Don had given no sign of his existence. He had followed mechanically wherever he had been led, over mountain and valley, through ravine and forest, until, on a sudden, the brilliant spectacle of fifty torches, flaring along a rocky ridge, and illuminating the depths of a fearful precipice, roused him into life and consciousness. Before he had time to enquire where he was, or whither they were taking him, a whistle was heard, and at the same moment he was seized by a pair of powerful arms, and placed upon the shoulders of a gigantic Indian, who tucked the young man's legs under his arms, and trotted away with his burden as though it had been a feather.

"*Vigilancia!*" suddenly exclaimed a voice, and the party paused for an instant: in the silence the roar of a mountain torrent was heard, ascending, as it seemed, from the very bowels of the earth. The climate, which had been alternately cold and temperate, as the march had lain over high ground, or through ravines and hollows, had now suddenly become of a tropical heat. [Pg 350]

"Where are we?" enquired Don Manuel of his bearer, as the latter at last sat him down upon his feet.

"*Callad!* Silence!" replied the Indian, pointing down into the depth below, from which a shout was heard, scarcely audible in the noise of the torrent. "*Callad!*" he repeated, as he fixed his lasso dexterously under Don Manuel's arms, and, lifting him over a rock, lowered him to a depth of thirty feet. Himself following by the like means, he perched the young man upon his shoulders in the same unceremonious manner as before, and began a rapid descent into the frightful barranca.

"*Vigilancia!*" cried a voice. "Half a foot's breadth and no more; the Virgin help those who require a whole one."

"*Silencio!*" commanded a second speaker. "Caballitos for the Creoles; a good journey to the Gachupins."

The warning and the command had alike reference to an unhewn tree-trunk thrown across the gulf that was now to be traversed. The order had hardly been given, when Manuel found himself transferred to the shoulders of a fresh Indian, who, without looking to the right or left, trotted, rather than walked over the perilous bridge. In the awful chasm beneath them, the water chafed and roared, concealed from view by the most luxuriant foliage and creeping plants. On the further side of the bridge, several Indians were already standing.

"*Eres Criollo?* Are you a Creole?" said a rough voice in rear of Don Manuel, and then the shaking of the tree-trunk gave notice that a second caballito, with a man upon his back, was accomplishing the dangerous passage. Again the question was put, but this time the answer was scarcely out of the mouth of the unfortunate Spaniard, when the exclamation of "*Maldito, Gachupin!*" and an agonized cry of "*Jesus Maria y José!*" were accompanied by a heavy fall and rattle amongst the branches. Manuel, who was now in safety on the farther side of the barranca, gazed shudderingly after the unhappy wretch, whose death scream rose shrill and wild from the depths of the abyss. Before he had time to utter a word, he was again seized and carried along as rapidly and unceremoniously as if he had been a child of two years' old. A few more single shrieks were heard, each more faint and distant, until at last they ceased altogether.

The heat of the *terra caliente*, which the party had recently entered, began to change rapidly into the cold of the *tierra fria*, while a wreath of white fog round the summit of a neighbouring mountain indicated the approach of dawn. In the barrancas it was still dark night. Here and there appeared heaps of snow, which became more numerous as the climbers ascended, until at last the whole mountain was one field of ice. As the daylight increased, a mass of snow-covered mountain appeared upon the left, spreading out like a huge winding-sheet, while to the right a still loftier peak caught the first beams of the morning sun. But the beams were pale, and the tints grey; all around was mist and icy cold.

"*Por Dios!*" exclaimed Don Manuel; "Where is the Conde Carlos? Where are Alonzo, Cosmo?"

"Forward!" commanded a voice.

"I ask where is the Conde Carlos?" repeated the young nobleman, who remarked, to his horror, that the party, which had set out more than four hundred strong, now consisted only of seventy Indians and twenty or thirty dragoons. He had been unconscious, owing to the darkness and to his agitation of mind, of the separation that had taken place upon the plateau. No answer was vouchsafed to his question. They had arrived at the edge of a deep precipice, which stopped their further progress.

"Lassos!" cried the same voice as before.

One of the Indians fastened the end of his lasso round his own body, gave the ring at the other extremity to a comrade, and was lowered over the precipice. A second lasso was made fast to the ring of the first, a third, a fourth, a fifth were added in like manner, until the Indian had disappeared in the fog, and it was only known by his shout when he had found a [Pg 351] footing. Another Indian, and another, followed in the same way, with as much safety and speed as if they had been so many cotton bales let down from the top floor of a warehouse.

"*Vuestra Señoria*," said one of the patriots to Don Manuel, pointing to this new kind of ladder, and making a sign to an Indian. The next moment the young nobleman also had vanished in the mist. Man followed man, and the last who went down gave each of the five guides a cigar, laid his finger on his lips, and hastened after his companions.

The descent thus strangely commenced, was continued for some time without incident, and the sun was just rising above the mountains, when the patriot detachment came in sight of a moderately deep barranca, along the side of which stood a *rancho*, or Indian village, composed of doorless and windowless huts, built of tree trunks, and thatched with palm leaves. Each of the humble dwellings was surrounded by its cactus hedge, enclosing an infinite variety of gorgeous tropical flowers, which offered a striking contrast with the adjacent poverty and filth. From the elevation on which the patriots stood, a chapel with snow-white walls, buried amidst centenary cypresses, was visible, as also some other buildings of various sizes, apparently belonging to an *hacienda* or plantation.

The party descended rapidly but cautiously towards the village, headed by a young Creole, who now, for the first time during their march, attracted Don Manuel's attention, and under whose unbuttoned frock-coat were visible the blue uniform and white facings of the patriots, and the insignia of a field-officer. The morning mass was just over, and the village alive with Indians—men, women, and children—who crowded round the detachment with joyous welcome and vociferous greetings.

In the midst of the bustle, the sound of voices was suddenly heard approaching the village from the opposite side, and presently the advanced guard of a corps of patriots came in sight. These were followed by several officers of distinguished appearance, clothed in rich staff uniforms, and amongst them the Conde Carlos. Then came the main body, numbering about five hundred men, all well armed and equipped. They were for the most part Indians, Metises, and Zambos from the southern provinces, powerful well-built fellows, who, in spite of their long march, came on with a light step and a proud glance. From time to time there was a shout of "*Viva Vicénte Gueréro! Viva nuestro general!*"

Oddly enough, as it struck Don Manuel, our old acquaintance, Captain Jago, was walking among the brilliant train of staff-officers, still attired in his shabby *manga*, although he had found means to renew the covering of his feet.

"Ah! Don Manuel!" cried he with a somewhat malicious smile, and fixing his eyes on the now tattered shoes and garb of the young cavalier, "You were doubtless not over well-pleased with your last night's march; but we could not help it, and your friend the Count Carlos has fared no better. I trust, however, that my commands were obeyed, and that Major Galeana took all possible care of you?"

"Major Galeana take care of me!" repeated the youth indignantly, his blood again getting up at the remembrance of the rough handling he had experienced.

"My orders have been obeyed, I hope," resumed Jago.

"Thy orders obeyed, knave!" interupted Don Manuel bitterly, without letting Jago finish his phrase.

"Mexico calls me Vicénte Gueréro," was the dry but dignified reply of the ex-arriero; "and henceforward I must beg of your young señoria to address me by that name."

And with these words, the former muleteer, now suddenly transformed into one of Mexico's most distinguished generals, turned his back upon the astonished Don Manuel, amidst the loud laughter of the bystanders.

"Let the men get their breakfast at once," continued Gueréro to Major Galeana, "so that they may have at least three hours' siesta. Be kind enough to give me a cigar," he added to another of his officers. "Ha! there are *tortillas*," laughed he, stepping up to a group of Indian women, who were busied baking the much-esteemed maize cakes, and had crept towards him in order to kiss the hem of his garment. "They are good, Matta," said he, with a smile, to one of the girls, taking a tortilla from the pan, stretching out his hand for the Chili pepper, and sprinkling the cake with the pungent condiment. "One more, Matta. So—try them, gentlemen, you will find them excellent." [Pg 352]

The aides-de-camp and generals hastened to follow the example of their chief.

"Apropos, Major Galeana," resumed the latter; "two Spaniards were caught trying to escape. Let them be strung up. Señor Conde," he continued, turning to his prisoner Carlos, "you are our guest, I hope, and your friend also, if he will so far condescend. But where is he? Where is Don Manuel?"

Common and reckless as Gueréro's manner undoubtedly was, there was, nevertheless, a something about him highly attractive; the more so, as the most superficial observer could easily discern that his abruptness was the result, not of a consciousness of great power, but of a wish to make himself popular with his followers. During the last of the pauses occasioned in his desultory discourse by his attacks upon the maize cakes, an officer came up and made a report, which seemed strongly to interest the general.

"The devil!" cried he. "The Léperos on the heights of Ajotla, say you? Let us have a look at them."

And so saying, he started off at a pace with which not one of his followers was able to keep up, and in a very few minutes had ascended an eminence commanding a distant view of the road from Puebla de los Angeles to the capital, while in the still remoter distance, beyond the lake of Chalco, lay the city of Mexico itself.

From that point a strange sight presented itself. The whole of the wretched class of people called Léperos, the Lazzaroni of New Spain, had evacuated the city and suburbs, and with their wives and children had taken up their station upon the Ajotla road, their legions extending as far as the chain of volcanic hills which on that side of the great Mexican valley, serve as outposts to the Tenochtitlan range.

"Madre de Dios!" cried Gueréro to his officers, as they came up. "Now for three thousand muskets, instead of five hundred, and Mexico would be ours."

"*No sé*," replied an old brigadier-general, "I do not know that."

"*Io lo sé*," said Vicénte Gueréro, "*I* know it; but as things now are, it certainly is impossible. They have two regiments of infantry, only Spanish infantry to be sure, but with the best colonel in the service; and five militia regiments. Yet, give me three thousand muskets and Mexico should be ours. The Léperos are waiting for us."

He paused for a moment and seemed to reflect.

"Pshaw!" added he to his officers, "it cannot be done, Señores! But *paciencia!* before we are ten years older, Mexico shall be free."

And without vouchsafing another glance either to the city or the Léperos, this remarkable man turned away in the direction of the Hacienda.

BRITISH HISTORY DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.[39] [Pg 353]

No effort of genius, or industry, can make the history of England, during the eighteenth century, equal in interest to that of either the seventeenth or nineteenth centuries. By the eighteenth century is meant the period of it ending in 1792: the subsequent eight years begin a new era—the era of Revolutions—which properly belongs to the nineteenth. It was essentially a period of repose. Placed midway between the great religious effort which, commencing in the middle of the sixteenth, was not closed in the British Islands till the end of the seventeenth century, and the not less vehement political struggle which began in the world with the French, or perhaps the American Revolution, and is still in uninterrupted activity, it exhibits a resting-place between the two great schisms which have distracted and distinguished modern times. It wants the ardent zeal, intrepid spirit, and enthusiastic devotion, of the former epoch, not less than the warm aspirations, fierce contests, and extravagant expectations of the latter. Passion had exhausted itself; energy was worn out by

exertion; enthusiasm damped by disappointment. We no longer see men nobly sacrificing themselves for what they deemed the public good; the generous had ceased to obliterate the selfish passions; good sense was the characteristic of the period; a desire for repose its leading principle; selfishness its ruling motive. It is ever so with men, when vehement passions are not awakened, and the ardour of visionary pursuit has not obliterated the desire for immediate gratification.

But if the eighteenth century can never rival the eras of the Reformation and the French Revolution in heart-stirring events, animated narrative, picturesque description, generous devotion, and sanguinary ambition, it is, perhaps, superior to either in the lessons of political wisdom with which it is fraught. It is so because it exhibits on a great scale, and for a long period, the *results* of those changes which had been the subject of that vehement struggle in the two preceding centuries, and enables us to appreciate, by actual experience, the benefits and evils of those great alterations in civil and religious institutions, which, after so long and severe a contest, had at length come to be thoroughly established. The survey is, in some respects, disheartening, but it is instructive; if it dispels many theories and blights much anticipation, it confirms many truths, and has established some principles which will probably never again be questioned. We are not aware that the history of the eighteenth century has ever yet been written in this spirit. It is understood now to be in the hands of learning and genius; let us hope that equanimity and impartial judgment will preside as much as these brilliant qualities in the completion of the great undertaking.

The great passion of the sixteenth century was for religious emancipation. The real evil which it was the object of the Reformation to shake off was the despotism of the Romish priesthood: the freedom for which the Reformers contended was the freedom of the human soul. The immediate object, the exciting cause, indeed, of Luther's movements, was the overthrow of the corrupt sale of indulgences, which, in the time of Leo X., had brought such scandal on the Church of Rome; but religious freedom was the general and durable passion of the Reformation. It was the constrained uniformity of worship, the compulsory unity of belief, the slavish submission to authority, in the dearest concerns of existence, which was the real evil that was complained of. This want, so natural to an age of mental activity, so indispensable to one of advancing freedom, the satisfaction of which is as necessary as vital air to one of general intelligence, distinctly appeared in the forms of worship which the [Pg 354] Reformers generally established when they had thrown off the authority of the Roman pontiff. The Romish liturgies, touching, admirable, and catholic, as great part of them are, were in general abolished; and, in their stead, extempore prayers, often of portentous length, were used, to give each individual minister an opportunity of introducing, in every part of the sacred proceeding, his peculiar tenets. The sermon, for a similar reason, became the longest and most important part of the service. Every one knows how strongly the same lines of distinction still characterize the ultra-Reformers, who contend for the Calvinistic tenets and Presbyterian form of worship, and those more moderate partizans of the Reformation who have embraced the less violent schism of the Church of England.

Political equality was, and still is, the grand aspiration of the nineteenth century. What the ardent multitudes who embraced the principles of the French Revolution desired, was equality of privilege, and universal participation in power. They saw the injustice and cruelty of their former oppressors, they felt how galling their chains had been, and they flattered themselves that, if they could once get possession of the reins of power, they had suffered too severely from their abuse to be in any danger of being led astray in the use they made of them. Abolition of rank and privilege, the opening of all careers to all, and the admission of all into the equal enjoyment of power, by means of a government resting on universal suffrage, was the general object of ambition, and has been established for a brief period in France, Spain, Portugal, and Piedmont; more durably in North and South America. What the results of this system of government are to be, is the great problem which is in the course of solution in the nineteenth century; but be these results fortunate or unfortunate, it is this which constitutes the characteristic of the period, and will form the object of close and anxious attention to historians in future times. It was a principle and basis of government wholly new in human affairs. No previous republic, either in ancient or modern times, had exhibited any approach to it. The seclusion of the great body of the working class, in all the states of antiquity, from any share either in municipal or social powers, by reason of the generality of slavery—the arrangement of men in trades and crafts, through whose heads all their powers were exercised, in the free cities of Italy and Flanders, in modern times, and in general in all the European burghs, necessarily rendered the basis of government in all former commonwealths essentially different. A democratic valley may have existed in Uri or Underwalden, where all the citizens were equally rich in fortune, and nearly equally poor in intelligence; but the example of a great community resting on universal suffrage, and a simple majority of votes, began with the year 1789.

Although the proper democratic spirit existed in great strength in many of the leaders of the Great Rebellion, and its extravagances generally affected the army, and some of the powerful leaders of that convulsion, yet extension of political power was not the object of the *national* will. This is decisively proved by the fact, that when they gained the power, the people made no attempt, in any material respect, to alter the public institutions. Cromwell, doubtless, was a military usurper; but a military usurper is only the head of a warlike republic, and he is constrained to obey the wishes of the soldiers who have elevated him to power. Neither he nor the Long Parliament made any important alterations on the lasting

structure of government, though, for the time, they totally altered its practice. The law was administered on the old precedents during the whole Protectorate. The estates of the malignants were put under sequestration, and many of the church lands were confiscated, but no great alteration in the foundations of government took place. Power, when the military oppression was removed, immediately returned to its former seats. The parliaments summoned by Cromwell proved so refractory, that they were in general dissolved after having sat a few days; juries, throughout his reign, were so hostile to his government that [Pg 355] they acquitted nearly all the state offenders brought before them; and legal prosecutions fell into disuse. Every thing was done by military force; but it never occurred to him to turn up the soil, so as to bring up fresh elements into action:—he never thought of summoning a parliament resting on universal suffrage, or establishing a revolutionary tribunal, the jurors of which were nominated by that democratic assembly. So as the victorious party were allowed to chant hymns as they pleased, and hear long sermons replete with any absurdity, and indulge in the freedom of the pulpit, they cared nothing for that of the press, or altering the structure of government. When Charles II. was recalled by Monk, he had only to issue writs to the counties and boroughs which had returned the Long Parliament, to obtain the most thoroughly loyal commons which ever sat in England.

Although the change of government in 1688 is usually called "the Revolution," and although it certainly was a most decisive overthrow so far as the reigning family was concerned, yet it was by no means a revolution in the sense in which we now understand the word. It made no change in the basis of power in the state, though it altered the dynasty which sat on the throne, and for seventy years fixed the reign of power in the hands of the Whig party, who had been most instrumental in placing William and Mary on it. But the structure of Government remained unchanged; or rather, it was changed only to be rendered more stable and powerful. We owe to the Revolution many of our greatest blessings; but not the least of these has been the removal of the causes of weakness which had so often before, in English history, proved fatal to the throne. It gave us a national debt, a standing army, and a stable foreign policy. The sum annually raised by William in taxes, within five years after he obtained the throne, was triple what had been so much the subject of complaint in the time of Charles I.; but the effect of this was to give us a firm government and steady policy. De Witt had said, in the disgraceful days of the alliance of Charles II. with France, that the changes of English policy had now become so frequent, that no man could rely on any system being continued steadily for two years together. The continental interests and connexions of William, and subsequently of the Hanover family, gave us a durable system of foreign policy, and imprinted, for an hundred and forty years, that steadiness in our councils, without which neither individuals nor nations ever attained either lasting fame or greatness. Nor was it the least blessing consequent upon such a change of external policy, and of the wars which it necessarily induced, that it gave Government the lasting support of a standing army, and thus prevented that ruinous prostration of the executive before the burst of popular passion, which had so often induced the most dreadful disorders in English history. After 1688, the standing army, though inconsiderable compared with what it has since become, was always respectable, and adequate, as the result of the rebellions in 1715 and 1745 demonstrated, to the defence of Government against the most serious domestic dangers. That of itself was an incalculable blessing, and cheaply purchased by the national debt and all the bloodshed of our foreign wars. Had Charles I. possessed five thousand guards, he would at once have crushed the great Rebellion; and the woful oppression of the Long Parliament, which, during the eleven years that it sat, extorted eighty millions, equal to two hundred millions at this time, from an impoverished and bleeding nation, would have been prevented.

Englishmen are not accustomed to pride themselves upon the external successes and military triumphs of the eighteenth century; and they have been so eclipsed by those of the Revolutionary war, that they are now in a great measure thrown into the shade. Yet nothing is more certain than that it is in external success and warlike glory, that, during the seventy years which immediately succeeded the Revolution, we must look for the chief rewards and best vindication of that convulsion. England then took its appropriate place as the head of the Protestant faith, the bulwark of the liberties of Europe. The ambition of the House of [Pg 356] Bourbon, which so nearly proved fatal to them in the person of Louis XIV., became the lasting object of their apprehension and resistance. The heroic steadiness of William, the consummate genius of Marlborough, the ardent spirit of Chatham, won for us the glories of the War of the Succession and of the Seven Years. Though deeply checkered, especially in the American war, with disaster, the eighteenth century was, upon the whole, one of external glory and national advancement. To their honour be it spoken, the Whigs at that period were the party who had the national glory and success at heart, and made the greatest efforts, both on the theatre of arms and of diplomacy, to promote it. The Tories were lukewarm or indifferent to national glory, averse to foreign alliances, and often willing to purchase peace by the abandonment of the chief advantages which war had purchased. During the Revolutionary war the case was just the reverse—the parties mutually changed places. The Tories were the national and patriotic, the Whigs the grumbling and discontented party. Both parties, in both periods, were in reality actuated, perhaps unconsciously, by their party interests—the Whigs were patriotic and national, the Tories backward and lukewarm when the Whigs were in power, and derived lustre from foreign success; the Tories were patriotic and national when they held the reins of government, and the opposite vices had passed over to their antagonists.

But if from the external policy and foreign triumphs of the Whigs during the first sixty years of the eighteenth century, we turn to the domestic government which they established, and the social ameliorations which they introduced, we shall see much less reason to congratulate ourselves on the benefits gained by the Revolution. It is here that the great moral and political lesson of the eighteenth century is to be found; this it is which it behoves our historians to tell; this it is which they have left untold. The long possession of power, after the accession of William and Mary, by the Whig party, which continued uninterrupted for seventy years, and the want of any philosophical history of the period since they were dispossessed of office, have prevented the truth from being boldly told, or even generally known in this country. It is much more generally appreciated, however, by continental writers, and we may rest assured the eyes of future generations will be steadily fixed on it. The danger is, that it will throw discredit on the cause, both of civil and religious freedom, in the eyes of future generations in the world. Let us, in the first instance, boldly, and without seeking to disguise the truth, examine what are the religious and civil evils which have attracted the attention of mankind in Great Britain during the eighteenth century, and then enquire whether they are the necessary result of the Reformation and the Revolution, or have arisen from causes foreign to that of religious and civil freedom—in a word, from the usual intermixture of human selfishness and iniquity with those great convulsions.

