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**BLACKWOOD'S  
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**THE LITERATURE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.**<sup>[1]</sup>

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Lord Brougham has resumed his memoirs of the eminent writers of England; and every lover of literature will feel gratified by this employment of his active research and of his vigorous pen.

One of the most striking distinctions of English public life from that of the Continent, is in the condition of statesmen after their casual retirement from power. The Foreign statesman seems to exist only in office. The moment that sees him "out of place," sees him extinguished. He is lost as suddenly to the public eye, as if he were carried to the tomb of his ancestors. He retires to his country-seat, and there subsides into the garrulous

complainant against the caprices of fortune, or buries his calamities in the quiet indulgence of his appetites; smokes away his term of years, subsides into the lean and slippered pantaloons, occupies his studies with the *Court Gazette*, and his faculties with cards; and is finally deposited in the family vault, to continue the process of mouldering which had been begun in his arm-chair, to be remembered only in an epitaph. France, at the present day, alone seems to form an exception. Her legislature affords a new element in which statesmanship in abeyance can still float: the little vessel is there at least kept in view of mankind; if it makes no progress, it at least keeps above water; and, however incapable of reaching the port by its own means, the fluctuations of the national surge, sometimes so powerful, and always so contemptuous of calculation, may at some time or other carry the craziest craft into harbour. But the general order of continental ministers, even of the highest rank, when abandoned by the monarch, are like men consigned to the dungeon. They go to their place of sentence at once. The man who to-day figured in the highest robe of power, to-morrow wears the prison costume. His rise was the work of the royal will—his fall is equally the work of the royal will. Having no connexion with the national mind, he has no resource in the national sympathies. He has been a royal instrument: when his edge becomes dull, or the royal artificer finds a tool whose fashion he likes better, the old tool is flung by to rust, and no man asks where or why, his use is at an end, and the world and the workman, alike, "knoweth it no more."

But, in England, the condition of public life is wholly different. The statesman is the creation of the national will, and neither in office, nor in opposition, does the nation forget the product of its will. The minister is no offspring of slavery, no official negro, made to be sold, and, when sold, separated from his parentage once and for ever. If he sins in power, he is at worst but the Prodigal Son, watched in his career, and willingly welcomed when he has abjured his wanderings. Instead of being extinguished by the loss of power, he often more than compensates the change, by the revival of popularity. Disencumbered of the laced and embroidered drapery of office, he often exhibits the natural vigour and proportion of his faculties to higher advantage; cultivates his intellectual distinctions with more palpable success; refreshes his strength for nobler purposes than even those of ambition; and, if he should not exert his renewed popularity for a new conquest of power, only substitutes for place the more generous and exalted determination of deserving those tributes which men naturally offer to great abilities exerted for the good of present and future generations.

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We must allude, for the national honour, to this characteristic of English feeling, in the changes of public men. On the Continent, the hour which deprived a statesman of office, at once deprived him of every thing. All the world ran away from him, as they would from a falling house. The crowded antechamber of yesterday, exhibited nothing to-day but utter solitude. The fallen minister was a leper; men shrank from his touch; the contagion of ill-luck was upon him; and every one dreaded to catch the disease. It was sometimes even worse. The loss of power was the ruin of fortune. The Dives had been suddenly transformed into the Lazarus; the purple and fine linen were "shreds and patches," and not even the dogs came to administer to his malady. But, among us, the breaking up of a cabinet often only gives rise to a bold and brilliant opposition. It is not like the breaking up of a ship, where the wreck is irreparable, and the timbers are shattered and scattered, and good for nothing; it is often more like the breaking up of a regiment in one of our colonies, where the once compact mass of force, which knew nothing but the command of its colonel, now takes, each man his own way, exhibits his own style of cleverness; instead of the one manual exercise of musket and bayonet, each individual takes the axe or the spade, the tool or the ploughshare, and works a new fertility out of the soil, according to his own "thews and sinews."

The moral of all this is, that the distinguished author of these Memoirs is now devoting himself to a career of literature, to which even his political services may have been of inferior utility. He is recalling the public memory to those eminent achievements, which have so powerfully advanced the mental grandeur of our era; and, while he thus gives due honour to the labours of the past, he is at once encouraging and illustrating the nobleness of the course which opens to posterity. But Lord Brougham's influence cannot be contented, we should hope, with merely speculative benefits; it is for him, and for men like him, to look with interest on the struggles of literary existence at the hour; to call the attention of government and the nation to the neglects, the narrowness, and the caprices of national patronage; to demand protection for genius depressed by the worldliness of the crowd; to point out to men of rank and wealth a path of service infinitely more honourable to their own taste, and infinitely more productive to their country, than ribands and stars; than the tinkling of a name, than pompous palaces, or picture galleries of royal price; to excite our nobles to constitute themselves the true patrons of the living genius of the land, and disdain to be content with either the offering of weak regrets or the tribute of worthless honours to the slumberers in the grave. A tenth part of the sums employed in raising obelisks to Burns, would have rescued one half of his life from poverty, and the other half from despair. The single sum which raised the monument to Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh, would have saved him from the final pressure which broke his heart, elastic as it was, and dimmed his intellect, capable as he still was of throwing a splendour over his native soil.