The two great evils which have disfigured the reformed church in the British islands, since its final establishment at the Revolution, have been the endless multiplication and unceasing rancour of sects, and the palpable outgrowth of the population beyond the possibility of their gratuitous instruction in religious truth by means of the national church.

The three great evils which have been felt in the political and social world in England during the eighteenth century, are the prodigious, and in general irresistible, power of an oligarchy; the unbounded parliamentary and official corruption by which their influence has been upheld; and the unprecedented spread of pauperism through the working classes of society.

In these days the reality of those evils will probably not be disputed in any quarter; when we have seen the latter lead to the Reform Bill, and the great organic change of 1832, as well as keep the nation, and all serious thinkers in it, in a state of constant anxiety; and the former rend the national church in Scotland asunder; threaten the most serious religious divisions in England, and in both countries permit the growth of a huge body of practical heathens in the midst of a Christian land.

Were these evils the necessary and inevitable result of the Reformation and the Revolution; or have they arisen from causes foreign to these changes, and which, in future times, may be detached from them? The Roman Catholic writers on the Continent all maintain the former opinion, and consider them as the necessary effect and just punishment of the great schism from the church; which, by a natural consequence, ended in civil convulsion, public immorality, and social distress. The English writers have, hitherto, rather avoided than grappled with the subject; they have rather denied the existence of the evils, than sought to account for them. Let us consider to what cause these unquestionable evils of the eighteenth century are really to be ascribed. [Pg 357]

They know little of the human heart who expect that, in an age and country where religion *is at all thought of*, sects and religious differences will not prevail. As well might you expect that, in a free community, political parties are to be unknown. Truth, indeed, is one and the same in all ages; but so also is the light of the sun; yet, in how many different hues, and under how many different appearances, does it manifest itself in the world? In the smoky city, and on the clear mountain; on the sandy desert, and in the stagnant marsh; radiant with the warmth of July, or faintly piercing the gloom of December. So various are the capacities, feelings, emotions, and dispositions of men, that, on any subject which really interests them, diversity of opinion is as inevitable as difference in their countenances, stature, character, fortune, and state in the world. Hence it was that our Saviour said he came to bring not peace on earth, but a sword—to divide the father from the son, to array the mother against the daughter. It will be so to the end of the world. Unity of opinion on political subjects seems to prevail under Asiatic despotism; in religious, under the European papacy—but nowhere else. The conclusion to be drawn from the absence of all theological disputes in a community, is, not that all think alike on religion, but that none think at all.

But although no rational man who knows the human heart will ever express a wish to see entire religious unity prevail in a state, yet there can be no question, that the prodigious multiplication of sects in Britain, which strikes foreigners with such astonishment, is mainly to be ascribed, as well as the immense mass of civilized heathenism which, through the whole of the eighteenth century, was growing up in the island, to the iniquitous confiscation of the property of the church which took place at the Reformation. It is well known that the proportion of the tithes of England which belongs to lay impropriators, is more considerable than that which is still in the hands of the church; and if to them is added the abbey and monastery lands, they would by this time have amounted to a very large annual sum, probably not less than six or seven millions a-year. In Scotland, it is well known, the church lands at the Reformation were about a third of the whole landed property. They would now, therefore, have produced £1,700,000 a-year, as the entire rental is somewhat above five millions. What a noble fund here existed, formed and set apart by the piety and charity of former ages, for the service of the altar and of the poor—two causes which God hath joined,

and no man should put asunder! What incalculable good would it have done, if it had been preserved sacred for its proper destination—sacred from the corruptions, mummery, and despotism of the Romish church, but preserved inviolate for the support of religion, the relief of suffering, the spread of education! What is it which blights and paralyses all the efforts now made, whether by individuals, voluntary associations, or the state, for the attainment of those truly godlike objects? Is it not ever one thing—the practical impossibility of finding the requisite funds to support the institutions necessary to grapple with the evils, on a scale at all commensurate to their magnitude? The Established Church could not spread for want of funds to erect and endow churches; meanwhile the population in the manufacturing districts and great towns was rapidly increasing, and, in consequence, part of the people took refuge in the divisions of dissent, part in the oblivion of practical heathenism. Thence the multiplication of sects, the spread of pauperism, the growth of civilized heathenism in the state. The poor-laws dated from the dissolution of the monasteries; the forty-second of Elizabeth stands a durable record of the real origin of that burdensome tax. It was the appropriation of the funds of religion and charity to the gratification of secular rapacity, which has been the cause of the chief religious and social evils under which Great Britain has ever since laboured; and it is it which still presents an invincible obstacle to all the efforts which are made for their removal. [Pg 358]

But the confiscation of the church lands and tithes to the use of the temporal nobility was not a necessary part of the Reformation, any more than the confiscation of the estates of the church and the emigrants was a necessary step in the progress of freedom in France. In both cases, the iniquitous spoliation was the result of human wickedness mingling with the current, and taking advantage of the generous effort for religious or civil emancipation on the part of the many, to render it the means of achieving individual robbery for behoof of the few. The Reformation might have been established in the utmost purity in Great Britain, without one shilling being diverted from the service of the church, or the maintenance of the poor, and with the preservation of a fund large enough to have provided for the permanent support of the unfortunate, and the progressive extension of the Established Church, in proportion to the increase and wants of the inhabitants. In like manner, the Revolution might have been conducted to a successful and probably bloodless termination in France, without the unutterable present misery and hopeless ultimate prostration of religion and freedom, which resulted from the confiscations of the Convention, and the division of all the land in the kingdom among the peasants. In neither case are we justified in stigmatizing the cause of freedom, on account of the dreadful excesses which were committed by the selfish who joined in its support; but in both we must acknowledge the impartial justice of Providence, which has made the iniquity of men work out their own appropriate and well-deserved punishments, and has made it to descend to the third and fourth generations from those who committed or permitted the deeds of injustice.

The power of the oligarchy, which resulted from the Revolution of 1688, and the unbounded corruption by which, for seventy years afterwards, their power was maintained, has been less the subject of observation or censure by subsequent writers, for the very obvious reason that the popular party, who had gained the victory at the Revolution, were during all that period in power, and they have been in no hurry to expose or decry these degrading, but to them most profitable, abuses. It is probable that they never would have been brought to light at all, but would have quietly and irrevocably sapped the foundations of the British character and of British greatness, had it not been that, fortunately for the country, the incubus of corrupting Whig aristocracy was thrown off by George III. and Lord Bute, in 1761, and cast down by the same monarch and Mr Pitt, in 1784; and, in their rage and disappointment, they exposed, when practised by their opponents, the well-known, and, to them, long profitable abuses, by which the government, since the Revolution, had been carried on. It is the revelations on this subject which have recently issued from the press, which have cast so broad, and, to the philosophic historian, so important a light on the history of the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century; and among them, the letters and memoirs of Horace Walpole occupy a distinguished place. Certainly it was far from the intention of that able and witty annalist to illustrate the unbounded abuses, so long practised by Sir Robert Walpole and the Whigs who preceded him, nor the vast blessings conferred upon the country by George III. and Lord Bute, who first broke through the degrading spell. We have heard little of this view of the subject from the able and learned Whigs who have reviewed his works. Yet it lies on the very surface of things, and little need be said, and still less learned, to show that it is there that the turning-point and great political moral of the history of England, during the eighteenth century, is to be found. [Pg 359]

The truth on this subject could not so long have been kept out of view, had it not been that, till very recently, no historian at all worthy of the name has approached the subject of English history during the eighteenth century. The immortal work of Hume, as all the world knows, comes down only to the Revolution of 1688; and of the subsequent period, down to that when his history was written, in 1760, he has told us only that the monopoly of offices, places, and opinions, by the dominant Whig party, had been so close and uninterrupted, that it had well-nigh rendered it impossible to arrive at the truth on the subject. Smollett, whose continuation of Hume is to be seen in every bookseller's window beside its great predecessor, is wholly unworthy of the honourable place which chance, and the neglect of others, have hitherto assigned it. Admirable as a novelist—at least as that character was understood in those days—graphic, entertaining, humourous—Smollett had none of the qualities necessary for a historian. He was neither a soldier nor an orator, a poet nor a

philosopher. The campaigns of Marlborough, the eloquence of Chatham, were alike lost upon him. He was neither warmed by the victory of Blenheim nor the death of Wolfe: the adventures of Charles Edward and the disasters of Saratoga, were narrated with the same imperturbable phlegm. As to philosophic views of the progress of society, or the social and political effects of the Revolution of 1688 and the Reformation, the thing was out of the question: it neither belonged to his age nor character, to dream of any thing of the kind. He was, in his history at least, a mere bookseller's hack, who compiled a very dull and uninteresting work from the information, scanty during his period, which the *Annual Register* and *Parliamentary History* afforded. If a greater annalist than he do not arise to do justice to his merits, the fame even of Marlborough will never descend, at least in its full proportions, to future generations.

It is deeply to be regretted that Sir James Mackintosh did not complete his long-cherished design of continuing Hume's history. No man, since Hume's time, possessed so many qualifications for the undertaking. To an incomparable talent for depicting character, and a luminous philosophic mind, he joined great erudition, extensive knowledge, and a practical acquaintance both with statesmen and ordinary life. Though he was a party man, and had early taken, in his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, a decided part against Burke, in apology of the French Revolution, yet he possessed great candour of mind, and had magnanimity enough, in maturer years, to admit, that he had been far led astray in early life by the inexperience and ardour of youth. When a man possesses this equanimity and justice of mind, it is wholly immaterial to what political party he belongs, and with what preconceived opinions he undertakes the task of narrating events. Truth will shine out in every page—justice will preside over every decision—facts will inevitably lead to the correct conclusion. It is perverted genius, skilful partisanship, imagination brought to the aid of party, and learning dedicated to the support of delusion, which is really to be dreaded. Mackintosh's mind was essentially philosophical: this appears in every page of his Life by his sons—one of the most interesting pieces of biography in the English language. His characters of statesmen, orators, and poets, in England during the eighteenth century, chiefly written at Bombay, or during the voyage home, are perhaps unparalleled in our language for justice and felicity. They show how richly stored his mind was; how correctly his taste had been formed on the best models; how vast a stock of images, comparisons, and associations, he brought to bear on the events and characters which he passed in survey. He had not a poetical mind, and was destitute of a pictorial eye. His history, therefore, never would have been adorned by those moving scenes, those graphic pictures, which are the life and soul of the highest style of history, and which have given immortality to the writings of Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus. But the eighteenth century, though by no means destitute of events calling for such imaginative [Pg 360] powers, has perhaps less of them than any equal period in English history. What is mainly required for it is a philosophic mind, to appreciate the effects of the great convulsions of the preceding century, and an impartial judgment, to discern the causes which were preparing the still more terrible catastrophe of the nineteenth. Mackintosh possessed these great and valuable qualities in a very high degree; and his history, if he had succeeded in completing it, would unquestionably have taken its place with those of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon. The thing really to be lamented is, that the time which Providence allotted to him, and which was amply sufficient for the completion even of so great an undertaking, was wasted amidst the attractions and frivolity of high London society; and that, more even than the heroic Swede in captivity, he was

> "Condemn'd a needy suppliant to wait,
> While ladies interpose, and slaves debate."

Lord Mahon has conferred essential obligations on English history. He has brought to the annals of the British empire during the eighteenth century, qualities nearly the reverse of those of Mackintosh, but which are, nevertheless, not less essential than those of the Scotch philosopher, for a right appreciation and correct delineation of the period. He is a scholar, a gentleman, and a man of the world. Possessed of great knowledge of his subject, vigorous application, and a classical turn of expression, he has united to these qualities those, in historical writers, still rarer, of a practical acquaintance with statesmen, both in Parliament and private life, and a thorough knowledge of the leading public characters, both military, literary, and dignified, of his own time. Every one must see what valuable qualities these are, for a correct appreciation and faithful narrative of the history of England during the eighteenth century—great part of which was not distinguished by any enthusiasm or impulse in the public mind, and during which the springs of events were to be found rather in the intrigues of the court, the coteries of the nobility, or the cabals of Parliament, than in any great movements of the people, or mighty heaves of the human mind. In truth, no one but a person moving in the sphere and possessed of the connexions which Lord Mahon enjoys, could either obtain the knowledge, or understand the real springs of events, during a great part of the period he has embraced in his work. But still the history of the eighteenth century remains to be written. Lord Mahon has remarkable talents as a biographer; his account of the Rebellion in 1745, and subsequent adventures of Charles Edward, is not surpassed in interest by any thing in the English language, and is justly referred to by Sismondi, in his *History of France*, as by far the best account of that interesting episode in British history. But his *History of England* are "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire," rather than history itself. We want in his pages the general views drawn from particular facts, the conclusions applicable to all ages, which mark the philosophic historian. His volumes will always occupy a distinguished place in English literature, and will prove of essential service

to every succeeding writer who may undertake to treat of the period which they embrace; but the mantle of Hume is destined to fall on other shoulders.

Walpole's correspondence and memoirs, in many respects, are highly valuable, and will always be referred to, as throwing much important light on the parliamentary and court transactions of the middle of the eighteenth century. They develope much that was known to no other man, at least to no other with whose writings we are yet acquainted, who has left any record of his information to future times. In this respect, his memoirs are invaluable. It is astonishing how much information there is afloat in the higher political circles, in every age, which is generally known at the time to all who frequent them, which, on that very account, perishes altogether with that generation. No one thinks of committing it to paper any more than they do the stages to London, or the names of the months in the year, or the usual forms of society—because every one knows them. Thus the information, often of essential value to future historians, perishes like the beauty of the women which has [Pg 361] adorned the age, unless some garrulous gossip, in his correspondence or memoirs, has been trifling enough for his age, and wise enough for the next, to commit it to paper. Horace Walpole was that garrulous gossip. His correspondence with Sir H. Mann, embracing altogether a period of twenty years, which had previously been published, and his *Memoirs of the Reign of George III.*, which have recently appeared, contain an account, tinged no doubt by strong party feelings, but still an account of a very long and important period of English history; and abound not only in curious facts, interesting to the antiquary or the biographer, but contain many important revelations of essential value to the national or general historian of the period.

The praise of these volumes, however, must be taken with much alloy. Horace Walpole was a man of the world and a courtier; he had quick natural parts and much acquired discernment. He was a good scholar, was fond of antiquities, and a passionate admirer of curiosities, which he collected with indefatigable industry, and no small success, from every quarter. He had lived too long in the political and the great world not to have learned its selfishness and appreciated its heartlessness; not to have become acquainted with many political secrets, and seen enough of political baseness. He had considerable powers of observation, and occasionally makes a profound remark, especially on the selfish tendencies and the secret springs of the human heart. His characters are all drawn from the life; and often with great power both of observation and expression. But he had not sufficient steadiness of thought or purpose to achieve any thing considerable, or draw any important conclusions even from the multifarious information of which he was master, or the powers of observation which he possessed. There was nothing grand or generous in his composition. No elevated thoughts, no lofty aspirations, no patriotic resolves, are visible in his writings. Political *insouciance* was his prevailing habitude of mind; an invincible tendency to "*laissez aller*" the basis of his character. But he did not lie by and observe events, like Metternich and Talleyrand, to become embued with their tendency, and ultimately gain the mastery of them; he let them take their course, and in reality cared very little for the result. He was an epicurean, not a stoic, in politics. His character approaches very nearly to that which common report has assigned to Lord Melbourne. He had strong party attachments, and still stronger party antipathies; he seems to have devoutly swallowed the creed so common to party men of every age, that all those on his side were noble and virtuous, and all those against him, base and selfish. He had much of the wit of Erasmus, but he had also a full share of his aversion to martyrdom. But we shall find abundance of patriotic declamation, cutting invective, and querulous complaint. The misfortune is, that the declamation is always against the triumph of the Tories; the invective against the astuteness of Lord Bute; the complaint against the disunion of the Whig leaders, or the Tory influences at court.

There is class of readers considerable among men, numerous among women, in whom the appetite for scandal is so strong, that it altogether overleaps the bounds of time and faction, and seizes with nearly as much avidity on the private gossip of the past as of the present age. With such persons, the next best thing to discovering a *faux pas* among their acquaintances, is to hear of it among their grandmothers; the greatest comfort, next to laying bare political baseness in their rulers, is to discover it in the government which ruled their fathers. We confess we do not belong to this class. We have little taste for scandal, either in the male or female great world. We see so much of selfishness, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, around us, that their details have not only entirely lost the charm of novelty, but become absolutely sickening by repetition. To such readers the first volume of Wraxall's Memoirs must be a precious morsel. We never doubted that the anecdotes he told were in the main true, from the moment we saw the *Quarterly* and [Pg 362] *Edinburgh Reviews* combined in running him down. Nothing but truth could have produced so portentous an alliance. They combined in saying that what he said was a libel. Doubtless they were right, upon the principle, that the greater the truth the greater the libel. To such readers we would strongly recommend the *Memoirs and Correspondence of Walpole*. They will find a mass of scandal adequate to satiate the most voracious appetite; evidence of general corruption sufficient to satisfy the most vehement political opponent.

It is in the evidence which these volumes afford, of the general corruption of Great Britain during the greater part of the eighteenth century, that, in our humble opinion, the most valuable lesson of political wisdom is to be found which that period conveys. We rise from the long series of his amusing volumes with the firm conviction, that in his days all parties were base, and all statesmen in a certain sense corrupt. They absolutely render the common

story credible, that during the days of Sir R. Walpole, when the members of Parliament were invited to dine with the prime-minister, each found a L.500 bank-note under his napkin, when he took it off his plate at dinner. At any rate the long, and in many respects beneficent, reign of that veteran statesman was maintained entirely by patronage and corruption. Horace Walpole himself tells us that it was commonly said, at the accession of George III. in 1761, that the country was governed by two hundred noblemen, who received more from the government than they gave to it. The influence of these two hundred noblemen, in their respective counties or boroughs, was maintained by the most unsparing use, sometimes of actual bribery, always of government patronage, to secure the adherence of every political partisan, even of the very lowest grade. With truth it might be said of England at that time, as it was of France before the Revolution, that "no one was so great as to be beyond the hatred of a minister, nor so little as to escape the notice of a comptroller of excise." Every office in the state, from the prime minister down to the humblest *employé* in the post-office or customs, was conferred to secure the fidelity of political supporters. Liberality to opponents, the public good, fair dealing, the claims of long service to the country, destitution, charity, noble descent, patriotic conduct, were alike scouted, and by common consent banished from the consideration of public men. Political support was the one thing needful; and to secure it nothing was grudged, without it nothing was to be got. Johnson's well-known definition of an exciseman, shows the profound indignation which this universal and unsparing system of corruption excited, among the few resolute and generous spirits which its long continuance had left in the country. We heard nothing of the evils of this system from the Whigs, during the seventy years subsequent to the Revolution, when it was practised by themselves; but we have heard enough of it from them since that time, when the state machine they had erected has been worked by their opponents.

The Emperor Nicholas said to the Marquis Custine, with much bitterness and some truth—"I can understand a democracy, where the popular voice is every thing, and the magistrates implicitly obey its mandates. I can understand a despotism, where the monarch's voice is every thing, and the people merely obey his commands. But a constitutional monarchy, where the people are mocked by a show of liberty which they do not possess, and bribed into submission by corruption, by which they are really degraded—that I do not understand, and I hope in God never again to see it. I had enough of it in the government of Poland." Amidst all the blessings of a limited and representative monarchy, which no one who surveys the mighty empire of Great Britain can dispute, there is, it must be confessed, some truth in this caustic remark. Walpole has told us of the astonishing extent to which corruption was carried in his day, by Lord Bute and the Tories, who got possession of the corrupting government in 1761, which the Whigs had been constructing since 1688. The untoward issue of the war, which terminated in 1749 in the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the disgraceful commencement of the Seven Years' War, unjustly expiated by the blood of Byng, gloriously redeemed by the genius of Chatham; the disasters of the American contest; the frequent defeats of the first years of the Revolutionary war, afford decisive evidence how deeply this degrading and corrupting system had entered into the vitals of the nation during the eighteenth century. Every one knows that America was lost in consequence of the imbecility and selfish views of the commanders, whom the corrupt system of government in Great Britain had raised to the head of affairs. On several occasions, they might, with a little energy, have terminated the war with glory to themselves and their country. The disasters of Flanders, in 1793 and 1794, were in a great measure owing to the same cause. During peace, influential imbecility is constantly rising to the head of affairs, and the consequences immediately appear on the first breaking out of hostilities. Nothing but the pressure and disasters of war, can drive government out of the inveterate vice of purchasing parliamentary support by the promotion of incapable and improper persons. The Whigs, since they were driven from the helm of affairs in 1761, have been constantly declaiming against this system, which they themselves had introduced and matured during the preceding seventy years; and the clamour they raised at last became so violent, that it brought about the great organic change of 1832. But no sooner were they again seated in power, than the same system was not only pursued by them, but extended: patronage was augmented in every possible way; a new machine for influence, adapted to the time—that of commissions—was introduced and largely worked, and promotions in every department were rigidly confined to political partisans. It has been a frequent subject of complaint against the Tory government, both before the Revolution of 1832, and on their return to power in 1841, that they were too liberal to their opponents, and forgetful of their friends, in the dispensing of the public patronage; and we have only to take up the Red Book, to see that this praise or imputation justly belongs to them. But no man alive ever heard of a Whig, during the ten years they were in power, being accused of giving any thing to a Tory. The saying, which had passed into a proverb during that period, that "the Whigs could do with impunity many things to which the Tories could never set their faces," proves how rapidly this degrading system of official corruption was again spreading, during the Whig tenure of power, in domestic government. The disasters of Affghanistan, the shaking of our power in India, the abortive first two years' hostilities with China, show with what dreadful danger it was attended to our external power and even national existence.

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We have said that it is the decisive mark of a party writer to ascribe political and private vices to his opponents, from which he represents his own side as exempt; and we have immediately afterwards said, that the wide-spread corruption, and constant promotion of influential imbecility, which, ever since 1688, has been the bane of Great Britain, and the

chief, if not the sole, cause of all the disasters we have undergone, and of nine-tenths of the debts we have contracted, is mainly to be ascribed to the Whigs, who, during the long period of seventy years, immediately subsequent to the Revolution, were exclusively in power, and had the entire moulding of the constitution, both in church and state, in their hands. Having taken the mote out of our neighbour's eye, we proceed to take the beam out of our own. We hasten to show that we do not ascribe greater political baseness to one party than another. We will not follow the example of Walpole, who represents Chatham, and all his Whig followers, as patriotic angels; Bute, and all his Tory supporters, as selfish devils. We assume it as the basis of all just or rational historical discussion, that, though there may be a wide and most important difference in the beneficial or ruinous effects with which their measures are attended, the real character, the moral purity of the motives, of men of opposite parties, in the same age, is much alike. There is, indeed, a wide difference in the virtue and public spirit of different ages, and of men in the same community, under different circumstances; [Pg 364] but in the same age, and under the same circumstances, they are very like similar.

The patriotism of Regulus and Fabricius was very different from that which followed the insurrection of the Gracchi; but Sylla and Marius, Cæsar and Pompey, differed, if their real motives are considered, very little from each other. The same result would probably have followed the triumphs of either. There is no such thing as all the sheep being on one side and all the goats on another, in the same country at the same time. The proportion of good and bad men, of generous and base motives, among the Roundheads and Cavaliers, was much the same. The cabal which was framing a government of despotic power for Charles II., was doubtless selfish and tyrannical; but Algernon Sidney, and the whole patriots who opposed them, except Lord Russell, were quietly taking, the whole time, bribes from Louis XIV. Severity was doubtless exercised in the punishment of the leaders, some of whom were noble and high-minded men, of the Rye-House Plot; but that was only in retaliation of the still greater atrocities consequent on the fictitious Popish plots, and the perjury of Titus Oates. The Revolution of 1688 was, doubtless, brought about, as a whole, by necessity and patriotic intentions; but Churchill proved a traitor to his benefactor and king, and betrayed his trust to promote that revolution—a crime as deep as that for which Ney justly suffered in the gardens of the Luxembourg—and the blackness of which all the glories of Marlborough have not been able to efface. The government of Lord Bute and Lord North was doubtless mainly based on the influence of official or parliamentary patronage, and the evils of that corruption clearly appeared in the disasters of the American war; but these Tory noblemen only carried on the system invented and brought to perfection, during the seventy years that the Whigs had enjoyed a monopoly of power.

It is a first principle, says Sismondi, in politics, that all classes which have not constitutionally the means of resistance, will be oppressed. There can be no doubt that this is true; and it is not less true, that all power which is not systematically watched, will become corrupt. It is these principles which explain the universal and wide-spread corruption which overran the country for a century after the Revolution; and they point to a conclusion of the very highest importance in political science. Direct or tyrannical power, by means of the prerogative, or the simple will, of the sovereign, having become impossible, in consequence of the safeguards established by the Great Rebellion and the Revolution, and the disposition to tyranny and abuse remaining the same, from the corrupt tendency of the human heart, the system of gaining a majority, both in Parliament and in the constituencies, by means of government influence and official corruption, became the acknowledged, and probably unavoidable, basis of government. During the seventy years that the Whigs were in power, they brought this system to perfection, and extended its ramifications into the remotest corners of the kingdom. A majority of the House of Peers, in the Whig interest, amply provided with emoluments, offices, and dignities, got possession of so many boroughs and counties, that they secured a majority in the Commons also, and got the entire command of government. The sovereigns on the throne—men of little capacity, imperfectly acquainted with English, unable, from that cause, even to preside at the meetings of their own cabinet, and strongly opposed by an ardent and generous, because disinterested, party in the country—became mere puppets in their hands, and rendered the crown nearly destitute of all real or independent weight in the kingdom.

The natural check in a free country upon this corrupt system, into which every constitutional monarchy has so strong a tendency to run, is found in the vigorous opposition and incessant watchfulness of the people. It is this which has been so powerful a restraint upon the abuses of government during the last half century; and which has now become so strong, that the common complaint is, that, in all important appointments at least, the Tory ministry are forgetful of their friends, and select the persons to be appointed from the ranks of their [Pg 365] enemies. But this salutary check upon bad government did not exist during the first half of the eighteenth century; or rather, it existed only to fan and augment the inclination, already sufficiently strong, to corrupt administration on the part of the Whig oligarchy, who had got possession of the helm. The popular party were now in power; their leaders had the disposal of every thing, and therefore not a whisper escaped their lips, as to the degrading system which was so fast spreading in the country. The Tories, who were in opposition, were a discredited and defeated party. They had got into ugly company—they had the axe impending over them. The unsuccessful result of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, had, as is always the case, not only greatly augmented the strength of the ruling government, but it had rendered the Tories, who were in great part, and probably justly, suspected of a leaning to the rebels, to the last degree obnoxious to a large majority of the English people.

Religious feeling combined with political antipathy and personal terror to produce this emotion. The Tories were associated, in the popular mind, with Jacobites and rebels; with Popish mummery and national antipathy; with the fires of Smithfield and the defeat of Prestonpans; with Scotch ascendency and revenge for the blood shed at Carlisle; with breechless Highlanders and Protestant confiscation. Thus the Tories, as a popular party, capable of exercising any effective control on the vices and corruptions of administration, were practically extinct. Meanwhile, the popular party in England, steeped in corruption, and gorged with the spoils of the state, which the expensive system of government, introduced with the Revolution, had done so much to augment, was effectually gagged, and was enjoying its lucrative abuses in silence. This is the true explanation and real cause of the prodigious corruptions which pervaded every department of the state, and—what was worse—every class in the country during the seventy years which followed the Revolution, and which had wellnigh proved fatal to all patriotic spirit, or public virtue in England. The two powers, that of the government and the people, usually opposing each other, had come to draw in the same direction, and they raised between them a spring-tide of corruption, which wellnigh submerged the state.

There can be no question, that if this degrading system of government—the necessary and never-failing result of successful revolution—had continued for a generation longer, it would have proved altogether fatal to Great Britain. But, fortunately for the country, George III. and his advisers, from the very first moment of his accession to the throne, set his face against the party which had introduced and matured this system of government; and their efforts, though after a severe struggle, were successful. This was the turning-point of English history; upon the success of that attempt, the future character of the government and of the people mainly depended. It, for the first time since the Revolution, restored the government to its proper position—it rested it, in its ultimate effects, on property, and put numbers in opposition. This is the only proper basis of good government—for without property ruling, there can be no stability in administration; and without numbers watching, there is no security against the multiplication of abuses. The corrupt system of Sir R. Walpole, and the preceding administrations, had arisen from the popular party—that is, numbers—having become the ruling power, and of course appropriated to themselves the whole spoils of the state. Instantly their watching became equal to nothing, and every abuse was perpetrated without either exposure or complaint. There were no Wilkeses nor Juniuses, to lash the vices of administration, from 1688 to 1761, when the Whigs were in power; though that was beyond all question the most corrupt period of English history. But they appeared fast enough, and did infinite good, as soon as the Tories got possession of the public treasury. This is the true secret of the unbounded corruption of the government of the Convention and Directory in France—of the rapid return to a corrupt system during the ten years of Whig power which succeeded the downfall of the Tories in 1830, and of the [Pg 366] establishment of Louis Philippe's dynasty, now, on the basis of one hundred and thirty-eight thousand offices, which Tocqueville tells us are at the disposal of the ruling power at the Tuileries. It is not that the popular leaders are worse men, or by nature more inclined to evil, than their Conservative opponents, but that, when they are elevated into power by the result of a revolution or social convulsion, the controlling has become the ruling power; its leaders and followers alike profit by corruption and mal-administration; and therefore there is no longer any possible restraint on abuse. It is not that the Conservative leaders are by nature better men, or more inclined to eschew evil and do good than their popular opponents: but that, as the basis of their government is property, which necessarily is vested in comparatively few hands, they are of course opposed and narrowly watched by numbers; and thus they are deterred from doing evil, from the dread of its consequences recoiling upon themselves. And this observation explains the cause of the remark by Montesquieu, which the experience of all ages has proved to be well founded, "that the most degrading despotisms recorded in history have been those which have immediately followed a successful revolution."

The clearest proof of how strongly, and all but indelibly, corruption and abuses had become engrained, as it were, on the practice of the English constitution, is to be found in their long continuance and pernicious effects after the popular party had been thrown back to their proper duty of watching and checking the abuses of government, and despite the prodigious efforts which were made, and the vast talent which was exerted, to expose and decry it. Walpole tells us enough of the corrupt means by which Lord Bute's authority was maintained, and of the discreditable intrigues by which succeeding administrations were raised up and cast down. Wilkes and Junius exposed, in cutting libels, and with caustic severity, their real or supposed continuance in a subsequent part of the reign of George III.; Burke and Fox declaimed in a voice of thunder against the vices of Lord North's administration; and the disasters of that untoward period demonstrate but too clearly, that the radical vice of parliamentary influence had almost banished talent and ability from the public service. Every one knows that commissions in the army and navy were bestowed on children, as the mere price of support to government; and that, when the little hirelings of corruption were sent forth into the public service, they were utterly ignorant, for the most part, of even the most elementary parts of their duty. The same system continued during the early years of the Revolutionary war: and we all know with what disastrous effects it was then attended. But the Whig orators and patriots, with all their acuteness and zeal, forgot to tell us one thing, which, however, it most behoved them to have told—and that is, that it was themselves who had formed and habituated the nation to this degrading system. They have

forgot to tell us that they had the framing of the constitution in church and state, after the Revolution of 1688; that their power was, for above a century, entirely paramount; and that, if the system of government had come, during that time, to rest on corrupt influences, it was they, and they alone, who are responsible for the practical moulding of the constitution into such a form.

No man who knows the human heart, or has had any experience, either of public characters in his own, or historic shades in any former age, will suppose that the Conservative party are more inclined in their hearts to pure and virtuous administration than their popular opponents; but, nevertheless, there can be no question that their government, generally speaking, is much more pure, and its effects far more beneficial. Decisive proof of this exists in English history during the nineteenth century. It took nearly forty years of incessant effort on the part of the Whigs to eradicate the harvest of corruption which sprang up since 1761, from the seeds so profusely sown by their predecessors during the seventy years before that period; and unless they had been aided by the disasters of the American, and the perilous [Pg 367] chances of the Revolutionary contest, it is probable all their efforts would have been unsuccessful. But when, by the firmness of George III., and the talent of Mr Pitt, the contest for political supremacy was at an end, and government was rested on its true basis—that of property being the ruling, and numbers the controlling power—when the Tory party, freed from the influence of their old Jacobite recollections, had rallied with sincere loyalty round the throne, and the Whigs, having lost the glittering prospect of a return to power and corruption, had been driven to seek for support in the passions of the people, what a marvellous display of public virtue and strength did the empire afford! Search the annals of the world, you will find nothing superior, few things equal, to the patriotism, public spirit, and generous devotion of the latter period of the Revolutionary war. Its unequalled triumphs prove this; the biographies of its great men, which are daily issuing from the press, show from what a noble and elevated spirit these triumphs had sprung. They conquered because they were worthy to conquer. The burning patriotism of Nelson; the prophetic courage of Pitt; the spotless heart of Collingwood; the stern resolves of St Vincent; the steady judgment of Eldon; the moral firmness of Castlereagh; the unconquerable resolution of Wellington, shine forth as the most conspicuous ornaments of this brilliant period. But these men, great as they were, did not stand alone. They were in prominent situations, and have thence acquired immortal fame; but they were followed and supported by hundreds and thousands, animated with the same spirit, and possessing, if called forth, the same abilities. England at that period seemed to have reached that epoch in national life, "brief and speedily to perish," as Tacitus says, when the firmness of aristocracy had given invincible resolution, and the energy of democracy inexhaustible vigour to the state; when we had the tenacity of nobles without their pride, and the vehemence of the people without their licentiousness —"Si monumentum quæris, circumspice."

The Emperor Nicholas, therefore, judged too hastily when he condemned all free countries and constitutional monarchies as necessarily the seats of corruption. It is no wonder he thought so from the experience he had of them, and that which the greater part of such governments, in his time, had afforded. If we had judged of constitutional monarchy and the cause of freedom from the history of England from 1688 to 1793, we should have said the same. But the subsequent history of the British empire has revealed the real cause of these general and wide-spread abuses. It has shown that they arose not necessarily from the triumph of freedom, but accidentally from government, in consequence of that triumph, having for a long period been established on a wrong basis. The contending powers, whose opposition produces equilibrium, had been brought to draw in the same direction, and thence the spring-tide of corruption. A constitutional monarchy is not necessarily based on patronage; it is so only when the popular party are in power. That party, having, as a whole, little or no interest in the property of the state, can be retained in obedience, and hindered from urging on the revolutionary movement, only by being well supplied with offices. It is like a beast of prey, which must be constantly gorged to be kept quiet. But the holders of property need no such degrading motive to keep them steady to the cause of order. They are retained there by their own private interest; by their deep stake in the maintenance of tranquillity; by their desire to transmit their estates unimpaired to their descendants. They are as certain, in the general case, of supporting the cause of order, and its guardians at the helm of a state, as the passengers in a ship are of standing by the pilot and crew who are to save them from the waves. The true, the legitimate, the honourable support of a Conservative government, is to be found in that numerous class of men who have no favours to ask, who would disdain to accept any gratification, who adhere to the cause of order, because it is that of peace, of religion, of themselves, and of their children. It is a sense of the strength of these bonds, a knowledge of the independent and disinterested support [Pg 368] which they are certain of receiving, which enables a Conservative administration so often to neglect its supporters in the distribution of the public patronage, and seek for merit and worth in the ranks of its opponents. A democratic government can never do this, because the passions and interests of the great bulk of its supporters are adverse to the preservation of property; and therefore they can be kept to their colours, and hindered from clamouring for those measures which its leaders feel to be destructive, only by the exclusive enjoyment and entire monopoly of all the patronage of the state.

Without undervaluing, then, the effects of the Revolution of 1688; without discrediting the motives of many of the patriots who combined to shake off the oppressive tyranny and Romish bigotry of James II., it may safely be affirmed, that it was George III., Lord Bute, and

Mr Pitt, who put the British constitution upon its right, and the only durable and beneficial, basis, and worked out the Revolution itself to its appropriate and beneficent effects. This is the great and important moral of English history during the eighteenth century; this is the conclusion forced on the mind by the perusal of *Walpole's Memoirs*, and his vehement abuse of Lord Bute and George III. for their dismissal of the Whigs from power. Doubtless, they acted from selfish motives in doing so. The king wanted to regain his prerogative, the minister to secure his power; but still it was, on the part of both, a step in the right direction. But for the resolute stand which they made against the Whig oligarchy—but for their wisdom in throwing themselves on the property of the nation to withstand its debasement, a domineering party would have become omnipotent, the people would have been irrecoverably plunged in the slough of corruption, and the liberties of England lost for ever, according to all former experience, in the firmly established despotism consequent on a successful revolution. George III. said, on the first decisive parliamentary division which gave a majority to the Tories in 1761—"At length, then, we have a king on the throne in England." Posterity will add—at length the foundations of a free constitution were laid on a durable and practicable basis.

NORTH'S SPECIMENS OF THE BRITISH CRITICS.

[Pg 369]

No. II.

Dryden and Pope.

Specimens of the British Critics are unavoidably an irregular history of Criticism in this island; and such a history of our Criticism is unavoidably one, too, of our Poetry. The first name in our series is Dryden. See what we have written, and you find half of our paper is on Shakspeare. Pope is our next worthy; and of three or four pillars on which his name as a critic rests, one is his character of the Protagonist. Thus, for this earlier part of a new Age, the Presidents of Criticism are the two Kings of Verse.

When the poet is a critic, how shall we sever in him the two Arts? If his prose is explicit, his verse is implicit criticism; and there was thus a reason for speaking somewhat especially of Dryden's character as a tragedian in drawing his character as a critic. But indeed the man, the critic, and the poet, are one, and must be characterized as a whole; only you may choose which aspect shall be principal. In studying his works you are struck, throughout, with a mind loosely disciplined in its great intellectual powers. In his critical writings, principles hastily proposed from partial consideration, are set up and forgotten. He intends largely, but a thousand causes restrain and lame the execution. Milton, in unsettled times, maintained his inward tranquillity of soul—and "dwelt apart." Dryden, in times oscillating indeed and various, yet quieter and safer, discloses private disturbance. His own bark appears to be borne on continually on a restless, violent, whirling, and tossing stream. It never sleeps in brightness on its own calm and bright shadow. An unhappy biography weaves itself into the history of the inly dwelling Genius.

His treatment of "The Tempest" shows that he wanted intelligence of highest passion and imagination. One powerful mind must have discernment of another; and he speaks best of Shakspeare when most generally. Then we might believe that he understood him in all the greatness of his might; but our belief cannot support itself among the many outrages offered by him to nature, in a blind or wanton desecration of her holiest revealments to her inspired priest. In the sense stated above, his transformation of "The Tempest," is an implicit criticism of "The Tempest." And, assuredly, there is no great rashness of theorizing in him who finds in this barbarous murder, evidence to a lack of apprehension in Dryden, for some part of the beauty which he swept away. It would be unjustifiable towards the man to believe that, for the lowest legitimate end of a playwright—money—or for the lower, because illegitimate end, the popular breath of a day amongst a public of a day—he voluntarily ruined one of the most delicate amongst the beautiful creations with which the divine muse, his own patroness, had enlarged and adorned the bright world of mind—ruined it down to the depraved, the degraded, the debased, the grovelling, the vulgar taste of a corrupt court and town. "The Inchanted Island" is a dolorous document ungainsayable, to the appreciation, in particulars, by that Dryden who could, in generals, laud Shakspeare so well—of that Shakspeare. And if, by Dryden, then by the age which he eminently led, and for which he created, and for which he—destroyed.

"The Inchanted Island," and "The State of Innocence" come under no criticism. They are literary facinora. No rational account—no theory of them can be given. There they are—melancholy, but instructive facts. They express the revolution of the national spirit, on the upper degrees of the social scale. That which thirty, twenty, ten years before was impossible, happens. The hewing in pieces of Shakspeare, to throw him into the magical caldron, to reproduce him, not in youth but in dotage, shows a death, but not yet the [Pg 370]

consequent life. Stupendous and sweet Nature whom we possessed, has vanished—fled heavenward—resolved into a dew—gone, into the country. At least, she is no longer in town! It may safely be averred, that no straining of the human intellect can compute the interval overleaped betwixt those originals, and these transcriptions. It is no translation, paraphrase, metaphrase. It is as if we should catch a confused and misapprehending glimpse of something that is going on in Jupiter. It is a transference from one order of beings to another; who have some intellectual processes in common, but are allied by no sympathy. The sublime is gone! The beautiful is gone! The rational is gone! The loving is gone! The divine is not here! Nor the angelical! Nor the human! Alas! not even the diabolical! All is corrupted! banished! obliterated!

We have seen Dryden complaining of Shakspeare's language and style—of the language as antiquated from the understanding of an audience in his own day—of the whole style as being "so pestered with the figurative expressions, that it is as affected as it is obscure." And we were aware of the modest self-attribution, "*I have refined the language*," in Drydenising Troilus and Cressida, "which before was *obsolete*." And Samuel Johnson corroborates and enlarges the self-praise. "Dryden was the first who *refined the language of poetry*."

At this day, such expressions fill the younger votary—creative or critical—of our vernacular muse with astonishment and perplexity, and set an older one upon thinking. Such assertions, it must be said, are "*unintelligible*" now, because a nobler unfolding of time, a happy return of our educated mind to the old and to the natural, has "*antiquated*" the literary sentiment, which Dryden and Johnson shared, and which they so confidently proposed to fitly-prepared readers.

Shakspeare obsolete! There is not a writer of to-day—whose WORDS are *nearer to our hearts*. OUR OWN *are hardly as intimate there, as* HIS *are*—

> "You are my true and honourable wife,
> *As dear to me as are the ruddy drops*
> *That visit my sad heart*,"

says the troubled Brutus to Portia, who has expressed a misdoubting of his true and clear affection for her.

Is this "*antiquated*" English, and thence "*unintelligible*?"

> "*Viola.*—My father had a daughter loved a man,
> As it might be, perhaps, WERE I A WOMAN,
> I should your lordship.
>
> *Duke.—And what's her history?*
>
> *Viola.—A blank, my lord. She never told her love.*
> * * * *
> *Duke.*—But died thy sister of her love, my boy?
>
> *Viola.*—I am all the daughters of my father's house,
> And all the brothers, too."