This neglect is known and suffered in no other province of public service. The soldier, the sailor, the architect, the painter, are all within sight of the most lavish prizes of public liberality. Parliament has just given titles and superb pensions to the conquerors of the Sikhs. The India Company has followed its example. We applaud this munificent liberality in

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both instances. Two general officers have thus obtained the peerage, with £7000 and £5000 a-year. They deserved those rewards. But the whole literary encouragement of the British empire, with a revenue of fifty-two millions sterling, is £1200, little more than the tenth part of the pensions allotted to those two gallant men. £1200 for the whole literary encouragement of England! There can be no greater scandal to the intellectual honour of the country. The pettiest German principality scarcely limits its literary encouragement to this sum. We doubt whether Weimar, between literary offices and pensions, did not give twice the sum annually. But named in competition with the liberality of the leading sovereigns, it is utterly mean. Louis XIV., two hundred years ago, allotted 80,000 francs a-year to his forty members of the Academy, a sum equivalent in *that day*, and in *France*, to little less than £5000 a-year in our day, and in England. Frederic II. gave pensions and appointments to a whole corps of literary men. At this moment, there is scarcely a man of any literary distinction in Paris, who has not a share in the liberal and wise patronage of government, either in office or public pension.

But if we are to be answered by a class, plethoric with wealth and rank; that literature ought to be content with living on its own means; must not the obvious answer be—Is the author to be an author, down to his grave? Is there to be no relaxation of his toil? is there to be no allowance for the exhaustion of his overworked faculties? for the natural infirmities of years? for the vexations of a noble spirit compelled to submit to the caprices of public change? and with its full share of the common calamities of life, increasing their pressure at once by an inevitable sense of wrong, and by a feeling that the delight of his youth must be the drudgery of his age? When the great Dryden, in his seventieth year, was forced, in the bitterness of his heart, to exclaim, "Must I die in the harness!" his language was a brand on the common sense, as well as on the just generosity, of his country. We now abandon the topic with one remark. This want of the higher liberality of the nation has already produced the most injurious effects on our literature.

All the great works of our ancestral literature were the works of leisure and comparative competence. All the great dramatic poetry of France was the work of comparative competence. Its writers were not compelled to hurry after the popular tastes; they followed their own, and impressed its character upon the mind of the nation. The plays of Racine, Corneille, Molière, and Voltaire, are nobler trophies to the greatness of France than all the victories of Louis the XIV., than Versailles, than all the pomps of his splendid reign. Louis Philippe has adopted the same munificent policy, and it will be followed by the same honour with posterity. But, in England, the keeping of a stud of racehorses, the building of a dog-kennel, or the purchase of a foreign picture, is ignominiously and selfishly suffered to absorb a larger sum than the whole literary patronage of the most opulent empire that the sun ever shone upon. We recommend these considerations to Lord Brougham: they are nobler than politics; they are fitter for his combined character of statesman and philosopher; they will also combine with that character another which alone can give permanency to the fame of any public man—that of the philanthropist. His ability, his knowledge of human nature, and his passion for public service—qualities in which his merits are known to Europe—designate him as the founder of a great system of public liberality to the enterprise of genius. And when party is forgotten, and cabinets have perished; when, perhaps, even the boundaries of empire may have been changed, and new nations rise to claim the supremacy of arts and arms; the services of the protector of literature will stand out before the eye with increased honour, and his name be rescued from the common ruin which envelopes the memory of ostentatious conquerors and idle kings.

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The present volume contains biographies of Johnson, Adam Smith, Lavoisier, Gibbon, Sir Joseph Banks, D'Alembert. We shall commence with the lives less known to the generality of readers than those of our great moralist and great political economist, reserving ourselves for sketches of their career, as our space may allow.

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Lord Brougham commences his life of Sir Joseph Banks by a species of apology, for placing in the ranks of philosophers a man who had never written a book. But no one has ever doubted that a man may be a philosopher, without being an author. Some of the greatest inventions of philosophy, of science, and of practical power, have been the work of men who never wrote a book. In fact, the inventor is generally a man of few words; his disciples, or rivals, or imitators, are the men of description. The inventor gives the idea, the follower gives the treatise; but the inventor is the philosopher after all. The question, however, with Sir Joseph Banks is, whether he was any more an inventor than a writer. It does not appear that he was either. Of course, he has no right to rank among men of science. But he had merits of his own, and on those his distinctions ought to have been placed. He was a zealous, active, and influential friend of philosophers. He gave them his time, he received them in his house, and he assisted their progress. He volunteered to be the protector of their class; he sympathised with their pursuits; and, while adding little or nothing to their discoveries, he assisted in bringing those discoveries before the world. He loved to be thought the patriarch of British science; and, like the patriarch, he retained his authority even when he was past his labour. If he filled the throne of science feebly, none could deny that he filled it zealously. The true definition of him was, an English gentleman occupying his leisure with philosophical pursuits, and encouraging others of more powerful understanding to do the

same.