> "*Miranda.*—I am a fool
> To weep at what I am glad of.
>
> *Ferdinand.*—Where should this music be?
> I' th' air?—or th' earth?
> It sounds no more; and sure it waits upon
> Some god o' th' island. Sitting on a bank,
> Weeping again the king my father's wreck,
> This music crept by me upon the waters,
> Allaying both their fury and my passion
> With its sweet air. Thence have I follow'd it,
> Or it hath drawn me, rather. But 'tis gone—
> No! it begins again.
> * * * *
> The ditty does remember my drown'd father.
> This is no mortal business, nor no sound
> That the earth owes.—I hear it now above me."

Here we have an "*antiquated*" touch or two of what would have distressed Dryden. "PASSION" is used in the old strong general sense of powerful, possessing emotion—in this example, filial sorrow; and lower down, we have the obsolete "OWES" for the modern "OWNS," which two vitiating reliques of antiquity, along with that "pestering," "affected," and "obscure" figure, "*crept by me* upon the waters," would explain, without doubt, the impossibility which the reader feels himself under, of deriving any pleasure from the passage, and, to speak strictly, of discovering any signification in it!! [Pg 371]

Assuredly we do not design transcribing whole Shakspeare, in order to contradicting a rash

word of Dryden's. It might not be politic, either; for we should now and then meet with hard sentences, which might seem, like unlucky witnesses, to give evidence against the party that brings them before the tribunal. They would not. It is not in twenty places, or not in a hundred, that the obsoleteness of a word or phrase makes Shakspeare hard, nor any thing in the world but his wit, his intellect in excess, that occasionally runs away with him, and wraps up his meaning in a phraseology of his own creating; enigmas that are embarrassing to disinvolve again—which might, indeed, be an antiquated manner of his age, but not an obsolete dictionary and grammar. Neither is it required of us to convince the reader, by copious extracts, that *he* really understands Shakspeare, one or other of whose volumes he has always in his pocket, and whose English he sits hearing by the hour, lisped, mouthed, and legitimately spoken upon the stage, and still fancying that he understands what he hears. But it seemed not altogether out of place, when the criticism of style is moved, and Shakspeare's English challenged, to recall into the liveliest consciousness of the reader, for a moment, the principal feature of the case, which is, without doubt, that Shakspeare is, in all our literature, the writer in whom this highest art of writing—namely—start not, good, innocent reader! for it must one day be said—THE ART OF SIMPLICITY—reaches its height; that magical art of steeping the words and idioms that fall from every lip at every minute, in music, and beauty, and pathos, and power, so that the familiar sound slips along the well-known inlets into the soul, and we are—"took ere we are 'ware."

Otherwise, for the general fact, that he, the reader of 1845, does understand, without much difficulty, the dramatic poet whom, in 1665, the gulf of years and the mutations of speech from father to son had rendered "unintelligible"—for the general verity of this unforeseen and improbable, but indisputable fact, the reader's recollection of his own personal history since he was eight or ten years old, may be left satisfactorily to vouch.

Neither was it, perhaps, unreasonable to snatch the occasion of alleging and manifesting the momentous and instructive truth—*that the intenser working of the mind finds out, in every age, the perpetuities of a language*.

Let us take our place for a moment in the Age of our poetry, which began with Dryden inclusive, and ended, or began ending, with Cowper exclusive. It was the UNCREATIVE age of our poetry; or, if you insist upon a denomination positively grounded, the IMITATIVE; or it was the *unimpassioned*, or it was the *rational*. Only the stage—losing passion, and not being the place for reason—went mad; as with Nat Lee. However, it retained something like a creative energy in Otway—and, moreover, Cato was really and afflictingly a *rational* play.—The mere musical flow of the verse took the place of ever varying expression; and the name used as nearly equivalent with a good verse, at least for describing that which a verse should ordinarily be, is a *smooth* verse. Concurrent in time and cause was the invasion of the ten syllabled rhymed couplet, which, in place of the old diversified measures, took possession—off the stage—of our poetry. With all this went a transformation of the language accepted in verse; a severing and setting apart, as if a consecrating of the Parnassian dialect, which formerly was always caught up fresh from the lap of nature, at the risk, no doubt, of pulling weeds amongs the flowers.

In the incidental enunciations of criticism, we may easily gather notices of the movement this way, in the double matter of the language and the verse. In both, it receives, as it should do, the same name and description. It is the disengaging of REFINEMENT—its birth from the bosom of BARBARISM—distinct as mother and daughter. Shakspeare and Milton are the two great barbarous kings with a numerous court. If we try to give ourselves account of this Refinement and to vindicate for it the title, we are at a loss for names and notions. A [Pg 372] Refinement which places the sluts of Dryden and his contemporaries above Imogen and Miranda, and above Eve. One hangs down the head in shame and perplexity. The history of England affords us a key in the name of Charles II. The Court, the Town, and Life-in-doors, are the words that resolve the mystery. The Muses that were Powers of Fell, and Flood, and Forest, and Field, that went with man wherever he went—in cottage and palace, in divan and in dungeon, in the student's or the miser's chamber, on the battle-plain, and at the dance of bacchanals—and when and wheresoever man spoke, heard their own mother-tongue, they were beguiled and imprisoned within the pale of artificial society and of high life. They had to learn the breeding of the drawing-room. Their auditors, in short, were gentlemen and ladies, who never forgot that they were such in the sudden overpowering consciousness of their being men and women.

There was therefore not only a denaturation, but an enervation of our poetry. There grew a dainty, fastidious, easily-loathing taste, betokening that the robust health of the older day—its healthy hunger, and its blood glowing and bounding like a forester's—was gone by. Never to come again? No! not so bad as that. We mark main lines. We have not room for the filling-up. The last century closing, opened another Age, and we of to-day renovate and reinvigorate ourselves the best we may.

England surely did not bring up the Heroic Tragedy on its unsown soil. It was foreign falsehood that overcame English truth and sincerity. A factitious excitement that induced a false pitch throughout. On the old French stage, there were these two eminent characteristics of tragedy: Whatever the subject—if Œdipus, and the Plague raging—there must be a love-tale; and the most impassioned persons most continually dissert. Generally, Dryden's heroic plays have these two marks—both disnaturings of tragedy. We conceive in Dryden's age, and in himself as participant, a pampered taste that cannot relish the

wholesome simple meats which Nature, "good cateress," provides for her beloved, healthy, naturally-living children. That is to say, a vitiation of taste, by indulged excesses; the wine and high feasting of their own theatre—which really made them unapt for understanding Shakspeare. For in such things men understand by force of delight, and if delight deserts them intelligence does too. The writings of the great creative poets—of Homer, Dante, Chaucer, and the rest—always give you the impression that they possessed nature by observation and sympathy—outward nature and man's nature—that this, as it were, stood in their soul—the great perpetually-present original—from which they drew fancifully varied portraiture. It is there as their standard of reference, when they read other poets. In Dryden, it is not so. You know neither what he draws from, nor to what he refers in those extraordinary heroic tragedies which resemble nothing—no men and no women, that were, are, or shall be. The impossible hero, the impossible heroine, and their extravagant sentiments, afford scope for a strife and a torture of thought, which is an inseparable medley of wit and argumentation; wit reasoning, and logic jesting; a strange confusion of mental actions, with an unfavourable result; for this result is neither TRUTH nor MIRTH; but very CHIMERA—changing colour like the chameleon—shape like the clouds, and substance like the contents of an alchemist's crucible. Wit that to nonsense nearly is allied, if the thin partitions are not often actually broken down. Where you should have the living blood that flows through the living heart—the affections, the passions, and the actions that mould man and his world—you find sporting and rejoicing in their own elastic vigour, their adroitness and buoyancy, and in their wonderful starts and capricious bounds, aimless flights and aerial gambols—the bold, the keen, the nimble, the strenuous faculties, summoned together to compose the masculine, ranging, intrepid, various, piercing, and comprehensive INTELLECT—long the acknowledged sovereign-master of that high literature, which Milton had now left, and which Pope did not yet occupy. [Pg 373]

Dryden dealt in the same incomprehensible way with Milton as with Shakspeare. In that famous falsifying epigram, the poet of *Paradise Lost* is greater than Homer and Virgil rolled into one; and his name is frequently mentioned with seeming reverence in those off-hand Prefaces. Yet even in such critical passages there is no just approbation of his genius. Thus, in the preface to "The State of Innocence," he says—"The original being undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced." *This age! One of the greatest*, &c.! The age of Charles II.! And what has become of the *other* great, noble, and sublime, poems which that age has produced? These wavering words were written the year Milton died; and Dennis, or some one else, tells us that, twenty years after, Dryden confessed that he had not then been sensible of half the extent of his excellence. But what, twenty years after, does he say?—

> "As for Mr Milton, whom we all admire with so much justice, his subject is not of an heroic poem, properly so called. His design is the losing of our happiness; his event is not prosperous like that of all other epic works; his heavenly machines are many, and human persons are but two. But I will not take Mr Rhymer's work out of his hands; he has promised the world a critique on that author, wherein, though he will not allow his poem for heroic, I hope he will grant us that his thoughts are elevated, his words sounding, and that no man has so happily copied the manner of Homer, or so copiously translated his Grecisms, and the Latin elegancies of Virgil. It is true he runs into a flat of thoughts, sometimes for a hundred lines together, but it is when he has got into a track of Scripture. His antiquated words were his choice, not his necessity; for therein he imitated Spenser, as Spenser did Chaucer. And though, perhaps, the love of their master may have transported both too far in the frequent use of them, yet, in my opinion, obsolete words may there be laudably revived, when either they are more sounding or more significant than those in practice; and when their obscurity is taken away, by joining other words to them which clear the sense, according to the rule of Horace, for the admission of new words. But, in both cases, a moderation is to be observed in the use of them: for unnecessary coinage, as well as unnecessary revival, runs into affectation; a fault to be avoided on either hand. Neither will I justify Milton for his blank verse, though I may excuse him, by the example of Hannibal Caro, and other Italians, who have used it; for whatever causes he alleges for the abolishing of rhyme, (which I have not now the leisure to examine,) his own particular reason is plainly this, that rhyme was not his talent; he had neither the ease of doing it, nor the graces of it; which is manifest in his 'Juvenilia,' or verses written in his youth, where his rhyme is always constrained and forced, and comes hardly from him, at an age when the soul is most pliant, and the passion of love makes almost every man a rhymer though not a poet."

The general effect of this captious passage is far from pleasant. It leaves us in doubt of the sincerity of Courts, and Towns, and Dryden's admiration of Mr Milton. "His subject is not that of a heroic poem, properly so called." Milton did not call it a heroic poem. But it is an epic poem, and a divine. "The event is not prosperous." Assuredly not. For that matter, neither, to our minds, is that of the Iliad. It seems not a little unreasonable to complain that in Paradise Lost, the "human persons are but two." Dryden "will not take Mr Rhymer's work out of his hands, who has promised us a critique on that author;" and he hopes Mr Rhymer *will grant* so and so—look pray again at what Dryden hopes Mr Rhymer will grant to Mr

Milton. Mr Rhymer had promised to favour the public "with some reflections on that Paradise Lost of Milton, which some are pleased to call a poem." But this promise, says best Sir Walter, "he never filled up the measure of his presumption by attempting to fulfil." Milton running on a flat of thought for a hundred lines together on a track of Scripture! In his poem, by unnecessary coinage of new, and unnecessary revival of old words, running into *affectation*! Milton not to be *justified* for his blank verse, no not even by the example of [Pg 374] the illustrious and immortal Hannibal Caro! Then he took to it in despair, for rhyme was not his talent! His rhyme forced and constrained in the Hymn on the Nativity—in Lycidas—in L'Allegro—in Il Penseroso!

In the same Essay on Satire—Dryden talks, not very intelligibly, about "the *beautiful turns of words and thoughts*, which are as requisite in this as in heroic poetry itself;" but with which he confesses himself to have been unacquainted till about twenty years before, when "that noble wit of Scotland," Sir George Mackenzie, asked him why he did not imitate "*the turns* of Mr Waller and Sir John Denham, of which he repeated many to me." The memory of that "noble wit of Scotland" is far from being honoured—nay, it is execrated by his countrymen—by the common people we mean—and, in the long run, they are no bad judges of merit. He was, we believe, no great shakes as a lawyer, either within or without the bar; and, like many other well-born, weak-minded men, had a taste for elegant literature and vulgar blood. Of his "voluminous works, historical and juridical," we know less than nothing; but his "Essays on several moral subjects," have more than once fallen out of our hands. Sir Walter says, "he was an accomplished scholar, of lively talents, and ready elocution, and very well deserved the appellation of a 'noble wit of Scotland.'" "The Bluidy Mackenyie," reciting to Dryden many "beautiful turns" from Waller and Denham—and Dryden calling the poetasters "those two fathers of our English poetry," in the same page where he is writing of Milton! At Sir George's behest, in Cowley, even in his "Davideis," an heroic poem, he sought in vain for "elegant turns, either on the word or on the thought;" and his search was equally fruitless in the "Paradise Lost"—for, as Milton "endeavours every where to express Homer, whose age had not yet arrived to that fineness, I found in him a true sublimity, lofty thoughts, which were clothed with admirable Grecisms, and ancient words which he had been digging from the mines of Chaucer and Spenser; and which, with all their rusticity, had somewhat of venerable in them. But I found not there neither, that for which I looked." His search through Spenser and Tasso is more fortunate; Virgil and Ovid are the two principal fountains of them in Latin poetry; and "the French, at this day, are so fond of them, that they judge them to be first beauties; *delicate et bien tourné*, are the highest commendations which they bestow on somewhat which they think a masterpiece."

This sort of explicit criticism, in a small way, is rather unsatisfactory; so let us look at a specimen of implicit on Milton. In Todd's edition are detailed the names of the translators of "Paradise Lost" into rhyme and prose. "We must not" says Sir Walter, "confound with these effusions of gratuitous folly an alteration or imitation planned and executed by John Dryden." We must not; therefore let "his gratuitous folly" stand aloof from theirs, and be judged of in itself. "The State of Innocence" is AN OPERA! "Had the subject been of a nature which admitted its being actually represented, we might conceive that Dryden, who was under engagements to the theatre, with which it was not always easy to comply, might have been desirous to shorten his own labour *by adopting the story, sentiments, and language of a poem*" (how kind and cool) "which he so highly esteemed, and which might probably have been new to the generality of his audience. But the *costume* of our first parents, had there been no other objection, must have excluded 'The State of Innocence' from the stage; and, accordingly, it was certainly never intended for representation." One cannot well help agreeing with Sir Walter in this pleasant passage; nevertheless, might not the opera have been indited with a view to representation? With what more *rational* purpose could it have been "planned and executed"? The stage directions are full and minute; and, if meant for perusal only, and to be part of the poem, they are beyond the ridiculous. As, for example—

"Scene I. represents a chaos, or a confused mass of matter; the stage is almost wholly dark. [Pg 375] A symphony of warlike music is heard for some time; then from the heavens (which are opened) fall the rebellious angels, wheeling in air, and seeming transfixed with thunderbolts. The bottom of the stage being opened, receives the angels, who fall out of sight. Tunes of victory are played, and an hymn sung; angels discovered alone, brandishing their swords. The music ceasing, and the heavens being closed, the scene shifts, and, on a sudden, represents hell. Part of the scene is a lake of brimstone or rolling fire; the earth of a burnt colour. The fallen angels appear on the lake, lying prostrate; a tune of horror and lamentation is heard."

How all this might take with a mixed audience, we do not presume to conjecture, yet very great absurdities do sometimes take almost as well on as of the stage. Must "the *costume* of our first parents, had there been no other objection, have excluded the 'State of Innocence' from the stage?" True, Sir Charles Sedley, and other "men of wit and fashion about town," were not well received when exhibiting themselves naked on a balcony overhanging a great thoroughfare; but then they were drunk, and acted not only indecent but insulting, nay, threatening attitudes, accompanied with abjurgations and blasphemies, which was going injudiciously in advance of that age of refinement. Suppose Booth perfectly sober in Adam, and Nell Gwynne up merely to the proper pitch of vivacity in Eve, we do not see why the opera might not have had a run during the reign of the Merry Monarch. The first sight we have of Adam is, "as newly created, laid on a bed of moss and flowers, by a rock." He rises as

he begins to utter his earliest soliloquy; and we believe it is an established rule, not to turn your back on—or in playhouse phrase—not to rump your audience. In such a case; however, considerable latitude would have been conceded by both sexes to our original; and what with shades and shrubs, and, above all, the rock, an adroit actor could have had little difficulty in accommodating to his posterity their progenitor. Of Eve our first glimpse is among "trees cut out on each side, with several fruits upon them; a fountain in the midst; at the far end the prospect terminating in walks." Nelly might have worn her famous felt chapeau, broad as a coach-wheel, as appropriately in that as in any other character, and contrived to amble about with sufficient decorum for those fastidious times. Besides, as custom soon reconciles people to the most absurd dress, so would it probably, before long, reconcile them to no dress at all. A full-bottomed wig in the mimic scene, on heroic representative of a class of men, who, off the boards, had always worn, not only their own hair, but a crop, was *a sine qua non* condition of historic success. *In puris naturalibus* would have been but to fall back on nature. Why, only couple of years ago, half a million of our countrymen and countrywomen of all ages, flocked by instalments, in a single season, to look at our First Parents fresh from the hands of a French painter, naked as you were born. Such is the power of Names. No imagination—not the least in the world—had that painter; no sense—not the least in the world—of the beautiful or of the sublime in the human figure. But the population, urban and rural alike, were unhappy till they had had a sight of Adam and Eve in Paradise. We cheerfully acknowledge that Adam was a very good-looking young fellow—bang up to the mark, six feet without his shoes-close upon thirteen stone. Had he been advertised as Major Adam of the Scots Greys, the brevet would have exhibited himself on that bank to empty benches. In like manner, with the fairest of her daughters, Eve. As Pope says,

> "Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
> Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be."

Pious old gentlemen, however, pronounced her perfect, merely because they gazed on the image of the mother of mankind. Painted they both were in oils. But from what we saw—for we too were carried away by the general enthusiasm—we are justified in inferring that, under prudent management, our First Parents might be successfully got up alive during the summer season at our Adelphi.

We believe that "The State of Innocence" *was* written for the stage. But the playwright did not intend that Adam and Eve should be stark-naked in an acted opera. Strange to say, there is not a word in it about their naked majesty or innocence. Dryden, by his idea of an opera, was forced to depart from nature and Milton. Eve's dream, so characteristically narrated by her to Adam in the poem, is shadowed out by a vision passing before her asleep, in the opera. The stage direction gives:—"A vision, where a tree rises loaden with fruit; spirits rise with it, and draw a canopy out of the tree; and the spirits dance about the tree in deformed shapes; after the dance an angel enters, *with a woman*, HABITED LIKE EVE." That is decisive. [Pg 376]

But what of the opera? In the preface, Dryden says "I cannot, without injury to the deceased author of 'Paradise Lost,' but acknowledge, that the poem has received *its entire foundation, part of the design, and many of the ornaments from him*. What I have borrowed will be so easily discerned from my mean productions, that I shall not need to point the reader to the places." That avowal may be thought to set aside all criticism—but not so—for his illustrious editor says, "the probable motive therefore of this alteration was the wish, so common to genius, to exert itself upon a subject on which another had already attained brilliant success; or, as Dryden has termed a similar attempt, the desire to shoot in the bow of Ulysses." And he adds, that because Milton intended at first to model his poem into a dramatic form, "Dryden, conscious of his own powers, and enthusiastically admiring those of Milton, was induced to make an experiment on the forsaken plan of the blind bard, which, with his usual rapidity of conception and execution, he completed in the short space of one month." Wide-encroaching Walter would see nothing far wrong in Glorious John. It is not "the forsaken plan of the blind bard," nor any thing in the least like it. They are opposite as any things that "own antipathy in nature." But this is all mere nonsense. The opera is disgraceful to Dryden. It proves that he had no understanding of the "Paradise Lost."

"Ay, you may *tag* my verses, if you will." But had Milton lived to hear their taggery, wrathful fire would have been in his eyes.

The opera opens, as we saw, in chaos, the scene sinking into hell, and we have Lucifer "raising himself on the lake." His exclamatory speech, of some sixteen lines, on the lake is versified, not in Dryden's best manner, from that most sublime one of Satan on reaching with Beelzebub the burning marle, with some additions from Satan's first address to that angel, while yet they were lying side by side on the fiery flood. To those who have the First Book of the "Paradise Lost" by heart, this sort of transposition patchwork cannot but be most offensive. As if to give an air of originality, where everything is borrowed and blurred, Asmoday in Milton one of the lowest, is made one of the highest, and is substituted for Beelzebub—and to him Lucifer most unarchangel-like calls "Ho! Asmoday, awake!"

Asmoday answers in a short speech, very ill reported, formerly delivered by Milton's Beelzebub, concluding with a bit absolutely stolen from his Satan himself! Lucifer then observes to Asmoday, that "our troops, *like scattered leaves in autumn*, lie!" A poor plagiarism indeed from the famous description from Milton's own lips, and from Lucifer's

incredibly absurd! Lucifer then announces—

"With wings expanded wide, ourselves we'll rear,
And fly incumbent on the dusky air.
Hell! thy new lord receive!
Heaven cannot envy me an empire here."
(*Both fly to dry land.*)

You remember the lines in Milton—

"Then with expanded wings he steers his flight,
Aloft incumbent on the dusky air"—

and the other sublimities of the description—all here destroyed by the monstrous absurdity of making Lucifer paint his own projected flight. He then asks "the rest of the devils," "Are you on *beds of down*?" On beds of down our grandsires lay—but think of eider-ducks in heaven. Moloch says his say from the Miltonic Satan, with a slight new reading.

"Better to *rule* in hell than serve in heaven."

And Beelzebub approves the dictum. [Pg 377]

"Moloch, in that all are resolved, like thee.
The means are unprepared; but 'tis not fit,
Our dark divan in public view should sit;
Or what we plot against the Thunderer,
The ignoble CROWD OF VULGAR DEVILS *hear*!"

Lucifer adopts this disdainful suggestion, and, great magician as he is, exclaims—

"A golden palace let be raised on high,
To imitate—no, to outshine the sky!
All mines are ours, and gold above the rest;
Let this be done, and *quick as 'twas exprest*."

"A palace rises, where sit as in council, LUCIFER, Asmoday, Moloch, Belial, Beelzebub, and SATAN." Who *he* may be, deuce take us if we can tell. Up to the very moment of his making his appearance, we in our simple faith had believed Lucifer and Satan to be one devil—nay, the devil. We were taken quite aback by this unexplained phenomenon of Satan's acting the part of his own tail. In this capacity he makes but one speech—but it is the speech of the evening. One seldom hears such eloquence. Moloch having proposed battle, the mysterious stranger rises to second the motion.

"*Satan.* I agree
With this brave vote; and if in Hell there be
Ten more such spirits, heaven is our own again.
We venture nothing, and may all obtain.
Yet, who can hope but well, since our success
Makes foes secure, and makes our dangers less?
Seraph and Cherub, careless of their charge
And wanton, in full ease now live at large;
Unguarded leave the passes of the sky,
And all dissolved in hallelujahs lie."

In the "grand consult," as recorded by Milton, Beelzebub, after proposing the "perilous attempt," asks,

"But, first, whom we shall send
In search of this new world? Whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight,
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle?"

And Satan is the self-chosen missionary of the religion of Hell. In Dryden Asmoday suggests the enterprise, and

"*Moloch.* This glorious enterprise—(*rising up.*)
Lucifer. Rash angel, stay. (*Rising, and laying his sceptre on Moloch's head.*)
That palm is mine, which none shall take away.
Hot braves like thee may fight, but know not well
To manage this, the last great stake of hell."

The council comes to a close—and Lucifer promises to be with them again,

"Before yon brimstone lake thrice ebb and flow."

Tides in the Mediterranean! a touch beyond Milton.

"Here, while the chiefs sit in the palace, may be expressed the sports of the devils, as flights and dancing in grotesque figures; and a song, expressing the change of their condition, what they enjoyed before, and how they fell bravely in battle, having deserved victory by their valour, and what they would have done if they had conquered."

What had Dryden purposed to achieve? Out of two books of a great epic, to edify one act of an opera. To invention of situation, character, or passion, he aspires not; all he had to do—since he must needs meddle—was to select, compress, and abridge, with some judgment and feeling, and to give the result—unhappy at the best—in his own vigorous verse and dearly-beloved rhyme. But beneath the majesty and imagination of Milton, his genius, strong as it was, broke down, and absolutely sunk beneath the level of that of common men. Yet not in awe, nor in reverence of a superior power; for there is no trepidation of spirit; on the contrary, with cool self-assurance he rants his way through the fiery gloom of hell. By his [Pg 378] hands shorn of their beams, the fallen angels are, one and all, poor devils indeed. The Son of the Morning is seedy, and has lost all authority over the swell mob, which he vainly essays to recover by cracking Moloch's organ with his sceptre. Yet Sir Walter, blinded by his generous admiration of Dryden's great endowments, scruples not to say that "the scene of the consultation in Pandemonium, and of the soliloquy of Satan (not Satan, it seems, but Lucifer) on his arrival in the newly-created universe, would possess great merit did they not unfortunately remind us of the majestic simplicity of Milton." Oh, heavens and earth! the veritable Satan's soliloquy on Niphate's top!

> "O thou, that with surpassing glory crown'd,
> Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
> Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
> Hide their diminish'd heads, to thee I call,
> But with no friendly voice, *and add thy name*,
> O SUN! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
> That bring to my remembrance from what state
> I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere,
> Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
> Warring in heaven against heaven's matchless king!"

And so on for nearly a hundred lines, in many a changeful strain, arch-angelical all, of heaven-remembering passion, while ever, as thus he spoke,

> "Each passion dimm'd his face,
> Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair;
> Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
> Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld;
> For heavenly minds, from such distempers foul
> Are ever clear."

The soliloquy of Dryden's Lucifer consists of twenty lines, taken almost at hap-hazard from that of Milton's, jumbled together without consideration, and mangled from the most multitudinous blank verse ever written, into rhymes much beneath the average merit of one who, at times, could indeed command "the long-majestic march and energy divine."

Adam and Eve fare little better than the angels under his reforming fingers. Milton, you remember, makes Adam tell Raphael the story of his birth, in language charmful to affable arch-angel's ear, albeit tuned to harmonies in heaven. Dryden burlesques that revelation into the following soliloquy, supposed to have been *the first words spoken by human lips*. Adam at once opens his mouth in the style of the age of refinement. After the fall, how degenerate kept growing on our father tongue, till it reached its acme in the barbarous lingo of Shakspeare! And how suited, here, the thought to the speech! How natural the natural theology of both! He anticipates Descartes.

> "*Adam.* What am I? or from whence? *For that I am* (rising)
> *I know, because I think*; but whence I come,
> Or how this frame of mine began to be,
> What other being can disclose to me?
> I move, and see, and speak, discourse, and know;
> Though now I am, I was not always so.
> Then that from which I was, must be before,
> Whom, as my spring of being, I adore.
> How full of ornament is all I view,
> In all its parts! and seems as beautiful as new:
> O goodly order'd earth! O Power Divine!
> Of thee I am, and what I am is thine."

A day or two after, "a cloud descends with six angels in it, and when it is near the ground breaks, and, on each side, discovers six more." Raphael and Gabriel, sent to admonish and warn, discourse with Adam, the ten others standing at a distance. The conversation instantly assumes, and throughout sustains, an intensely controversial character, and Raphael and Gabriel, though two to one, and moreover angel *versus* man, are hard put to it on predestination and free-will. Adam is equipped with all the weapons of the schools, and uses

them defensively, and most offensively, with all the dexterity of a veteran gladiator. But our disgust soon ceases, along with our deception; and we but see and hear John Dryden puzzling a brace of would-be wits at Wills's. The whole reads like a so-so bit of the *Religio Laici*. It ends thus:— [Pg 379]

"*Adam.* Hard state of life! since heaven foreknows my will,
Why am I not tied up from doing ill?
Why am I trusted with myself at large,
When he's more able to sustain the charge?
Since angels fell, whose strength was more than mine,
'Twould then more grace my frailty to confine.
Foreknowing the success, to leave me free,
Excuses him, and yet supports not me!"

This from Adam yet sinless in Paradise!

The loves of Adam and Eve are not perhaps absolutely coarse—at least not so for Dryden—but they are of the earth earthy, and the earth is not of the mould of Eden. Aiblins—not coarse, but verily coquettish, and something more, is Eve. And she is too silly.

"From each tree
The feather'd kinds peep down to look on me;
And beasts with upcast eyes forsake their shade,
And gaze as if I were to be obey'd.
Sure I am somewhat which they wish to be,
And cannot. *I myself am proud of me.*"

A day or two after their marriage, Eve gives Adam a long description of her first emotions experienced in the nuptial bower. More warmly coloured than in her simplicity she seems to be aware of; and Adam, pleased with her innocent flattery, treats her with an Epithalamium.

"When to my arms thou brought'st thy virgin love,
Fair angels sang our bridal hymn above:
The Eternal, nodding, shook the firmament!
And conscious nature gave her glad consent.
Roses unbid, and every fragrant flower
Flew from their stalks to strew thy nuptial bower:
The furr'd and feather'd kinds the triumph did pursue,
And fishes leap'd above the streams the passing pomp to view."

Hats off—bravo—bravo—hurra—hurra!—Of such stuff is made, in the "State of Innocence," Dryden's implicit criticism on the *Paradise Lost* of Milton.

Peace be with his shade! and its forgiveness with us. It is dangerous to unite the functions of judge and executioner. The imperturbable bosom of the seated judge calmly gives forth the award of everlasting Justice, and the mandate for the punishment that must expiate or appease her violated majesty. But the judge who is obliged to turn lictor, and must step down from the tribunal to take his criminal farther in hand, undoubtedly runs a risk, when he feels his hand in, of being carried too far by his excited zeal. After all, we have stayed ours. And now, having discharged a principal part of our office, what remains, but that we turn round, heal with our right hand what our left has inflicted, and lift up Glorious John to the skies? And lift him up we will; and with good reason; for we are far indeed from being done with this first era of deliberate and formal criticism in English literature. Extol him to the clouds and to the stars we will, but not now; for lo! where another great name beckons!

The close of the seventeenth century for ever shut the eyes of John Dryden upon the clouded and fluctuating daylight of our sublunary world. It may have been, in the same year, that a solitary boy, then twelve years old, wrote five stanzas which any man might have been glad to have written—and which you have by heart—an "Ode to Solitude"—conspicuous in the annals of English poetry as the dawn-gleam of a new sun that was presently to arise, and to fill the region that Dryden had left.

A feeble frame has dedicated many a student. This, with other causes about this time, took the boy, Alexander Pope, from schools where he learned little, to commit him, under the guardian more than guiding love of indulgent parents, to his own management of his own studies. And study he did—instinctively, eagerly, ramblingly through books of sundry kinds—helping himself as he could to their languages—devouring more than he digested—wedding himself to the high and gracious muses—seeking for, and finding, his own extraordinary powers—and diminishing the small quantity of delicate health which nature had put in his keeping. He resigned himself to die, and was dying, when a strong interposition, among other sanatary measures, transferred him from the back of Pegasus to that of an earth-born horse. [Pg 380]

Pope had a gentleness of spirit, which showed itself in his filial offices to his father and mother—to her the most, ill the prolonged wearing out of a beloved life. It appears in kindly relations to his friends, in charities, in the scheme of his life—contentedness in a bounded, quiet existence, a seclusion among books, and trees, and flowers. His life flowed on peaceably and gently, like the noble river upon which his modest dwelling looked. Ill health, as we said, often dedicates a student. The constitutional feebleness from which he suffered,

might doubly favour his mind; as often the more delicate frame harbours the greater spirit; and as inaptitude for active and rough sports, throws the solitary boy upon the companionship of books, and upon the energies, avocations, and pleasures of his own intelligence and fancy. The little poem of his boyhood, and the first of his manhood, prophesy his tenor of life, and his literary career.

A commanding power, a predominant star in English literature—you might say that the last century belonged to him. Dryden reigned over his contemporaries. Pope, succeeding, took dominion over his own time and the following. The pupil of Dryden, and gratefully proud to proclaim the greatness of his master, and to own all obligations, he moulded himself nevertheless upon a type in his own mind. In the school of Dryden he is an original master. Dryden is, properly speaking, without imitators. His manner proceeds from his own genius, and baffles transcribers. But Pope completed an art which could be learned, and he left a world full of copyists.

A remarkable feature is the early acknowledgment of Pope by his contemporaries. At sixteen he is a poet for the world by his PASTORALS, and at that age he has a literary adviser in Walsh and a literary patron in Trumbull. He does not seem to court. He is courted. He is the intimate friend, we do not know how soon, of scholars and polite writers, of men and women high in birth, in education, in station. Scarce twenty, by his "ESSAY ON CRITICISM" he assumes a chair in the school of the Muses. At five-and-twenty, he is an acknowledged dictator of polite letters. So early, rapid, untroubled an ascension to fame, it would require some research to find a parallel to. Our literature has it not. And this acknowledgment, gratulation, triumph, which friends and circles, and the confined literary world of that day in this country could furnish, a whole age, and a whole country, and a whole world, the extended republic of letters, confirm.

In the judgment of England, in the eighteenth century, the reputation of Pope may be called the most dazzling in English literature. It was a nearer sun than Dryden, Milton, Shakspeare; as for Spenser and Chaucer, they were little better than fixed stars.

Great revolutions in the state of the heavens and of astronomical science have ensued. To say nothing of new luminaries that have come into birth, from the bosom of "chaos and unoriginal night," either we have wheeled round upon Shakspeare, or he upon us, in a surprising manner; the orb of Milton enlarges day by day; cheerily we draw large accessions of the gentlest light on Spenser; and old Father Geoffrey and we are sensibly approximating.

We have taken Pope's counsel. We have with some good-will reverted to Nature, and so we come nearer to the poets of Nature. There may have been other causes at work. The change has involved more than was just a depreciation of Pope himself: as if he were an accomplished artist in a limited sphere of art, and no poet. We dissent *toto corde et toto cœlo*. He was a spirit, muse-born, a hero of half celestial extraction, and so by all rule a demigod.

His age confined him. A poet is not independent of his age. He may ride on the van of the tide—no more. And we see that the greatest poets are but the most entire expression of the age, taken at the best. How shall it be otherwise? Their age is mother and nurse to them. [Pg 381] And what air does a poet respire, but the circulating, fanning, living, breeze of sympathy? He more than all beings receives into his soul the souls of other men. So he thrives and grows; and shall he not be a partaker in his age?

In an age thus to be described, that it refines instead of creating, and that, in particular, it imposes the refinement elaborated by social, and indeed aristocratical manners, upon genius, which should only refine itself by tenderness and sanctity, and by love dwelling evermore in the inextinguishable paradise of the beautiful—he who was fitted to his age by much of his mind, by his wit, by fancy given more fully than imagination, by inclination to the *limæ labor*, by the susceptibility of polish, by a reasonableness of understanding, by his perception of manners, even by the delicacy of his habits—he, ALEXANDER POPE, nevertheless, desired the greatnesses of poetry. At fourteen, he tries his hand in practice on the lofty Statius—at five-and-twenty, upon the sublime Homer. Judge of his poetical heart by his Preface to Shakspeare, by his translation of Homer, preface and all. What was the translation of Homer? Of all works, not creative, the one of most aspiring ambition, even more than that of Pindar or Æschylus. The young poet who has launched on the air the light self-buoyed, gracefully-floating Rape of the Lock, who has dipped his pen in the pathos of love and religion for Eloisa, longs to put in use the powers that kindle and struggle within him. He will do something of greater design in weightier literature; he will, so as a poet may, stir, melt, strengthen, instruct, exalt, and amplify the mind of his country; and he makes the greatest of poets, the father of all poetry—ENGLISH. He pledges himself, before his country, to the task, and then trembles at the difficulties and magnitude of his undertaking, and then sits down to it, and then delivers it accomplished.

Did Homer already speak English, through the organ of Chapman? If he did, it was not English for England; least of all, for the England of Pope's day. Fiery and eloquent, and creative as it is, Chapman's *Homer* is hard reading now, and somewhat rare. *Then*, the book was, for the general capacity, precisely the same thing as if it were not. And Pope, no grudging bestower of merited honours, awards generous praise to his irregularly-great predecessor, amply acknowledging, with one word, in him both native power and effectual sympathy with their unparagoned original.

Let us reflect, also, that after all a true translation of Homer into English is, in all probability, a thing impossible. Why did not Milton leave us half a book, or some fifty verses, that we might know what the utmost poetical power, and the utmost mastery of our speech, and the utmost resources of our verse, could effect? The inspiring expressive music of the original tongue clothes the simplest and most unadorned word and phrase in wealth, splendour, gorgeous majesty, prodigal magnificence; and this, not with any incongruence or disharmony, any more than Eve's GOLDEN tresses were excessive ornament, unmeet for the primitive simplicity of Eden. The same exhilaration and vivification of the hearing soul, which this perpetual music infuses, united to the same simplicity of the thought and the words, will not easily be found in English. Again, rhyme seems wanted to the richness of the harmony. Yet how shall rhyme allow that utmost freedom and range in the flow of the thought which marks the now majestically, now impetuously sweeping, Homeric river? That measure, so *measured*, and yet so free; large, various, capacious—that hexameter is despair. Meanwhile no nation concludes to forego the incorporation of the great foreign works of literature into its own, merely for such discouragement, merely because the adequate representation lies wholly out of reach. We have gained much in bringing over the powerful matter, if we must leave the style behind, and yet the style is almost a part of the matter.

Homer is out of hand—Iliad and Odyssey. The Mæonian sun has ripened the powers of the occidental poet. And Pope—*aged thirty-seven*—declares that henceforward he will write *from*, as well as *to*, his own mind. The "ESSAY ON MAN" follows. It expresses that graver study [Pg 382] of the universal subject, MAN, which appeared to Pope, now self-known, to be, for the time of poetical literature to which he came, the most practicable—for his own ability the aptest; and it embodies that part of anthropology which doubtless was the most congenial to his own inclination—the philosophical contemplation of man's nature, estate, destiny.

The success of this enterprise was astonishing. Be the philosophy what and whose it may, the poem revived to the latest age of poetry the phenomenon of the first, when precept and maxim were modulated into verse, that they might write themselves in every brain, and live upon every tongue.

The spirit and sweetness of the verse, the lucid and vivid expression, the pregnant brevity of the meanings, the marrying of ardent and lofty poetical imagings to moral sentiments and reflections, of which every bosom is the birth-home, the pious will of the argument, which humbles the proud and rebellious human intellect under the absolute rectitude and benevolence of the Deity—nor least of all, the pleasure of receiving easily, as in a familiar speech, thoughts that *were* high, and *might be* abstruse, that, at all events, wore a profound and philosophical air—with strokes intervening of a now playful, now piercing, but always adroit wit—and with touches, here and there strewn between, of natural painting, and of apt unsought pathos—these numerous and excellent qualifications met upon the subject of all subjects nearest to all—MAN—speedily made the first great, original, serious writing of Pope a textbook and a manual for its branch of ethico-theosophy, in every house where there were books in England. These powerful excellences of this great poem did more. They inwove its terse, vigorous, clear, significant, wise, loving, noble, beautiful, and musical sentences—east, west, north, south—with all memories, the mature and the immature—even as in that old, brave day of the world or ever books were.

Pause, gentle reader, for a while, and reflect kindly on these paragraphs for the sake of Alexander Pope and Christopher North. And now accompany us while we select our specimens of the British critics, from the "Nightingale of Twickenham's" preface to the works of Shakspeare. What he proposed to accomplish in this undertaking was, "to give a more correct text from the collated copies of the old editions, without any innovation or indulgence to his own private sense, or conjecture; to insert the various readings in the margin, and to place the suspected passages or interpolations at the bottom of the page; to this was added an explanation of some of the more obsolete or unusual words; and such as appeared to him the most striking passages were marked by a star, or by inverted commas." Warton laments that Pope ever undertook this edition; "a task which the course of his reading and studies did not qualify him to execute with the ability and skill which it deserved, and with which it has since been executed;" but though it was a failure, there was no occasion for lamentation. Johnson says more wisely, "that Pope did many things wrong, and left many things undone, but let him not be defrauded of his due praise. He was the first that knew, or at least, the first that told by what helps the text might be improved. If he inspected the early editions negligently, he taught others to be more accurate. In his preface he expanded with great skill and eloquence the character which had been given of Shakspeare by Dryden; and he drew the public attention upon his works, which, though often mentioned, had been little read."

Warton, too, admits that the "preface is written with taste, judgment, purity, and elegance." Pope speaks modestly of the design of his preface, which is not, he says, to enter into a criticism upon Shakspeare, "though to do it effectually, and not superficially, would be the best occasion that any just writer could take to form the judgment and taste of our nation." His humbler aim is but to give an account of the fate of his works, and the disadvantages under which they have been transmitted to us. But he cannot neglect the opportunity thus [Pg 383] afforded him, "of mentioning some of the principal and characteristic excellences for which (notwithstanding his defects) *he is justly and universally elevated above all other dramatic writers*."

> "If ever any author deserved the name of an *original*, it was Shakspeare. Homer himself drew not his art so immediately from the fountains of nature; it proceeded through Egyptian strainers and channels, and came to him not without some tincture of the learning, or some cast of the models, of those before him. The poetry of Shakspeare was inspiration indeed: he is not so much an imitator, as an instrument, of Nature; and it is not so just to say that he speaks from her, as that she speaks through him.
>
> "His *characters* are so much nature herself, that it is a sort of injury to call them by so distant a name as copies of her. Those of other poets have a constant resemblance, which shows that they received them from one another, and were but multipliers of the same image; each picture, like a mock rainbow, is but the reflection of a reflection. But every single character in Shakspeare is as much an individual as those in life itself; it is as impossible to find any two alike; and such as from their relation or affinity in any respect appear most to be twins, will, upon comparison, be found remarkably distinct. To this life and variety of character, we must add the wonderful preservation of it; which is such throughout his plays, that had all the speeches been printed without the very names of the persons, I believe one might have applied them with certainty to every speaker.
>
> "The *power* over our *passions* was never possessed in a more eminent degree, or displayed in so different instances. Yet all along, there is seen no labour, no pains to raise them; no preparation to guide or guess to the effect, or be perceived to lead toward it, but the heart swells, and the tears burst out, just at the proper places; we are surprised at the moment we weep; and yet upon reflection, find the passion so just, that we should be surprised if we had not wept, and wept at that very moment.
>
> "How astonishing is it again, that the passions directly opposite to these, laughter and spleen, are no less at his command? that he is not more a master of the *great* than the *ridiculous* in human nature; of our noblest tendernesses, than of our vainest foibles; of our strongest emotions, than of our idlest sensations!
>
> "Nor does he only excel in the passions; in the coolness of reflection and reasoning he is full as admirable. His *sentiments* are not only in general the most pertinent and judicious upon every subject; but by a talent very peculiar, something between penetration and felicity, he hits upon that particular point on which the bent of each argument turns, or the force of each motive depends. This is perfectly amazing, from a man of no education or experience in those great and public scenes of life which are usually the subject of his thoughts; so that he seems to have known the world by intuition, to have looked through human nature at one glance, and to be the only author that gives ground for a very new opinion, that the philosopher, and even the man of the world, may be *born*, as well as the poet."