Sir Joseph Banks was of an old and wealthy family, dating so far back as Edward III.; first settled in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and afterwards in the county of Lincoln. He was born in London in January 1743. At the age of nine he was sent to Harrow, and at thirteen to Eton, where the tutors observed, as has happened in many other instances, that he was fonder of play than of books. In about a twelvemonth, however, he became studious, though not to the taste of his schoolmasters. The origin of this change was described by himself, in a letter to Sir Everard Home, as accidental. One afternoon he had been bathing with some of the Eton boys, and, on returning to dress himself, found that they had left him alone. Walking down a green lane, whose sides exhibited the wild-flowers of the season, the thought occurred to him, how much more natural and useful would be the knowledge of plants, than of Greek and Latin. From this time he devoted himself to the study of botany, though still continuing that of the classics. On returning to his father's house, he found a copy of Gerard's *Herbal*, which fixed his taste. He now added to his collecting of plants that of butterflies and other insects. Lord Brougham mentions that his father was one of Banks's associates at this period, and that they employed themselves together in natural history.

Natural history has been so frequently the pursuit of studious triflers, that it is difficult to exempt it from the charge of trifling. To gather plants which have been gathered a thousand times before, to ascertain their names from an herbal, and classify them according to its list, seems to be little more than a grave apology for playing the fool. A determination to gather all the butterflies and blue-bottles within the limits of the realm, certainly has nothing that can dignify it with the name of scientific pursuit. The collecting of pebbles and shells, or even the arranging of animals in the cases of a museum, are accomplishments of so easy an order, and of so little actual use, that they serve for little else than to wile away the time. But this trifling assumes a more important shape when it rises to the acquisition of actual knowledge; when, instead of classifying plants, it develops their medicinal virtues, and, instead of embalming animals, it examines their structure, as throwing light on the conformation or diseases of man.

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But Sir Joseph Banks was fortunately relieved from subsiding into this foppery, by circumstances which forced him into vigorous and useful exertion. An approaching transit of Venus had been long looked to, as giving an opportunity for ascertaining the distance of the sun from the earth. It was recommended, that observations on this phenomenon should be made from different stations on the globe. Accordingly, in 1761, the British government sent out two observers, one to the Cape and the other to St Helena. The French government at the same time sent out three—to Pondicherry, Siberia, and the Mauritius. But the weather was unfavourable, and the observations were to be regarded as a failure. But there was a second transit in 1769, and the leading powers of Europe sent out observers; England sending a vessel to the South Seas, an observer to India, and two to Hudson's Bay. Captain Wallace having lately made several discoveries in the Pacific, public attention had been strongly drawn to that hitherto scarcely known portion of the globe. The celebrated Captain Cook was appointed commander, and Sir Joseph Banks, stimulated by an honourable zeal and a rational desire of knowledge, obtained leave from his friend, Lord Sandwich, to join the expedition. He took with him Dr Solander the botanist, and two draughtsmen.

On the 25th of August 1768, Cook's vessel, the *Endeavour*, sailed from Plymouth Sound, and the first point of land at which they touched was the Terra del Fuego, the southern extremity of the American continent. There they encountered such severity of cold, that, although it was the summer of those regions, Banks and Solander, in one of their botanical excursions, had nearly shared the fate of three of their attendants, who perished from the intensity of the cold. The effect of this excess of low temperature has been often felt and often described. It was a general torpor of the frame, producing an almost irresistible propensity to sleep. Every exertion was painful, and the strongest desire was to lie down in the snow and give way to slumber. Solander, who had acquired his experience in botanizing among the Swedish mountains, warned the party of their danger. "Whoever," said he, "sits down, will sleep; whoever sleeps, will wake no more." Yet he himself was one of the first to yield; he insisted on lying down, fell asleep before he could be brought to the fire which Banks had kindled, and was restored with difficulty. His companion had felt a similar inclination, but resisted it, by the greater energy of youth, and probably of a more vigorous mind.

Cook then sailed for Otaheite, which he reached in April. The contrast of the luxurious climate with the inclement region which they had left behind them, was doubly striking to men who, for upwards of half a year, had seen nothing but the ocean or the deserts of Cape Horn. They now proceeded vigorously to the chief purposes of their voyage. The captain and his officers prepared their instruments to observe the transit, while Banks and his botanical attendants ranged the island, made themselves acquainted with its natural productions, and conciliated the natives. The effect of his intelligence and intrepidity was conspicuous on an occasion which might have involved the scientific fate of the expedition. The quadrant, though under charge of a sentinel, had been stolen by the adroitness of some of the natives. But without it no observation could be taken. Banks volunteered to go in search of it into the woods, made himself master of it, and conveyed it in safety to the observatory; though followed by parties of the natives, and occasionally compelled to keep them at bay by exhibiting his pistols.

The transit was successfully observed, but it took six hours for the operation. As the period

approached, even the crew had felt the strongest anxiety for its success. The state of the sky was reported every half hour during the night before, and their spirits rose and fell as the report gave its answer, clear or cloudy. But at dawn the sky was brilliant, and the day passed without a cloud. Four other observations had been simultaneously made, in Siberia, Lapland, Hudson's Bay, and California. The general result gave the sun's distance at nearly ninety-four millions of miles.