Nothing can be better. Dryden gave us large and grand outlines. Pope's is closer criticism. But it is more than that which Johnson says, that all the successors of Dryden have produced —an expansion only of his notions; unless, in that sense in which every follower in time could by possibility do nothing but expand the notions of the first critic who should have said —"Shakspeare was a poet of the highest description, with a good many troublesome faults." Pope's portraiture is drawn from near and intent inspection; a likeness after the life, and reflecting the life; thoroughly independent of any thing preceding him. Thus, THE COMPLETE SEVERING OF NEARLY-ALLIED PERSONAGES (upon which Pope insists, and which, more than the immense multiplicity, contemplated in a general way, of the some hundred DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, determines essential variety; attests the constituting of every character, after the manner of Nature, from an indivisible SELF, which at once rules it into unity, and holds it unconfused with all others) is a finely-just observation, of which we have not a hint from Dryden; and it carries us, instantly, deep into a most interesting study of comparisons. As of Macbeth and [Pg 384] Richard III., both murderous usurpers, as different as two men can well be; of Leontes and Othello, two jealous husbands, and as different, even in their jealousy, as two men can be; of Coriolanus and Hotspur, each an earthly Mars; each "the soul of honour;" each sudden in passion, impetuous, and ungovernable; each with a kindliness of nature that draws and attaches his friends as much as the superiority of his character overrules them; each with a rough, abrupt, penetrating strength of intellect; each endowed, which is more peculiar, with vivid imagination, that leaps into bold poetical figures; each of a cutting wit, and, in his own way, humourous pleasantry; and yet the semi-traditionary Roman patrician, and the quite historical English earl's son, so distinct that you shall read the two plays, in which they are, ten and twenty times over, without thinking of putting the towering heroes, twinned by so many, so marked, and so profound affinities, upon a line of comparison. Or put all Shakspeare's gallant warriors in a catalogue, and what a diversified list have you drawn up! Hector, Troilus, Diomed, Coriolanus, Tullus Aufidius, Mark Antony, Othello, Cassio, nay, and Iago, Falconbridge, Hotspur, Glendower, Mortimer, Henry V., Talbot, Warwick, Richard III., Richmond, Macbeth, Banquo, Macduff, Old Seward, Edmund, Edgar, Benedict, Bertram, are some of them; for Shakspeare like Scott loved a good soldier. Compare the melancholy

Hamlet and the melancholy Jaques; both shrewd observers of men; both given to philosophizing; and yet different—Heaven knows. And so on. Thus, the remark of Pope goes to the root of Shakspeare's creative art, and leads you into a method of thinking, not soon exhausted.

We endeavour, says Dryden, to follow the VARIETY and greatness of characters that are derived to us from Shakspeare and Fletcher. But does this most general attribution of a characteristic—shared with Fletcher—and such as the loosest observation of the plays forces upon the most uncritical reader—does the accident that Dryden left this inevitable word "VARIETY" written, make the critical observation of Pope no more than a "diffusing" and "paraphrasing" of Dryden's "Epitome?" Has he only "changed Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value, though of greater bulk?" It would at least be as near the truth to say, that he has made Dryden's bill good money by accepting it. Pope, in the precise and critical sense in which he has attached the praise of "variety" to Shakspeare, would certainly not have communicated the praise, with him, to Fletcher.

Shakspeare, says Dryden, "drew the images of Nature, *not laboriously*, but luckily." "All along," says Pope, "there is seen *no labour*, no pains to raise the passions, no preparation to lead towards the effect; but the heart swells, and the tears burst out, just at the proper places." The unstudied, spontaneous movement of the scene, in Shakspeare, both of the Action and of the Passion, as if every thing went on of its own impulse, and not as willed and ruled by the poet, is an imitation of Nature which no other dramatist has so closely urged. Pope insists upon it—for the passion, at least. Is this characteristic already contained in the "not laboriously, but luckily," of Dryden? If it is contained, it is hardly conveyed. A seed has dropped from the hand of Dryden. Under the gardening of Pope, it springs up into a fair and fairly-spread plant. That is a sort of "diffusion" very distinct from turning gold into base metal. So Pope of himself admires that, in the comedies, histories, and tragedies of the unversed Shakspeare, all the businesses, high and low, of human life, turn upon their own hinges.—If a statesman counsel, he lays down the very grounds of proceeding which greyheaded statesmanship would have propounded—a king reigns like a king, a soldier fights like a soldier, woman loves and hates like a woman, a clown is a clown, a thief is a thief. In short, besides the individual constitution and self-consistency of the CHARACTERS, besides the spontaneous and self-timed motion of the PASSIONS, we are further and distinctly to admire this—that the springs, the constitution, and the government of ACTION are imitated; —as if the inexperienced player from Avon side had stood personally, confidentially, [Pg 385] participatingly present in the heart of all human transactions: And if it appears to the acute critic wonderful that Shakspeare should have found, in his own bosom, the archetypes of so many and so diverse individualities, that he should have found there the law given by original Nature for the flow and current, the impulsion, the meandering, and the precipitation of the *passions*; it strikes him as yet more wonderful, more like an inspiring, that he should have found there a divination of that which is subsequent to and ingrafted upon Nature—namely, of human life itself, of universal human experience; much in the same way as Ulysses admired most, in the song of Demodocus, his knowledge of that which had passed withinside the Wooden Horse, and concluded, hence, to the undoubted inspiration of the Muse.

This appears to us to be the meaning of Pope's eulogy; and if it but unfolds the hints of Dryden's, it unfolds them, be it said, uninvidiously, something after the fashion in which Shakspeare himself unfolded the hints which he found in old books, of plots and personages; that is to say, originally, creatively, with quite independent power; and certainly with no deterioration to the matter. Pope goes on to admit faults. We must here dissent as to facts and opinions, and must qualify.

> "It must be owned, that with all these great excellences, he has almost as great defects: and that as he has certainly written better, so he has perhaps written worse than any other. But I think I can in some measure account for these defects, from several causes and accidents; without which it is hard to imagine that so large and so enlightened a mind could ever have been susceptible of them. That all these contingencies should unite to his disadvantage seems to me almost as singularly unlucky, as that so many various, nay, contrary talents should meet in one man, was happy and extraordinary.
>
> "It must be allowed that stage-poetry, of all other, is more particularly levelled to please the *populace*, and its success more immediately depending upon the *common suffrage*. One cannot therefore wonder, if Shakspeare having at his first appearance no other aim in his writings than to procure a subsistence, directed his endeavours solely to hit the taste and humour that then prevailed. The audience was generally composed of the meaner sort of people, and therefore the images of life were to be drawn from those of their own rank; accordingly we find, that not our author's only, but almost all the old comedies have their scene among *tradesmen* and *mechanics*; and even their historical plays strictly follow the common *old stories* or *vulgar traditions* of that kind of people. In tragedy, nothing was so sure to *surprise* and cause *admiration*, as the most strange, unexpected, and consequently most unnatural, events and incidents; the most exaggerated thoughts; the most verbose and bombast

> expression; the most pompous rhymes, and thundering versification. In comedy, nothing was so sure to *please* as mean buffoonery, vile ribaldry, and unmannerly jests of fools and clowns. Yet even in these, our author's wit buoys up, and is borne above his subject; his genius in those low parts is like some prince of a romance in the disguise of a shepherd or peasant; a certain greatness and spirit now and then break out, which manifest his higher extraction and qualities.
>
> "It may be added, that not only the common audience had no notion of the rules of writing, but few even of the better sort piqued themselves upon any great degree of knowledge or nicety that way; till Ben Jonson, getting possession of the stage, brought critical learning into vogue; and that this was not done without difficulty, may appear from those frequent lessons (and indeed almost declamations) which he was forced to prefix to his first plays, and put into the mouth of his actors, the *grex*, *chorus*, &c., to remove the prejudices, and inform the judgment of his hearers. Till then, our authors had no thoughts of writing on the model of the ancients: their tragedies were only histories in dialogue; and their comedies followed the thread of any novel as they found it, no less implicitly than if it had been true history.
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> "To judge, therefore, of Shakspeare by Aristotle's rules, is like trying a man by the laws of one country, who acted under those of another. He writ to the *people*; and writ at first without patronage from the better sort, and therefore [Pg 386]
> without aims of pleasing them: without assistance or advice from them: learned, as without the advantage of education or acquaintance among them; without that knowledge of the best of models, the ancients, to inspire him with an emulation of them: in a word, without any views of reputation, and of what poets are pleased to call immortality: some or all of which have encouraged the vanity, or animated the ambition, of other writers.
>
> "Yet it must be observed, that when his performances had merited the protection of his prince, and when the encouragement of the court had succeeded to that of the town, the works of his riper years are manifestly raised above those of his former. The dates of his plays sufficiently evidence that his productions improved, in proportion to the respect he had for his auditors. And I make no doubt this observation would be found true in every instance, were but editions extant, from which we might learn the exact time when every piece was composed, and whether writ for the town or the court."

Pope here apologises for the very middling sort of company which Shakspeare, in his Comedies, obliges us to keep, by the obligation he was under of "holding the mirror up to" his hearers, who being, for the most part, "the meaner sort of people," would only duly recognise and sympathize with "images of life drawn from those of their own rank." And so we have a pardonable cause, wherefore "our author's" (like "almost all the old") Comedies, HAVE THEIR SCENE among TRADESMEN and MECHANICS;" and some excuse for the degradation of history by the historical plays, which strictly follow the common OLD STORIES or VULGAR TRADITIONS of that sort of people.

The DEFENCE is kindly; and bears with it, we must acknowledge, a specious air. In the mean time, here lacks surely something to the regular ordering of the trial. Where, we should be glad to know, is the CORPUS DELICTI? Before justifying, let us hear some witnesses to the OFFENCE. Let us call over the Comedies. Here is the roll of them.

THE TEMPEST!—*Dramatis Personæ:*—Alonso, KING of Naples;—Sebastian, HIS BROTHER;—Prospero, the RIGHTFUL DUKE of Milan!—Antonio, HIS BROTHER, the USURPING DUKE of Milan!—Ferdinand, SON TO THE KING OF NAPLES!—Gonzalo, an honest old COUNSELLOR of Naples!—Adrian, Francisco, LORDS!—Really, we are afraid that all the ignobler males left, Caliban, a savage and deformed SLAVE; Trinculo, a JESTER; Stephano, a drunken BUTLER; the MASTER OF A SHIP, the BOATSWAIN, and MARINERS—will not, any more than Miranda, with Ariel and the Spirits who personate in Prospero's masque, and who clear out the playbill, suffice to lay THE SCENE of the "Tempest" AMONG tradesmen and mechanics. Next come, handsomely cloaked and feathered in old Italian garb, "The TWO GENTLEMEN of Verona!"

But we will not spare, any further, the curious reader the labour of turning over the leaves of his own copy, or of his memory. The truth is, as every reader's recollection at once answers, that the rule for the comedy of Shakspeare, respectively to the social degrees along which it moves, may be worded safely enough from the scheme of persons exhibited above. The comedy of Shakspeare removes itself, by two great strides, from the meaner sort of its auditory; for light-footed, or more seriously-pacing, it loves to tread on floors of state; it associates familiarly with the highly-born and the highly-natured. His Thalia is of a very aristocratic humour. But, more than this, she further distances the vulgar associations and experience of her spectators, by putting between herself and them the Romance of Manners. We have seen the names—Naples, Milan, Verona. Let us pursue the roll-call. In "Twelfth Night," the "scene" is a city in Illyria, and the sea-coast near it;—in "Measure for Measure," VIENNA;—in "Much Ado about Nothing," MESSINA;—in the "Midsummer Night's dream," ATHENS, AND A WOOD NOT FAR FROM IT;—in "Love's Labour's Lost," NAVARRE;—in the "Merchant of Venice," PARTLY AT VENICE, AND PARTLY AT BELMONT, THE SEAT OF PORTIA, ON THE CONTINENT

(understand, OF ITALY;)—in "As You Like It," THE SCENE LIES, FIRST, NEAR OLIVER'S HOUSE; AFTERWARDS, PARTLY IN THE USURPER'S COURT, AND PARTLY IN THE FOREST OF ARDEN;—in "All's Well that End's Well," PARTLY IN FRANCE, AND PARTLY IN TUSCANY;—in the "Taming of the Shrew," SOMETIMES IN PADUA, AND SOMETIMES IN PETRUCHIO'S HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY;—in "The Winter's Tale," (a comedy, wherein only two of the personages die—one eaten,) THE SCENE IS SOMETIMES IN SICILIA, SOMETIMES IN BOHEMIA;—in the "Comedy of Errors," at EPHESUS;—Last of all, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," in WINDSOR and the parts adjacent. THIRTEEN comedies lying in Italy, Illyria, Germany, Greece, France, Asia Minor, Sicily, Bohemia, and in that uninhabited island, inhabited by a day-dream, and which lies nowhere. *One* in *England*. [Pg 387]

We throw every thing together. To Shakspeare the boarded stage is the field of imagination. He comes from the hand of Nature an essential poet. That he is a dramatic poet, should have two reasons. The first, given in his poetical constitution; that the piercing and various inquisition of humanity for which he was gifted; the intimate mastery of passion; and the extraordinary activity of ratiocination which distinguish him, are satisfied only by the Drama. Then, in the accident of the times—that as the stage rose for Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and they for the stage—so, with Shakspeare, in England. At a certain point of the social progression, the theatre becomes the spot where poetry has living power. Shakspeare must seize upon the mind of his countrymen, as Homer took possession of Greece—VIVA VOCE. The silent and retired press is for the dream-like Spenser—for the star-like Milton. To Shakspeare, the Promethean maker of men and women, earthly-moulded if kindled into life with fire from heaven—give a stage and actors!—Give men and women, to personate men and women!—And give three thousand men and women, to throng roundabout, and look and listen—thrill and weep—suspended in one breathlessness! But not because he has deigned to trace upon those actual boards his magical ring, and because within it his powerful art calls up no air-made phantasmagoria, but breathing and sentient *substantial* humanity; not, therefore, is he less a magician—less a POET—less, if you will, a dreamer. Imagination is the faculty which habitually divides him, as all his brotherhood, from us, the vulgar of mankind. To him the stage is the field of imagination; therefore, he avails himself of all allowed imaginative resources. Distance, in time and place, which renders indefinite; strange, picturesque, poetical manners, and regions, are such legitimate means. In particular, imagination prefers high rank to low, for half a dozen reasons. The outward show, state, pomp, retinue, splendour of costume, of habitation, of all daily accidental conditions;—these allure imagination, which, like grief, "is easily beguiled." EASE, in human life, like that attributed to the heavenly divinities—the ρεια ζωντες—the gods who live at ease, pleases imagination;—which might be justified. But imagination is not a light and idle child, to be won by the mere toy of a throne and robe, crown and sceptre. These are the signs of a universal homage rendered; and in this meaning, besides their natural richness and beauty, pleasing. Again, imagination itself does homage to stately power—not homage servile, as to that from which it dreads evil—but free homage, contemplatively, to a wellspring of momentous effects. The power that invests the person of a sovereign, of necessity clothes him in majesty. Again, many and grave destinies hang about high persons. Each stands for many of less note; and imagination is a faculty, taking delight in the representation of many by one. Besides, high persons carry on high actions; and they are free to act. They will, and straightway they do.

Here, then, is good cause why the imaginative drama, comic or tragic, shall delight in high persons. And you see accordingly, that the plays of Shakspeare, of whatsoever description, move regularly amongst the loftily born—kings, independent dukes, nobles, gentlemen.

"The Emperor of Russia was my father:"

says the falsely accused Hermione, and you sympathize with her proud consciousness, and you THE MORE feel her abhorred indignity. [Pg 388]

If Spenser could say, that it belongs to gentle blood to sit well on horseback—much more does the easy and inborn courage and worth of gentle blood bestride bravely, gracefully, lightly, and well, the careering, rearing, bounding, plunging, and headlong rushing horses of human destinies.

The fact, then, is this:—Shakspeare thus views the world; and he frames his idea of the drama accordingly.

What, then, does Pope mean, when he says that Shakspeare "lays his scene amongst tradesmen and mechanics?"

Surely he does not include under *tradesmen*, great *merchants*. Not, for example, the "Merchant of Syracusa," the grave and good old Ægæon, condemned to death in the "Comedy of Errors" because Ephesus and Syracusa have war. He and his fortune are as far away as a king with his—from the 'prentices of London. It is not the Venetian merchant, the princely Antonio, with his argosies, spice and silk laden, that Pope regards as letting down the dignity of the sock; nor, we hope, the Jew and usurer, Shylock; the sublime in indignation, when he vindicates to his down-spurned race the parity of the human tempering in body and soul; the sublime in hate, when he fastens like a devil his fangs—or prepares to fasten—in the quivering, living flesh of his Christian debtor.

No! these are not yet the key to the enigma—"*tradesmen* and mechanics."

In the "Midsummer Night's Dream," "a crew" of six "rude *mechanicals*," "hard-handed men," "that work for bread upon Athenian stalls," enact TWO scenes wholly to themselves—ONE, which mixes them up with the fairies; and ONE, in the presence of Theseus, Duke of Athens, and of his fair warrior-bride Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons; to say nothing of ONE, or possible TWO fairy scenes, which include one of the said "swaggering hempen homespuns," transformed by faëry.

Is *this* that "laying" of the "scene amongst tradesmen and mechanics," which has afforded our critic his absolute description of Shakspeare's comedy?

We greatly suspect, that it had too much to do in suggesting the strange misrepresentation.

And is this all?

No! It is not.

There is one play that, by its whole invention, lies nearest the reality, which must be taken as habitually possessing the understandings of an English—a London—audience, in the reign of Elizabeth. It is that one comedy which haunts upon English ground—"The Merry Wives of Windsor." The complexion and constitution of the play lay it in the bosom—the manners are those—of MIDDLE English life.

Here are the persons:—Sir John Falstaff; Fenton, (he is Ann Page's lover, the list of the names assigns him no rank. In conversation with mine host of the Garter, however, he asserts his own quality; with "as I am a gentleman;") Shallow, *a country justice*; Slender, *cousin to Shallow*; Mr Ford, Mr Page, *two gentlemen* dwelling at Windsor; William Page, a boy, *son to Mr Page*; Sir Hugh Evans, *a Welsh parson*; Dr Caius, *a French Physician; Host of the Garter Inn*; Bardolf, Pistol, Nym, *followers* of Falstaff; Robin, *page* to Falstaff; Simple, *servant* to Slender; Rugby, *servant* to Dr Caius.

There is no need of adding two wives and a daughter. Here is the *toning* of that which we will take leave to call Shakspeare's *only unromantic and unaristocratical* comedy.

Was this written to please the "meaner sort" of people who frequented the playhouses?

Dennis hands down the tradition—which he may have had from Dryden, who may have had it from Sir W. Davenant—that "the comedy was written at the command of Queen Elizabeth, and *by her direction*." At all events, and whatsoever other tastes it courted and may have gratified, it won the favour of the highest audience. The quarto edition of 1602, describes it as having been "divers times acted by the right honourable my Lord Chamberlaine's servants, both before her Maiestie, and else-where;" and in the accounts of the *Revels at Court*, in the latter end of 1604, it figures as performed on the Sunday following November first, "by his Majestie's plaiers." [Pg 389]

We have thus, in part explicitly and in part summarily, documented the TONE, if it may be so called, of Shakspeare's Comic Theatre—being impelled so to do, first of all, by the duty of contradicting, the most injurious and utterly groundless characterization of a critic, whom we cite with the highest esteem and applause; further, by the fear that the positive and unqualified averment of a high and critical authority might entrap a docile and easy reader into an unhappy *misrecollection* of his own true and clear knowledge upon the matter. Thirdly, we were not sorry to find ourselves engaged in clearing up, once for all, our own hitherto somewhat confused and insecure impressions. In the fourth place, we do always rejoice, and are irresistibly swayed from our equipoise, and are liable to be hurried any lengths, when we fall in with any opportunity of talking in any way about Shakspeare. But in particular we are glad to be obliged to approve and authenticate any general and grounding views of his poetry; and it came not amiss to our humour, in this day of the world, to show how tenderly and reverently the Spirit, who has the most lovingly, largely, and profoundly comprehended humanity, viewed the mistrusted and assailed institutions which have all along built and sustained the societies of men. If there is "beauty" that "maketh beautiful old rhyme," there is verse that reacts upon its matter; the poetry of Shakspeare shall stand in the place of a more easily fallible political science, to strengthen, whilst it adorns, the old pillars of man's world. Song can draw down the moon from the sky—song shall draw and charm many a rugged, uncouth, untamed understanding to a more submissive political docility.

But, indeed, there lurked one other less ambitious motive. What could the accurate Pope mean by this most inaccurate description of his author? We presume that there is an answer. The eulogy which precisely describes Shakspeare, is Pope's own. The imputations against Shakspeare, of which Pope will palliate the edge, are not Pope's. They are the impeachments laid by the adversary, which Pope, zealous of mitigating, too largely and hastily concedes. Standing, then, in bare and sharp opposition, as they do, to the fact, they may serve us as constituting a fact in themselves. They attest the opinion of the day—opinion, at least, prevalent high and wide, since Pope allows it. We can understand the opinion itself only as a confused and excessive exaggeration of the admixture which Shakspeare allowed to the lower comic, in comedy and in tragedy; as a protest—in which how far did Pope join?—against that admixture. The conclusion which this day will draw, must be, that the criticism of Shakspeare in polite circles, at that day, stood low.

> "Another cause (and no less strong than the former) may be deduced from our

author's being a *player*, and forming himself first upon the judgments of that body of men whereof he was a member. They have ever had a standard to themselves, upon other principles than those of Aristotle. As they live by the majority, they know no rule but that of pleasing the present humour, and complying with the wit in fashion; a consideration which brings all their judgment to a short point. Players are just such judges of what is *right*, as tailors are of what is *graceful*. And in this view it will be but fair to allow, that most of our author's faults are less to be ascribed to his wrong judgment as a poet, than to his right judgment as a player.

"By these men it was thought a praise to Shakspeare, that he scarce ever *blotted a line*. This they industriously propagated, as appears from what we are told by Ben Jonson in his *Discoveries*, and from the preface of Heminges and Condell to the first folio edition. But in reality (however it has prevailed) there never was a more groundless report, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable evidences; as the comedy of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, which he entirely new writ; the *History of Henry VI.*, which was first published under the title of *The Contention of York and Lancaster*, and that of *Henry V.*, extremely improved: that of *Hamlet*, enlarged to almost as much again as at first, and many others. I believe the common opinion of his want of learning proceeded from no better ground. This too might be thought a praise by some, and to this his errors have as injudiciously been ascribed by others. For it is certain, were it true, it could concern but a small part of them; the most are such as are not properly defects, but superfœtations; and arise not from want of learning or reading, but from want of thinking or judging: or rather (to be more just to our author) from a compliance to those wants in others. As to a wrong choice of the subject, a wrong conduct of the incidents, false thoughts, forced expressions, &c., if these are not to be ascribed to the aforesaid accidental reasons, they must be charged upon the poet himself, and there is no help for it. But I think the two disadvantages which I have mentioned, (to be obliged to please the lowest of people, and to keep the worst of company,) if the consideration be extended as far as it reasonably may, will appear sufficient to mislead and depress the greatest genius upon earth. Nay, the more modesty with which such a one is endued, the more he is in danger of submitting and conforming to others against his own better judgment." [Pg 390]

On the other hand, as the intellectual destiny of Shakspeare was to be the greatest of dramatists, the trade of a player had its advantages. He learned absolutely what a stage is, what actors can do, and what audiences are. Charles Lamb feebly maintained, that Shakspeare's Plays are unfitted for acting, by being above it. They are above reading too; at least, they are above most—why not say the truth at once—above all readers of them. Yet it would be a pity to leave them unread. They are the best fitted of all plays for acting; for of all plays they best possess the stage, and command the audience. In thus extolling the essential poetry of Shakspeare, he condemns his practical understanding, his art. He oversteps, too, the inabilities of the histrionic art. The inabilities of the histrions themselves, is another matter. The difficulty of understanding Shakspeare, must not be turned into the impossibility of representing him when understood. The power, art, science, capacity, what you will, with which he has fitted his works to their immediate use, shows itself remarkably in this, that as the stage grows in its material means, the play comes out in power, splendour, majesty, magnificence, as if the stage but grew to the dimensions of that which it must contain; and it must have been hundreds of times felt in the green-room, that only the Plays of Shakspeare try, and form actor and actress, foster and rear them to the height of their possible stature.

"But as to his *want of learning*, it may be necessary to say something more: there is certainly a vast difference between *learning* and *languages*. How far he was ignorant of the latter, I cannot determine; but it is plain he had much reading at least, if they will not call it learning. Nor is it any great matter, if a man has knowledge, whether he has it from one language or another. Nothing is more evident than that he had a taste of natural philosophy, mechanics, ancient and modern history, poetical learning, and mythology: we find him very knowing in the customs, rights, and manners of antiquity. In *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cæsar*, not only the spirit, but manners of Romans are exactly drawn: and still a nicer distinction is shown between the manners of the Romans in time of the former and of the latter. His reading in the ancient historians is no less conspicuous, in many references to particular passages, and the speeches copied from Plutarch in *Coriolanus* may, I think, as well be made an instance of his learning as those copied from Cicero in *Catiline*, of Ben Jonson's. The manners of other nations in general, the Egyptians, Venetians, French, &c., are drawn with equal propriety. Whatever object of nature or branch of science he either speaks of or describes, it is always with competent, if not extensive knowledge; his descriptions are still exact; all his metaphors appropriated, and remarkably drawn from the true nature and inherent qualities of each subject. When he treats of ethic or politic, we may constantly observe a wonderful justness of distinction as well as extent of comprehension. No one is more a master of the poetical story, or has more

> frequent allusions to the various parts of it. Mr Waller (who has been celebrated for this last particular) has not shown more learning this way than Shakspeare. We have translations from Ovid published in his name, among those poems which pass for his, and for some of which we have undoubted authority, (being published by himself, and dedicated to his noble patron, the Earl of Southampton.) He appears also to have been conversant in Plautus, from whom he has taken the plot of one of his plays. He follows the Greek authors, and particularly Dares Phrygius, in another; although I will not pretend to say in what language he read them. The modern Italian writers of novels he was manifestly acquainted with; and we may conclude him to be no less conversant with the ancients of his own country; from the use he has made of Chaucer in *Troilus and Cressida*, and in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, if that play be his, as there goes a tradition it was; and indeed it has little resemblance of Fletcher, and more of our author than some of those that have been received as genuine. [Pg 391]
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> "I am inclined to think, this opinion proceeded originally from the zeal of the partisans of our author and Ben Jonson; as they endeavoured to exalt the one at the expense of the other. It is ever the nature of parties to be in extremes; and nothing is so probable, as that because Ben Jonson had much the more learning, it was said, on the one hand, that Shakspeare had none at all; and because Shakspeare had much the most wit and fancy, it was retorted, on the other, that Jonson wanted both. Because Shakspeare borrowed nothing, it was said that Ben Jonson borrowed every thing. Because Jonson did not write extempore, he was reproached with being a year about every piece; and because Shakspeare wrote with ease and rapidity, they cried, he never once made a blot. Nay, the spirit of opposition ran so high, that whatever those of the one side objected to the other, was taken at the rebound, and turned into praises; as injudiciously as their antagonists before had made them objections."

The learning of Shakspeare! Pope, like Dryden, has said well upon it. Shakspeare, the personal friend of men of highest rank, learning, genius; and reading in the English language as much as he chose of the wit and wisdom there entreasured, inherited the mind of the world. What will you have more? That he shall read his own spirit; and, therefore, is he above all men learned. As for that seeming wildness and irregularity of his style, which many are inclined, even at this day, to set down to his imperfect education, we beg you to recollect his more elaborated rhymed poems; his Venus and Adonis; his Rape of Lucrece; his Passionate Pilgrim; his Sonnets. And are you quite sure that some of the most finished, the strictest composition as to language and verse, of his age, shall not be found there, far beyond the experience or even comprehension of Dr Parr and all his scholars?

Reader beloved from old, and with whom we have ever loved, on pleasant landing-place in spacious article, lovingly to confabulate—while printer's devil, forgetful of copy, in the far depths of Altisidora indulged in snoreless sleep—reader, beloved anew, tell us who were the Greeks? "They were that division of mankind in which Homer took mortal existence. Homer spoke Greek." Good. And so, three or five thousand years hence, somebody will be asking somebody, who were the English? "Oh! they inhabited the island in which Shakspeare was born! Then, and a little while before and after. Shakspeare spoke English. He was an Englishman." Good. Ay, ay, rough and ready, and gentle reader, in what civilized part of Central Africa such question and reply will be made, we predict not; but you and we feel, that when and wheresoever the little dialogue shall occur, we two shall have for ourselves our own sufficient share of posthumous reputation, and eke Charles Knight. These twelve volumes always lying on their own line of our table, are Charles' edition of Shakspeare, alone of all our valuables uninsured at the Sun, for they are bound in asbestos. And now, obedient reader, listen to us lecturing, like a philosophical critic as we are, on Pope's ESSAY ON CRITICISM, involved in these ten volumes, edited twenty years ago by William Roscoe, now with the saints.

Essay on Criticism! What does one expect? Criticism, be it noted, has two phases. This is the first. In its origin, it follows now afar, now close upon the works out of which it has arisen. It describes the methods which genius has half-instinctively, half-thoughtfully followed. It [Pg 392] brings out into clear statement, certain movements and felt workings of genius; and it defines formal imitation to workers that shall come. It appears, therefore, as an embodying of rules. This is, in the main, the shape in which criticism appears in classical antiquity. This was the meaning of the name with Pope and his contemporaries. "*Dicta sunt omnia*," remarks Quinctilian, (insisting upon the order in which nature produces, first, the arts themselves, poetry or eloquence, in power—operative; *then*, the deduction and exposition of the method,) "*antequam præciperentur*." And so in Pope and his contemporaries, we read of nothing but RULES—RULES—RULES! At this day, the word then in honour, grates, albeit a smooth one, upon one's ear. It seems to depress and to tame, to shut up and imprison thought, which would range and soar, and asks breath, and vigour, and liberty, from true criticism. The truth is, that since that day the world has turned round, and we are turned philosophers. Thus the second phasis has arisen. We want no longer the rules, but the PRINCIPLES—the facts or the laws in our nature, and the nature of things about us, which have given out the rules; whence they flowed to Homer and to Demosthenes. We will drink from

the fountains; not even from those "golden urns!" And with right and with reason, for we, too, are the children of nature. Besides, we will JUDGE Homer and Demosthenes. Without doubt, criticism, founded as an art empirical, tends continually to its second phasis, of a science grounding an art. And it is to be hoped, that something towards this profounder constitution has been attained, and that we, in following down our critics, shall follow out some part of such a progress. In the mean time, let us not rate our predecessors too low, merely upon the showing of their own modesty. Do not believe that Aristotle could propound a rule, through which a principle did not gleam out. And, in sooth, when this Essay sprang from the brain of Pope,—were not, possibly, the papers lying in the desk of Addison, in which he began, for our literature, the deliberate and express examination into the Philosophy of Criticism, within the domain of the beautiful in Art and Nature?

Addison, in a commendatory critique in the *Spectator*, said, that the observations in the Essay "follow one another without that methodical regularity that would have been requisite in a prose writer." And Warton, in opposition to Warburton, who asserted that it was a regular piece, written on a regular and consistent plan, has spoken scornfully of the Bishop's Commentary, and concluded in his usual forcible-feeble way, that Pope had no plan in the poem at all. Roscoe spiritedly rates Warton for assuming to know Pope's mind better than Pope himself, who gave the Commentary his *imprimatur*. It may occasionally refine rather too ingeniously, but on the whole it is elucidatory, and Roscoe did well to give it entire in his edition of Pope. The Essay is in one book, but divided into three principal parts or numbers; and Warburton in a few words tells its plan:—"The rest gives the rules for the study of the art of criticism; the second exposes the causes of wrong judgment; and the third marks out the morals of the critic." And Roscoe says, with equal truth, that "a certain degree of order and succession prevails, which leads the reader through the most important topics connected with the subject; thereby uniting the charm of variety with the regularity of art." Adding finely, that "poetry abhors nothing so much as the *appearance* of formality and restraint."

An excellent feature of the Essay, giving it practical worth, and interesting as native to the character of the writer, is the strenuous requisition to the poet himself, that he shall within his own soul, and for his own use of his own art, accomplish himself in criticism. It is recorded that Walsh, "the muses' judge and friend," said to Pope—"There is at least one virtue of writing in which an English poet of to-day may excel his predecessors; that is —CORRECTNESS." But it is more likely that the perception of this virtue in the poetical intellect of Pope drew out the remark from Walsh, than that the remark suggested to the poet the [Pg 393] pursuit of the virtue. Pope, in his verse, in his prose, in his life, *rules himself*. Deliberated purpose, resolutely adopted and consistently executed, characterises the man and the writer. It is nature, or some profounder control than a casual suggestion of a literary aim, that imparts this pervading character. As little could he owe to another the nice discrimination, the intellectual precision, the delicacy of perception—in a word, the critical sense and apprehension which make up one aspect of the mind, impressed upon the style, generally considered, of Pope. As far, then, as the virtue of correctness is to be predicated of his writings—and we do not believe that the countrymen of a poet go on predicating of him, for generation after generation, gratuitously—we must believe that we have to thank himself for it, and not Walsh.

We said, "UPON THE STYLE, GENERALLY CONSIDERED,"—for we acknowledge exceptions and contradictions to the general position; inaccuracies and incorrectnesses, that would make an answer to the question—"What is the CORRECTNESS OF POPE?" a somewhat troublesome affair. But we resolutely insist that when, in his "Essay on Criticism," he calls upon the poet himself severely to school his own mind in preparation; when he requires, that in working he shall not only feel and fancy, but understand too; when, in a word, he claims that he shall possess his art AS AN ART; he speaks, his own spirit impelling; and so stamps a fine personality, which is one mode of originality, on his work.

The praise that is uppermost in one's mind of the *Essay on Criticism*, is its rectitude of legislation. Pope is an orthodox doctor—a champion of the good old cause. Hence, after almost a century and a half, this poem of a minor (Warburton says his twentieth year) carries in our literature the repute and weight of an authority and a standard. It is of the right good *English* temper—thoughtful and ardent—discreet and generous—firm, with sensibility—bold and sedate—manly and polished. He establishes himself in well-chosen positions of natural strength, commanding the field; and he occupies them in the style of an experienced leader, with forces judiciously disposed, and showing a resolute front every way of defence and offence. You do not curiously enquire into the novelty of his doctrines. He has done well if, in small compass, he has brought together, and vigorously compacted and expressed with animation, poignancy, and effect, the best precepts. Such writing is beneficial, not simply by the truths which it newly propounds, or more luminously than heretofore unfolds, but by the authority which it vindicates to true art—by the rallying-point which it affords to the loyal adherents of the high and pure muses—by the sympathy which its wins, or confirms, to good letters—by its influence in dispersing pestilent vapours, and rendering the atmosphere wholesome.

In perusing the "Essay on Criticism," the reader is occasionally tempted to ask himself "whether he has under his eyes an art of criticism or an art of poetry." 'Tis no wonder; since, in some sort, the two arts are one and the same. They coincide largely; criticism being

nothing else than the reasoned intelligence of poetry. Just the same spirit, power, precision, delicacy, and accomplishment of understanding, which reign in the soul of the great poet creating, rule in that of the good critic judging. The poet, creating, criticizes his own work; he is poet and critic both. The critic is a poet without the creation. As Apelles is eye and hand, both; the critic of Apelles is eye only. This identification, so far as it goes, has been variously grounded and viewed. Of old, it was urged that only the poet is the judge of poetry, the painter of painting, the musician of music, and so on. Such positions proceed upon a high and reverential estimation of art. To judge requires the depth and sharpness of sensibility, the vivid and pathetic imagination, which characterize the artist. It asks more. To see the picture as it should be gazed upon, to hear the poem as it would be listened to, laborious preparation is needed—study, strenuous and exact, learned and searching—that ardent and lover-like communing with nature, the original of arts, and that experience in the [Pg 394] powers, the difficulties, and the significancy of art, which only the dedication of the votary to the service of an art can easily be supposed to induce. There is, in practice, a verity and an intimacy of knowledge, without which theoretical criticism wants both light and life. So Pope contends—

> "Let such judge others who themselves excel;
> And censure freely, who have written well."

He seems, at the same time, to be aware that this doctrine is not likely to find general favour; and that an objection will be taken up by those with whom it is unpalatable, grounded in the poet's liability to be seduced, beguiled, transported, misled, by his sympathy with that which is in the art specifically his own—the inventive power. And he admits the danger; but rebuts the objection by averring that, on the other side, the critic who is not a poet has his own temptation. He will be run away with by his intellectual propensities; the opinion of his own infallibillity; the pleasure of pronouncing sentence—dispositions all, that move to a hasty, and are adverse to a generous, decision.

> "Poets are partial to *their wit*, 'tis true,
> But are not critics to *their judgment*, too?"

The two arts, poetry and the criticism of poetry, thus running together, so as that in the mind of the poet they are one thing, and that it is hard well to distinguish in speaking of them in prose, it will not seem surprising if Pope, intending to write of the lesser, and so inveigled into writing of the greater, should not always distinctly know of which he writes.

Let us cite a celebrated passage as an example of such almost unavoidable confusion.

> "First fathom nature, and your judgment frame
> By her just standard, which is still the same.
> Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,
> One clear, unchanged, and universal light;
> Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
> At once the source, and end, and test of art.
> Art from that fund each just supply provides,
> Works without show, and without pomp presides.
> In some fair body thus the informing soul
> With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole,
> Each motion guides, and every nerve sustains,
> Itself unseen, but in th' effect remains.
> Some, to whom heaven in wit has been profuse,
> Want as much more to turn it to its use;
> For wit and judgment often are at strife,
> Though meant each other's aid, like man and wife.
> 'Tis more to guide than spur the muse's steed
> Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed;
> The winged courser, like a generous horse,
> Shows most his mettle when you check his course."

Now, lend your ears. Pray, *attend*.

It these memorable twenty lines—memorable by the truth of the thinking, and the spirited or splendid felicity of expression—the subject of the rules delivered is for two verses—CRITICISM PROPER, that is to say, the faculty of judging in the mind of the critic, who is not necessarily a poet, and whose function in the world is the judgment of the work produced and complete, and exposed for free censure.

> "First fathom nature, and your judgment frame
> By her just standard, which is still the same."

This general reference to the fountain-head of law and of power, is spoken to the critic—the writer of critiques—the public censurer—the man of judgment.

For the next four lines, the creative power, and the presiding criticism in the mind of the poet, and the judicial criticism in the mind of the official critic, are all three in hand together.

> "Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright, [Pg 395]

One clear, unchanged, and universal light;
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of art."

Warburton has remarked, that the two last verses run parallel to one another, inasmuch as "source" respects "life," the ever-welling—"end" reflects "force," for the force of any thing arises from its being directed to its end—and "test" looks back to "beauty," for every thing acquires beauty by its being reduced to its true standard. Very well said.

But in what sense is nature the "end" of art? Warburton explains the word, by "the design of poetry being to convey knowledge of nature in the most agreeable manner." Might not one think that nature is this "end" rather, inasmuch as art aims at reaching nature in our bosoms? In this acceptation, "end" and "force" would precisely belong to one another.

In the mean time, "life" and "source" distinctly concern the creative power in the soul of the poet; art's "end" must be known, and fixedly looked at, as the lodestar by the mariner, by presiding criticism in the same soul; and the "test" of art must evidently be applied by the critic discharging his peculiar functions; whilst "unerring nature," imaged as the sun, enlightens, of course, both poet and critic.

And now the critic, who was at the outset of the strain—six verses ago—alone in contemplation, is dismissed for good or for ill. The poet is on Pegasus's back; the lashing out of a heel kicks the unfortunate devil to the devil; and away we go.

For one verse, the creative power, and the presiding criticism in the mind of the poet, are confounded together under the freshly suggested name—ART.

"Art from that fund each just supply provides."

That is to say, "Art," as the inventive power in the poet, draws from the sole "fund," nature, its abundant "supplies." Art, as the critical power in the poet, takes care that precisely the "just" supply be drawn.

In the next line, this same art, signifies this presiding criticism only.

"Works without show, and without pomp presides."

Clearly, the intent, inostensive, virtuous faculty of criticism alone, influencing, guarding, leading, and ruling.

Then out of the four lines, which elaborate an excellent simile, due in propriety to the presiding criticism, two are chequered with a lingering recollection of the creative power—

"In some fair body thus the informing soul
With spirit feeds, with vigour fills the whole,
Each motion guides, and every nerve sustains;
Itself unseen, but in th' effect remains."

What feeds? What fills? You cannot help looking back to that provision of "supplies;" and yet a profounder truth would be disclosed, another brilliancy imparted, and an unperplexed significancy given to the fine image, if Criticism alone might be the informing soul—if the delicate Reason of Art in the accomplished poetical spirit, had been boldly and frankly represented as inspiriting and invigorating, no less than as guiding and supporting; for criticism is the virtue of art, ruling the passions, and surely neither orator, nor poet, nor philosopher, will pause in answering, that virtue "feeds" with "spirits," and "fills with vigour." That which, itself unseen, remains in its effect, is clearly that authorized criticism which genius, in the poet's soul, obeys.

In the next verse wit signifies the creative power alone.

"Some to whom Heaven in wit has been profuse."

In the next, wit is the presiding criticism alone.

"Want as much more to turn it to its use."

In the two following, wit is the creative power only, and judgment is the presiding criticism.

"For wit and judgment often are at strife,
Though meant each other's aid, like man and wife."