The next object of the voyage was a search for the great southern continent, which the philosophers of the day had conceived to exist, as a "necessary balance" to the mass of land in the northern hemisphere. But conjectural philosophy is often at fault, and necessary as this terrestrial balance was asserted to be, no "great" southern continent has yet been found. For a while, even Cook's sagacity seems to have been deceived by the mountains of New Zealand, which had been discovered, in 1620, by Tasman. Cook sailed round it, and explored its shores for six months. He then, on his homeward voyage, examined the east coast of New Holland. Of course, it is not the intention of this paper to trace a career so well known as that of the celebrated navigator. We refer to its incidents, merely as connected with Sir Joseph Banks. They had run about thirteen hundred miles of the coast, when, after having received some alarm from the neighbourhood of coral reefs, the vessel suddenly struck. It was Cook's sagacious habit, nightly, to give all his orders and precautions before he went to rest; and thus, after having done all that prudence could do, he undressed, went to bed, and such was the composure of his mind that he instantly fell asleep. But immediately on the vessel's striking, the captain was on deck, and giving his orders with his characteristic coolness. The light of the moon showed the sheathing boards of the ship floating all round, and at last her false keel. Their fate appeared imminent, but it was only when the day broke, that they became fully sensible of their forlorn condition. The land was at eight leagues' distance. There were no intermediate islets on which the crew might be saved, and the boats were wholly insufficient to take them all at once. To lighten the ship was their first object. Guns, ballast, stores, every thing was thrown over. After two tides they were enabled to get the ship afloat. To their great relief, the leak did not seem to gain upon them, though to keep it down required the labour of the men night and day. At length a midshipman fortunately suggested an expedient which he had once seen adopted at sea. This was to draw under the ship's bottom a sail, to which were fastened oakum, flax, and other light substances. The sail thus covered the leak, and enabled the ship to swim. On pursuing their voyage, and reaching a river, in which they attempted to repair the ship, they found that her preservation, in the first instance, was owing to the extraordinary circumstance of a large fragment of rock which had stuck into the vessel, and thus partially stopped up the leak. In this most anxious emergency Sir Joseph Banks and his party exhibited all the coolness and intrepidity which were required; and in the subsequent account of the voyage, received from Cook himself well-merited praises.

Another peril likely to be attended with still more certain ruin, now assailed the crew. The scurvy began to make its appearance. The devastations of this dreadful disease, in the early history of our navigation, fortunately now appear almost fabulous. It was a real plague; it seemed almost to dissolve the whole frame; teeth fell out, limbs dropped off, and the sufferer sank into a rapid, and, as it was once thought, an inevitable grave. It is a remarkable instance of the powers which man possesses to counteract the most formidable evils, that this terrible disease is now scarcely known. It has been overpowered solely by such simple means as fresh meat and vegetables, and a drink medicated with lemon-juice. Simple as those expedients are, they have saved the lives of thousands and tens of thousands of the sea-going population of England.

But new hazards, arising alike from the imperfect condition of the vessel and their ignorance of the coast, continued to pursue them. Never was a voyage attempted with greater difficulties to surmount, or achieved with more triumphant success; after having explored two thousand miles of this perilous coast, Cook took possession of it in the name of his king, giving it the title of New South Wales.

At length he arrived at Batavia, where, on laying up his ship to repair, it was discovered that their preservation throughout this long voyage had been little less than miraculous, her planks having been in many instances worn "as thin as the sole of a shoe." But their trials were not yet over: the marsh fever quickly laid up the crew; the captain, Banks, and Solander, were taken seriously ill. They set sail from this pestilential island as soon as possible; but before they reached the Cape, three-and-twenty had died, including Green the astronomer, and the midshipman whose suggestion had saved the ship. At length, on the 12th of July 1771, they cast anchor in the Downs, and Cook and his companions were received with national acclamation.

The triumph of the navigation was naturally due to Cook, but the most important part of the knowledge which had been communicated to the empire was due to the labours of Banks. It was from his journals, that the chief details of the habits, manners, and resources of the natives were derived. The vegetable, mineral, and animal products of the Society Islands, and of New Holland, New Zealand, and New Guinea, had been explored, and a vast quantity of general intelligence was obtained relative to countries, which now form an essential portion of the British empire. The novelty of those possessions has now worn off, their value has made them familiar. We are fully acquainted with their products, however we may be still ignorant of their powers. But, at the period of this memorable voyage, the Southern

Hemisphere was scarcely more known than the hemisphere of the moon. Every league of the coasts of New Holland, and the islands of the Great Southern Ocean, abounded with natural perils, heightened by the necessary ignorance of the navigator. Even to this day, many a fearful catastrophe attests the difficulties of the navigation; the coral rocks were a phenomenon wholly new to nautical experience; and, in all the modern improvements of nautical science, full room is left for wonder, at the skill, the intelligence, and the daring, which carried Cook and his companions safe through the perils of this gigantic navigation.

A new expedition was soon demanded at once by the curiosity of the people and the interests of science. The dream of a great southern continent was still the favourite topic of all who regarded themselves as philosophers in England, although Cook had sailed over an unfathomable ocean, in the very tract where he ought, according to this adventurous theory, to have found a continent. Sir Joseph Banks again gallantly volunteered to join the expedition which was equipped for the discovery. His large fortune enabled him to make unusual preparations; but such was his zeal, that he even raised a loan for the purpose. He engaged Zoffani, the painter, with three assistant draughtsmen. He selected two secretaries and nine attendants, instructed in the art of preserving plants and animals; he also provided books, drawings, and instruments. But his natural ambition was suddenly thwarted by the opposition of Sir Hugh Palliser, controller of the navy. For whatever reason—and it is now difficult to imagine any, except some jealousy too contemptible to name—so many obstructions were thrown in the way, that Banks relinquished the pursuit, and turned his attention to a voyage to Iceland. His suite, seamen and all, amounting to forty persons, reached the island in 1772, examined its chief natural phenomena, Hecla and its hot springs, and furnished its historian, Von Troil, with the materials for the most accurate history of this outpost of the northern world.

On his return to England, he commenced the career, natural to an opulent man of a cultivated mind, but yet so seldom followed in England by individuals of even higher means than his own. He fitted up a large house in Soho Square with all the preparatives for a life of literary association—a copious library, collections of natural history, and philosophical instruments. He held frequent conversazioni, gave dinners, and easily and naturally constituted himself the leader of the men of science in London. In Lincolnshire, where his chief property lay, he performed the part of the liberal and hospitable country gentleman on a large scale; while in London, he was the first person to whom scientific foreigners were introduced, and the principal patron and protector of ingenious men.

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On the resignation of Sir John Pringle as President of the Royal Society, Sir Joseph Banks was placed in the chair, in 1778, almost by acclamation. He had some obvious qualifications for the office, but he as obviously wanted others. His opulence, his hospitality, and his zeal for science, were valuable, and are nearly indispensable in the president of a body which concentrates the chief intellectual force of the community. But his favourite pursuit, botany, has never deserved the name of a science, and inevitably bears a character of triviality in the eyes of the mathematician and the philosopher. The distinction given to a comparatively young man, known to the world only as a voyager, and a collector of plants and animals, not unnaturally tended to breed scoffing among the professors of the severe sciences. The feeling spread, and the opportunity for its expression was soon found. Dr Hutton, the mathematical professor at Woolwich, happened to be secretary for foreign correspondence. His residence at Woolwich was said to produce some inconvenience in his intercourse with the president; and the council passed a resolution, in 1783, recommending that "the foreign secretary should reside in London." The secret history of this transaction is, that Hutton was one of the mathematical party; though we cannot distinctly ascertain whether he had actually gone so far as to sneer at the president. Upon this Hutton resigned the office; to accept which, the emolument could not have been his object, the salary being but L.20 a year—a sum that cannot be mentioned without a sense of disgrace to a society reckoning among its members some of the wealthiest men of England.

Hutton's resignation, or rather dismissal, produced an open war in the society. The mathematicians ranged themselves on the Huttonian side; the cultivators of natural history, and the cultivators of nothing, ranged themselves on the side of the president. The mathematicians were headed by Horsley, afterwards the bishop—a man whom Lord Brougham characterizes as extremely arrogant, of violent temper, and intoxicated with an extravagant sense of his own scientific merits, which his noble biographer pronounces to be altogether insignificant, heading this charge with the unkindest cut of all, namely, that he was "a priest." Horsley was certainly no great mathematician, as his publication of the *Principia* unluckily shows; but the picture is high coloured, which represents him as a hot-tempered, loud-tongued, bustling personage—a sort of bravo of science and theology, who took up the first opinion which occurred to him, scorned to rectify it by any after-thought, and plunged from one absurdity into another, for the sake of consistency. The eloquence of his attacks upon the chair, of whose possession he was supposed to be foolishly ambitious, was vaunted a good deal by his partisans. But, as the only evidence of his rhetoric in these squabbles ever quoted, is one sentence, it is like the pretension to wit on the strength of a single pun, and may be easily cast aside. This boasted sentence was uttered, in threatening the secession of the mathematical party. "The president will then be left with his train of feeble amateurs, and that toy (the mace) upon the table—the ghost of the Society in which Philosophy once reigned, and Newton officiated as her minister."

Horsley's theology was too nearly on a par with his mathematics—he was harsh and headlong. The fortunate folly of Priestley in challenging the English clergy to a trial of strength in the old arena of Unitarianism, gained him an opportunity of crushing an antagonist whose presumption was in proportion to his ignorance. Accordingly, the Unitarian was speedily put *hors-de-combat*, and Horsley was rewarded with a mitre.

The president had long felt that the purpose of this violent lover of parallelograms was, to unseat him. The question was therefore brought to a decision, in the shape of a resolution "approving of Sir Joseph Banks as president, and resolving to support him in his office." This resolution was carried by 119 to 43.