The four closing verses, which deservedly ring in every ear, and grace every tongue—lucid and vigorous—born of the true poetical self-understanding—extol duly the presiding criticism, of which only they speak. [Pg 396]

"'Tis more to guide than spur the muse's steed,
Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed;
The winged courser, like a generous horse,
Shows most his mettle when you check his course."

A happy commentary on the "feeding with spirits," and "filling with vigour," as we would accept them. The rein provokes into action the plenitude of life that else lies unused.

By the by, Gilbert Wakefield, not the happiest of critics in his services to Pope, here rightly warns against the unskilful and indolent error of apprehending from the word "like" a most inapt simile, which would explain a horse by a horse, and exalt Pegasus by cutting off his wings. The words are clearly to be understood, "like a generous horse—AS HE IS."

We have seen, then, instructed reader, that the poet begins giving advice to the critic. Then he entangles for a moment the critic and poet together. Then he discards the critic wholly, and takes the poet along with him to the end. Do not forget, we beseech you, that there are, in the soul of the poet, two great distinct powers. There is the primary creative power, which, strong in love and passion and imagination, converses with nature, draws thence its heaped intellectual wealth, and transmutes it all into poetical substance. Then there is the great presiding power of criticism, which sits in sovereignty, ruling the work of the poet engaged in exercising his art. These two are confounded and confused by Pope once and again. They are so, under the name of *Art*!—which, at first, comprehends the two; and then suddenly means only the power of criticism in the poet. Again, they shift place confusedly under the name "*Wit*"—which at first means the creative power only—then, the critical power only. Then, once more, the creative power only; in which sense it is here at last opposed explicitly to judgment. The close is, under a fit and gallant figure, a spirited description of the creative power firily working under the control of criticism.

These deceiving interchanges run through a passage otherwise of great lucidity and beauty, and of sterling strength and worth. Probably, most attentive of readers, though possibly not the least perplexed, thou wilt not rest with less satisfaction upon what is truly good in the passage, now thou hast with us taken the trouble of detecting the slight disorder which overshadows it. The possibility of the first confusion which slips from the critic to the poet, attests the strength of the opinion in Pope's mind, that the poet must entertain as an intellectual inmate a spirit of criticism, as learned and severe as that of the mere critic. Perhaps the latter infers how close the cognation of the creative and the critical faculty.

And now for another striking instance of sliding, unconsciously, from critic to poet.

> "But most by numbers judge a poet's song,
> And smooth or rough, with them is right or wrong:
> In the bright muse, though thousand charms conspire,
> Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;
> Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
> Not mend their minds; as some to church repair,
> Not for the doctrine, but the music, there.
> These equal syllables alone require,
> Though oft the ear the open vowels tire;
> While expletives their feeble aid do join,
> And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.
> While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,
> With sure returns of still expected rhymes;
> Where'er you find the 'cooling western breeze,'
> In the next line, it 'whispers through the trees;'
> If crystal streams 'with pleasing murmurs creep,'
> The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with 'sleep;'
> Then, at the last and only couplet fraught [Pg 397]
> With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
> A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
> That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
> Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes!"—

Who are the "MOST" that "JUDGE a poet's song by numbers?" with whom "smooth or rough is RIGHT or WRONG?" Who are "the tuneful fools," who, of the Muse's thousand charms, "ADMIRE her tuneful voice" only? The haunters of Parnassus, whose attraction thither is the "PLEASURE" of their ear, not the instruction of their mind; who "REQUIRE" nothing more than "equal syllables?"—For these first eight lines, you have the bad critic, and the bad critic only.

But who are "THEY" that "ring round the same unvaried chimes" of rhymes; who bestow upon "you," "the reader,"—"breeze," "trees;" "creep," and "sleep;" whose one thought has no meaning; who have scotched the snake, not killed it; and who are to be abandoned to the solitary delight of their own bad verses? In these last ELEVEN lines, you have the bad poet, and the bad poet only. Whilst in the three intermediate verses, "Though oft the ear," &c., you have the imperceptible slide effected from critic to poet. Did Pope know and intend this? We think not; and we think there is in the construction itself proof positive to the inadvertency. For where is the antecedent referred to in

> "While THEY ring round?"

He who looks for it will arrive first at the "THESE," who "equal syllables alone require." But he has now escaped from the bad poet's into almost worse company. The said "THESE" are clearly a SECOND smaller division of the condemned EAR-CRITICS. The greater division, the "MOST", *have* ears, forsooth, and can distinguish "smooth" and "rough." But "THESE" WOULD HAVE ears. They have none; they have only FINGERS. They can tell that the syllables keep the RULE of the measure, and that is all. They stand on the lowest round of the ladder, or on the ground at the foot of the ladder.

| | | | | |
Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire,

is to them "excellent music," an unimpeachable verse, for it COUNTS RIGHT. They are the arithmeticians of the Muse—no musicians.

We agree with Warburton, who says that it is "impossible to give a full and exact idea of poetical criticism without considering at the same time the *art of poetry*, so far as poetry is an ART." But we must contend, that a poet who addresses or discourses of two such distinct species as the writer who criticizes, and the writer who is criticized—two human beings, at least, placed in such very different predicaments—is bound continually to know and to keep his reader aware, which he exhorts and which he smites—the sacrificer or the victim.

You have in your memory, and a thousand times recollected, the following fine passage; but are you sure that you have fully and clearly understood, as well as felt it?

"A *little learning* is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;
There shallow drafts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the length behind;
But more advanced, behold with strange surprise,
Far distant views of endless science rise!
So pleased at first the towering Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last.
But those attain'd, we tremble to survey [Pg 398]
The growing labours of the lengthen'd way,
Th' increasing prospect tires our wondering eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise."

The precept must be given to somebody. To whom? The whole Essay addresses itself to two descriptions of persons—to those who *will be* critics, and to those who *will be* poets. Both are here addressed, and indistinctively. But we may distinguish—nay, must—in turning verse into prose. What is the counsel bestowed? "Meddle not with criticism, as a professed or unprofessed critic, unless you are prepared to invade the depths of criticism." "Touch not the lyre of Apollo to call forth a tone, unless you are willing to put your hand under the most rigorous discipline in the school of the musicians." What is the motive, the reason of the counsel? The twofold monitory and hortatory counsel, proceeds upon a twofold contemplation; upon the view of the beginning, and upon that of the end.

A taste of criticism—the possession of half a dozen rules—the sitting, for a few furtive and perilous instants, upon that august seat of high judgment, before which the great wits of all ages and nations come to receive their award—infatuates the youthful untempered brain with dazzling, bewildering, and blinding self-opinion. Enough to mislead is easily learned. Right dictates of clearest minds—oracles of the old wisdom—crudely misunderstood. Rules of general enunciation made false in the applying, by the inability of perceiving in the instance the differencing conditions which qualify the rule, or suspend it. So, on the other hand, canons of a narrower scope, stretched beyond their true intent. And last, and worst of all, in the ignorance and in the disdain of statutes, and sanctions, and preceding authoritative judgments—the humours and fancies, the likings and the mislikings, the incapable comprehension and the precipitate misapprehensions of an untrained, uninstructed, inexperienced, self-unknowing spirit, howsoever of Nature gifted or ungifted, to be taken for the standard of the worth which the generations of mankind have approved, or which has newly risen up to enlighten the generations of mankind!

Abstain, then, from judging, O Critic that wilt be! Humble thine understanding in reverence! Open thy soul to beliefs! Yield up thy heart, dissolving and overcome, to love! Cultivate self-suspicion! and learn! learn! learn! The bountiful years that lift up the oak to maturity, shall rear, and strengthen, and ripen thee! Knowledge of books, knowledge of men, knowledge of Nature—and solicited, and roused, and sharpened, in the manifold and studious conversation with books, and with men, and with Nature—last and greatest—the knowledge of thyself—shall bring thee out large-hearted, high-minded, sensitive, apprehensive, comprehensive, informed and original, clear and profound, genial and exact, scrutinizing and pardoning, candid, and generous, and just—in a word, a finished CRITIC. The steadfast and mighty laws of the moral and intellectual world have taken safe care and tutelage of thee, and confer upon thee, in thy now accomplished powers, the natural and well-earned remuneration of honestly, laboriously, and pertinaciously dedicated powers!

And as for thee, O Poet that wilt be, con thou, by night and by day, the biography of JOHN MILTON!

And now—in conclusion—for the very noblest strain in didactic poetry.

"Those Rules of old discover'd, not devised,
Are Nature still, but Nature methodised;
Nature, like Liberty, is but restrain'd
By the same laws which first herself ordain'd.
"Hear how learn'd Greece her useful rules indites,
When to repress, and when indulge our flights:
High on Parnassus' top her sons she show'd,
And pointed out those arduous paths they trod;
Held from afar, aloft, th' immortal prize,
And urged the rest by equal steps to rise:
Just precepts thus from great examples given, [Pg 399]
She drew from them what they derived from Heaven.
The gen'rous critic fann'd the poet's fire,
And taught the world with reason to admire.
Then Criticism the Muse's handmaid proved,
To dress her charms, and make her more beloved.
* * * *
"You, then, whose judgment the right course would steer,
Know well each Ancient's proper character:
His fable, subject, scope in ev'ry page;
Religion, country, genius of his age:
Without all these at once before your eyes,
Cavil you may, but never criticise.
Be Homer's works your study and delight,
Read them by day, and meditate by night;
Thence form your Judgment, thence your maxims bring,
And trace the muses upward to their spring.
Still with itself compared, his text peruse;
And let your comment be the Mantuan muse.
"When first young Maro in his boundless mind
A work t' outlast immortal Rome design'd,
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from Nature's fountains scorn'd to draw:
But when t' examine ev'ry part he came,
Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.
Convinced, amazed, he checks the bold design;
And rules as strict his labour'd work confine,
As if the Stagyrite o'erlook'd each line.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy nature is to copy them.
Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,
For there's a happiness as well as care.
Music resembles poetry; in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master-hand alone can reach.
If, where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end,)
Some lucky license answer to the full
Th' intent proposed, that license is a rule.
Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take,
May boldly deviate from the common track;
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend.
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,
Which, without passing through the judgment, gains
The heart, and all its end at once attains.
In prospects thus, some objects please our eyes,
Which out of nature's common order rise,
The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice.
But though the ancients thus their rules invade,
(As kings dispense with laws themselves have made,)
Moderns, beware! or if you must offend
Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end;
Let it be seldom, and compell'd by need,
And have, at least, their precedent to plead,
The critic else proceeds without remorse,
Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.
I know there are, to whose presumptuous thought
Those freer beauties, ev'n in them, seem faults.
Some figures monstrous and mis-shaped appear,
Consider'd singly, or beheld too near;
Which, but proportion'd to their light or place, [Pg 400]
Due distance reconciles to form and grace.
A prudent chief not always must display

His powers in equal ranks, and fair array,
But with the occasion and the place comply,
Conceal his force, nay seem sometimes to fly.
Those oft are stratagems which errors seem;
Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.
  Still green with bays each ancient altar stands,
Above the reach of sacrilegious hands;
Secure from flames, from Envy's fiercer rage,
Destructive war, and all-involving age.
See from each clime the learn'd their incense bring!
Hear, in all tongues consenting paeans ring!
In praise so just let ev'ry voice be join'd,
And fill the gen'ral chorus of mankind.
Hail, bards triumphant! born in happier days;
Immortal heirs of universal praise!
Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
And worlds applaud that must not yet be found
O may some spark of your celestial fire,
The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,
(That on weak wings, from far, pursues your flights;
Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes,)
To teach vain wits a science little known,
T' admire superior sense, and doubt their own!

A magnificent burst of thoughtful enthusiasm! an urgent and monitory exhortation, in which Pope calls upon rising critics and poets to pursue, in the great writings of classical antiquity, the study of that art which proceeds from the true study of Nature. It depictures his own studies; and expresses the admiration of a glowing disciple, who, having found his own strength and light in the conversation of his high instructors, will utter his own gratitude, will advance their honour, and will satisfy his zeal for the good of his brethren, by engaging others to use the means that have prospered with himself.

The art delivered by Greece was self-regulated nature. Criticism was the well-expounded Reason of inspiration, calling and instructing emulation. The critic that will be, must transport himself into the mind of antiquity; and, in particular, into the mind of his author for the time being. Homer is your one great, all-sufficient lesson. Read him, after Virgil's manner of reading him, who sought Nature by submitting himself to rules drawn from her, and emblazoned in the Iliad and Odyssey.

Nevertheless, the rules do not yet comprehend every thing; and emergencies occur when they whom the rules have trained to mastery, inspired by their spirit, and following out their design, transcend them: so creating a new excellence, which, in its turn, becomes a rule—but, O ye moderns! beware, and dare tremblingly!

There are critics of a confined and self-confident wit, who impeach these liberties, even of the masters, most unthinkingly and rashly; for sometimes the skillful tactician is on his way to winning the victory, when you think him flying.

The fame of those ancients is now safe and universal. Withhold not your solitary voice. Hail, ye victorious inheritors of ever-gathering renown! And, oh! enable the last and least of poets to teach the pretenders of criticism modesty and reverence!

Edinburgh: Printed by Ballantyne and Hughes, Paul's Work.

Footnotes:

[1] Daguerreotype, &c.

[2] Valerius Flaccus.

[3] Cicero, in a well-known passage of his *Ethics*, speaks of trade as irredeemably base, if petty; but as not so absolutely felonious if wholesale. He gives a *real* merchant (one who is such in the English sense) leave to think himself a shade above small-beer.

[4] "*The astonishment of science.*"—Her medical attendants were Dr Percival, a well-known literary physician, who had been a correspondent of Condorcet, D'Alembert, &c., and Mr Charles White, a very distinguished surgeon. It was he who pronounced her head to be the finest in its structure and development of any that he had ever seen—an assertion which, to my own knowledge, he repeated in after years, and with enthusiasm. That he had some

acquaintance with the subject may be presumed from this, that he wrote and published a work on the human skull, supported by many measurements which he had made of heads selected from all varieties of the human species. Meantime, as I would be loth that any trait of what might seem vanity should creep into this record, I will candidly admit that she died of hydrocephalus; and it has been often supposed that the premature expansion of the intellect in cases of that class, is altogether morbid—forced on, in fact, by the mere stimulation of the disease. I would, however, suggest, as a possibility, the very inverse order of relation between the disease and the intellectual manifestations. Not the disease may always have caused the preternatural growth of the intellect, but, on the contrary, this growth coming on spontaneously, and outrunning the capacities of the physical structure, may have caused the disease.

[5] Amongst the oversights in the *Paradise Lost*, some of which have not yet been perceived, it is certainly *one*—that, by placing in such overpowering light of pathos the sublime sacrifice of Adam to his love for his frail companion, he has too much lowered the guilt of his disobedience to God. All that Milton can say afterwards, does not, and cannot, obscure the beauty of that action: reviewing it calmly, we condemn—but taking the impassioned station of Adam at the moment of temptation, we approve in our hearts. This was certainly an oversight; but it was one very difficult to redress. I remember, amongst the many exquisite thoughts of John Paul, (Richter,) one which strikes me as peculiarly touching upon this subject. He suggests—not as any grave theological comment, but as the wandering fancy of a poetic heart—that, had Adam conquered the anguish of separation as a pure sacrifice of obedience to God, his reward would have been the pardon and reconciliation of Eve, together with her restoration to innocence.

[6]

> "I stood in unimaginable trance
> And agony, which cannot be remember'd."
> —*Speech of Alhadra in Coleridge's Remorse.*

[7] Some readers will question the *fact*, and seek no reason. But did they ever suffer grief at *any* season of the year?

[8] Φυγη μονου προς μονον.—PLOTINUS.

[9] The thoughts referred to will be given in final notes; as at this point they seemed too much to interrupt the course of the narrative.

[10] "Everlasting Jew!"—*der ewige Jude*—which is the common German expression for *The Wandering Jew*, and sublimer even than our own.

[11] "*I felt.*"—The reader must not forget, in reading this and other passages, that, though a child's feelings are spoken of, it is not the child who speaks. *I* decipher what the child only felt in cipher. And so far is this distinction or this explanation from pointing to any thing metaphysical or doubtful, that a man must be grossly unobservant who is not aware of what I am here noticing, not as a peculiarity of this child or that, but as a necessity of all children. Whatsoever in a man's mind blossoms and expands to his own consciousness in mature life, must have pre-existed in germ during his infancy. I, for instance, did not, as a child, *consciously* read in my own deep feeling these ideas. No, not at all; nor was it possible for a child to do so. I the child had the feelings, I the man decipher them. In the child lay the handwriting mysterious to *him*; in me the interpretation and the comment.

[12] I except, however, one case—the case of a child dying of an organic disorder, so therefore as to die slowly, and aware of its own condition. Because such a child is solemnized, and sometimes, in a partial sense, inspired—inspired by the depth of its sufferings, and by the awfulness of its prospect. Such a child having put off the earthly mind in many things, may naturally have put off the childish mind in all things. I therefore, speaking for myself only, acknowledge to have read with emotion a record of a little girl, who, knowing herself for months to be amongst the elect of death, became anxious even to sickness of heart for what she called the *conversion* of her father. Her filial duty and reverence had been swallowed up in filial love.

[13] *The Englishwoman in Egypt.*—Letters from Cairo, written during a residence in 1842, 1843, and 1844, with E. W. Lane, Esq., author of the *Modern Egyptians*. By his SISTER.

[14] Blue eyes are regarded in the East as so unlucky, that the epithet "blue-eyed" is commonly applied as a term of abuse—(see Lane's *Thousand and One Nights*, chap. XV. note 9.) We find from Miss Pardoe, that a similar prejudice prevails among the Osmanlis.

[15] A representation of ladies thus mounted, is found in the *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. i. p. 240, first edit.

[16] *Observations on the Mussulmans of India*, by Mrs Meer Hassan Ali, (Parbury and Allen, 1832.) The authoress of these volumes became, under what circumstances she does not inform us, the wife of a Moslem native of wealth and rank in India, of whose hareem she had been twelve years an inmate, without once having had reason, by her own account, to regret her apparently strange choice of a partner.

[17] Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*, ii. 414, a talented but shortlived periodical, chiefly by

members of the University of Cambridge, to which Praed was a principal contributor under the assumed signature of Peregrine Courtenay.

[18] Lane's *Thousand and One Nights*, i. 176, ii. 345.

[19] A representation of the Mahmal is given in the *Modern Egyptians*, ii. 182.

[20] Mrs Damer describes this lady, to whose amiability and accomplishments she does ample justice, as "a sort of Turkish *chanoinesse*," who had renounced marriage in order to devote herself to her mother—a circumstance which, if correctly stated, would be almost unparalleled in the East. But Mrs Poole's silence would rather lead us to suppose that Mrs Damer was mistaken.

[21] A belief precisely similar prevailed throughout Christendom, previous to the year 1260 of our own era: the reference being to the two mystic periods in the eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse.

[22] An anecdote of this personage is given in Mr Lane's works, i. 153.

[23] It is hareem etiquette to address mothers by the names of their children.

[24] Marriages of slaves from the khalif's hareem occur more than once in the Thousand and One Nights.

[25] The higher classes are not free from this reproach if we are to believe the story told by Mrs Damer, that Nezleh Hanum punished a female slave who had offended her by the daily amputation of a joint of one of her fingers!

[26] A Spanish proverb of former days, defines "Castilian faith and Moorish works" as the ingredients of a good Christian.

[27] *Lectures on Agricultural Chemistry and Geology.* 1 vol. 8vo.

Elements of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology. 4th Edition.

Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology. 7th Edition.

[28] *Elements of Agricultural Chemistry and Geology*, 4th Edition, p. 239.

[29] Yet we are sometimes led to doubt if our author be really so kind-hearted as he would have us to believe. The following passage, for example, would lead us to believe that he is really savage at heart, and that his humanity is little better than affectation. The contrast between the two passages which we have put in italics is very amusing. He is speaking of the *weeding* of pigeons.

"Every bird that is caught should be examined and recognized and every one exhibiting signs of old age should be destroyed, by pushing the joint of the thumb with force into the back of the head, and severing the cervical vertebræ, or *applying the teeth for that purpose*; but should these modes be disliked or impracticable, *rather than torture the poor devoted animals* by abortive attempts, let their heads be cut off at once by a sharp table-knife."—(Vol. ii. p. 253.)

[30] *Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, First Earl of Malmesbury.* Edited by his GRANDSON, the Third Earl, Vols. 3 and 4, London: 1844.

[31] Barrancas are those immense clefts or ravines, some of them several thousand feet deep, which abound upon the plateau, or table-land, on which the city of Mexico stands.

[32] Orizava—in Mexican, Citlatepetl, or the Star Mountain.

[33] The Mexican wolf.

[34] A proverbial expression amongst the Indians, signifying something inimical or prejudicial; the day of ill luck.

[35] Bixa Orellana—a species of dye-wood. String is made out of the bark. The wood takes fire easily upon friction.

[36] Infamous by birth. The children of whites and negroes, or whites and Indians, or Indians and negroes, were *infames de derecho*.

[37] Guachinango is another name for Lépero. Pulque is the favourite drink of the Mexicans, made from the sap of the agave or aloe.

[38] Beef, salted and dried.

[39] *Walpole's Memoirs of the Reign of George III.* London: 1845. 2 vols.

Transcriber's Notes:

Printer's inconsistencies in spelling and hyphenation have been retained.

Some quotes are opened with marks but are not closed. Obvious errors have been silently closed, while those requiring interpretation have been left open.

Other punctuation has been corrected without note.

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