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Honours began now to gather upon him. In 1788 he had been made a baronet. In 1795 he received the order of the Bath, then generally restricted to soldiers and diplomatists. In two years after, he was called to the Privy Council. On the death of the Duke of Ancaster he was chosen recorder of Boston; but, though often solicited to stand an election, he was never a member of Parliament. Though professing himself a Tory, he seems never to have taken any active part in politics, preserving a curious practical neutrality in Lincolnshire, and giving his interest to Mr Pelham, a Whig, and Mr Chaplin, a Tory. This, which his noble biographer curiously seems to consider as a happy proof of the absence of all party feelings, we should be apt to look upon as a proof of a degenerate wish to consult his own ease, and of a sluggish neutrality discreditable to the character of an Englishman.

However, he had more honourable distinctions. In the furious Revolutionary war—a war of principles and passions, not less than of public interests, the president of the Royal Society largely exerted his interest with both governments, to alleviate the sufferings of scientific men who happened to fall into the hands of the belligerents, and to effect the restoration of scientific property captured by our ships of war. In 1802 he was chosen one of the foreign members of the Institute of France; and his letter of thanks, a little too ardent in its gratitude, was said to have involved the baronet in some vexations peculiarly felt by his courtly temperament. He was instantly attacked for his Gallican panegyric, by a portion of the Royal Society. Cobbett, who was then looking out for a victim, and whose loyalty was at that period peculiarly glowing, flew at him like a tiger-cat; and, last and most dreaded of all, he was said to have received at Windsor some of those frowns, which to a courtier are a total eclipse of the sun. But the nation soon had higher things to think of than a slip of the President's pen, or a little betrayal of his vanity. Napoleon ascended the throne; and, when the thunderbolts began to fall, the squibs and crackers flung from hand to hand of little men are of necessity forgotten.

His latter years were signalized by acts of unequivocal public service. He is designated by Lord Brougham, and no one can have a better right to be informed of the fact, as the real founder of the African Association.—His lordship also regards him as the real founder of the colony of Botany Bay.—He was the first to suggest the transfer of the tropical fruits to the West India islands.—British horticulture owed him great services.—And the British Museum, during forty-two years of his trusteeship, was the object of his peculiar care, and finally received the bequest of his excellent library and of all his collections.

His career, however, was now, by the course of nature, drawing to its close. Yet, he had lived seventy-eight years in this anxious and disappointing world, in opulence, in peace, and in public estimation. But his lot had been singularly fortunate. Few men are without their share of those troubles which characterize the general condition of human nature. Sir Joseph Banks had *his* trial, in physical suffering. In the first portion of his life he had been remarkable for robust health and activity; but, from about his fortieth year, he suffered severely from attacks of gout, which increased so much, that for his last fourteen years he was scarcely able to walk. His robust mind, however, enabled him to encounter his disease by increased and extreme temperance. He gave up all fermented liquors and animal food. He seems to have derived considerable benefit from D'Huisson's medicine. But his hour was come; and on the 19th of June 1820, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, he died—just one year after his honoured and royal friend, George III.

Thus passed through the world one of those men who are among the most useful in their generation. It would be idle to pronounce him a genius, a discoverer, or a profound philosopher. But he served an important purpose in society; he suggested philosophical enterprise, he protected the honourable ambition of men whose career, without that protection, might have closed in obscure suffering; he gave the philosophy and literature of his time a leader, and formed it into a substantial shape. In this spirit he employed his life; and he accomplished his purpose with the constancy and determination of a sagacious and systematic mind. He might not be a pillar of the philosophical temple of his country, nor its architrave; but he performed the office of the clamp—he bound together the materials of both pillar and architrave, and sustained the edifice alike in its stateliness and in its security.

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Lord Brougham's biography of D'Alembert commences with a brief dissertation on the interest which the mind takes in the study of mathematics. This study he regards as superior in gratification to every other, from its independence of external circumstances. In all other studies, he observes truly, that a large portion of the researches must depend upon facts imperfectly ascertained from the reports of others, and upon knowledge impeded by the capricious chances of things; while in pure science, the principles, the premises, and the

conclusions, are wholly within our own power.

In a passage exhibiting the affluence of the noble lord's language, he says, "The life of a geometrician may well be supposed an uninterrupted calm, and the gratification which is derived from its researches, is of a pure and also of a lively kind—whether he contemplates the truths discovered by others, with the demonstrative evidence on which they rest, or carries the science further, and himself adds to the number of the interesting truths before known. He may be often stopt in his researches by the difficulties that beset his path; he may be frustrated in his attempts to discover relations, depending on complicated data, which he cannot unravel or reconcile; but his study is wholly independent of accident, his reliance is on his own powers. Contestation and uncertainty he never can know; a stranger to all controversy, above all mystery, he possesses his mind in unruffled peace. Bound by no authority, regardless of all consequences as of all opposition, he is entire master of his conclusions as of his operations, and feels even perfect indifference to the acceptance or objection of his doctrines, because he confidently looks forward to their universal and immediate admission the moment they are comprehended."

All this is strikingly expressed, yet it is after all but a showy hypothesis. That pure mathematics have nothing to do with external existence, may be easily granted; but that mathematicians are exempt from controversy, is no more a matter of experience than that all mathematical assertions are self-evident. The history of science is a direct contradiction of this halcyon hypothesis. The bitterest controversies, and the most ridiculous too, have been raised on mathematical opinions. Universal experience tends strongly to the proof, that no exclusive exertion of the mind is more fatal to its general vigour, more apt to narrow its range of conception; more distinctly operative, by its very exclusiveness, and by its making minute truths the especial object of the mind, in rendering it incapable of those loftier and broader truths on which depend all the great concerns of society, all the efficient progress of civilisation, and all the nobler growth of human powers—than the mere study of mathematics. A spider drawing his web out of his own fibres, and constructing his little lines and circles in his dusty corner, is the fittest emblem of the mere mathematician. In this language, we acknowledge the use of the science; we protest only against its pretence of superiority. Every man's experience of college studies may supply him with examples; but we have room but for one, and that of a sufficiently high order.

When Napoleon assumed the French throne, in his ambition of being regarded as the universal patron of science he appointed the author of the *Mécanique Céleste* a member of his privy council. But La Place, then and since, the first scientific name of France, was found utterly inadequate to even the almost sinecure duties of his office. Napoleon soon found that he could make no use of him. He accordingly consulted him no longer. "I found his mind," said he, "like his book, full of *infiniments petits*." Or if we look for further illustration among the French geometers—the only men among whom the trial can be made, from their opportunities of power in the Revolution—there was not one of them who exhibited any qualification for the higher duties of public life. Bailly, Condorcet, and their tribe, proved themselves utterly feeble, helpless, and trifling, where manliness, activity, and intelligence of mind were required. The Savans were swept away like a swarm of mice, or crushed like mosquitoes, when they dared to buzz in the presence of the public. That they were first-rate mathematicians there can be no question; that they quarrelled about their mathematical theories with the bitterness, and not a little in the style of village gossips, is equally certain; and that, though the Encyclopedists had chiefly died off before the Revolution, their successors and imitators were extinguished by their preposterous combination of an avarice of power, and of an inadequacy to exertion, is a fact written unanswerably in the history of their trifling career, and of their early scaffolds. The ridiculous figure made in politics by the first astronomer of France, at this moment, only strengthens the conclusion.

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The life of D'Alembert is, however, one of the happiest illustrations of the use to which science may be applied, in raising an obscure individual into public fame. Yet, it is not to be forgotten, that D'Alembert's European celebrity commenced only when he had laid aside the exclusive study of mathematics, and devoted himself to general literature, and, shaking off the dust of his closet, he became a man of the world.

Jean le Rond d'Alembert was born in November 1717, and was exposed as a foundling near the church of St Jean le Rond in Paris, and thus called by the name of the parish. The commissary of the district, taking pity upon the infant's apparently dying condition, instead of sending it to the hospital, where it would have inevitably died, gave it to be nursed by the wife of a poor glazier. In a few days, however, a person named D'Estouches, a commissary of artillery, came forward, acknowledged the child, and made provision for its support. The habits of foreign life are generally so scandalous, that they can scarcely be alluded to without offending our sense of delicacy. The mother of this infant was an unmarried woman, living in the very highest circles of Paris, the sister of Cardinal Tencin, archbishop of Lyons. This woman thus added to her vice the cruelty of exposing her unfortunate offspring to die of cold and hunger in the streets. It does not appear that her profligacy, though notorious, ever affected her position in society. Her coteries were as gay, her circle was as complete, and her rank as high, as ever. In the Paris of those days, "throwing the first stone" was unheard of; its reaction would have been an avalanche; there was no scandal where there was no concealment; there was no crime where there was no conscience; and thus danced the world away, until the scourge of a higher power swept the whole noblesse of France into



beggary and exile.

D'Alembert seems to have taken his surname from that of his nurse, and was sent, when twelve years old, to the College of La Nation, then in the possession of the Jansenists. There he learned mathematics. On leaving the college, he returned to the glazier's house, there had one room for his bedroom and study, lived on the family fare, supported himself on a pension of £50 a-year left to him by his father, and in that house lived for forty years. He once made an abortive attempt to study the law and medicine, but soon grew weary of both, and returned to mathematics, for which he had a decided predilection. His application to this study, however, by no means pleased the homely sense of his old nurse. "You will never be any thing better than a philosopher," was her usual saying. "And what's a philosopher?—a fool, who wears out his life, to be spoken of after he is dead."

But D'Alembert had evidently a passion for science; and in his twenty-third year he sent to the Academy of Sciences an analytical paper, which attracted general notice. This was followed by his admission into the society, at the unusually early age of twenty-four. From this period, he proceeded for eighteen years, constantly furnishing the Academy with papers, which added greatly to its reputation and his own. In a note on the presumed discovery of Taylor's Theorem by D'Alembert, the noble biographer alludes to what he regards as a similar event, the discovery of the "Binomial Theorem" by himself. We must acknowledge, that we cannot easily comprehend how any student, within the last hundred years, could have had this "discovery" to make—the Binomial Theorem being one of the very first which meets the eye of the algebraist, in Newton's, and every other treatise on analysis. It seems to us very like an English reader's "discovery" of the alphabet, or, at least, of the recondite art of spelling words of two syllables. But D'Alembert was at length to find, that if he was to obtain either fame or fortune, he must seek them in some other road. At this period, infidelity had become the distinction of all who arrogated to themselves intellectual accomplishment. The power of the crown, and the power of the clergy, had hitherto made its expression dangerous; but the new liberalism of the throne having enfeebled its power, the reign of the libeller, the rebel, and the sceptic openly commenced. The opulence of the clergy increased the bitterness of their enemies; and the blow which was intended to lay the throne in the dust, was nominally aimed at religion. Voltaire had commenced this crusade half a century before; but the arch-infidel lived beyond the dominion of France, possessed an independent income, had acquired the reputation of the wittiest man in Europe, and had established a species of impunity by the pungency of his perpetual sneers. During this period, French infidelity had been silent through fear, but it was not the less virulent, active, and general. It appeared in the result, that almost the whole of the French higher orders were either deists or total unbelievers. All the literary men of France followed the example of Voltaire, and a scoff at religion was always accepted as an evidence of wit. France loves extremes; and, as the popular literature of Paris is now plunged in impurity, fifty years ago it was characterized by outrageous blasphemy. The only religion which France knew, was certainly not calculated to repress the evil. Its fantastic exhibitions and grim formalities, were equally obnoxious to the human understanding. Its persecuting spirit insulted the growing passion of the people for liberty; while its fierce dogmas, contrasting with its ridiculous traditions, supplied the largest materials at once for horror and ridicule.

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At length the storm broke forth. The infidelity which had danced and smiled, and made *calembourgs* and scoffed, in the full-dress circles of the nobles; made its appearance in the streets and highways, in rags and riot, with the axe for the pen, and blood for the ink, and trampled the whole polished race of scoffers in the mire of Revolution.

The *Encyclopédie* was the great text-book of the literary faction, and Diderot and D'Alembert were the editors of its first seven volumes—D'Alembert writing the preliminary discourse upon the progress of the sciences. But the latter mixed caution with his courage; for on the issue of the government prohibition of the work, he abandoned the editorship and left it to Diderot.

At length, in 1752, the King of Prussia, who, with all his fame, had the weakness of being emulous of French flattery, offered him an appointment at Berlin, with an allowance of five hundred pounds a-year, and the reversionary office of president of the academy. But this royal offer he refused, on the ground of his reluctance to quit Paris, and the fear that the employment would be inconsistent with his freedom. At this period his fixed income seemed to be about seventy pounds a-year; yet, when we suffer ourselves to be astonished at the apparent magnanimity of the refusal, we are to remember that this sum, a hundred years ago, and in Paris, would be about equivalent to two hundred pounds a-year in England at the present day; that, like all Frenchmen, he hated Germany; that Frederic's dealings with Voltaire gave by no means a favourable specimen of his friendships; and that, to a Frenchman of that day, Paris was all the world. But, ten years after, the Empress Catharine made him the much more tempting offer of the tutorship of her son, afterwards the unfortunate Emperor Paul. The salary was to be magnificent, no less than four thousand pounds a-year; still he refused the offer, and preferred remaining in Paris.

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Whether we are to applaud his magnanimity, or blame his habits, on this occasion, may fairly be a question. The possession of the four thousand pounds a-year, even if it were limited to the period of tuition, would have made him opulent; and his opulence would undoubtedly have given him the means of extensive benevolence, of relieving private distress, of assisting his less fortunate literary brethren, of promoting public objects, and

ultimately, perhaps, of founding some valuable institution which might last for ages. But D'Alembert, and men like him, seem to live only for themselves. It would have cost him an absence from Paris for a certain period to have obtained this power of public good; and he preferred living without it, and haunting, night after night, the coterie of the old blue-stockings who kept open house for the evening gossipry of the capital.

Nothing can form a stronger contrast to the general passion of the French character for change, than its devotion to the same coterie for half a century together. In the middle of the eighteenth century two houses in Paris were especially the rendezvous of the talkers, idlers, and philosophers of Paris. That some of those visitants were men of remarkable ability, there can be no doubt. But this perpetual haunting of the same coffee-cups, this regularity of trifling, this wretched inability to remain at home for a single evening, is so wholly irreconcilable with our English sense of domestic duties, of the attachment of parents to their families, and of the exercise of the natural affections, that we find it utterly impossible to attach any degree of respect to the perpetual loungee at another's fire-side. Madame Geoffrin had now succeeded to Madame de Tencin, as the receiver of the coterie. Madame du Deffand held a kind of rival, but inferior, coterie. The former had a house, the latter had only a lodging; the former was good-humoured, amiable, and kind—the latter satirical and cold; but both were clever, and, at all events, both received the gossips, wise and foolish, of Paris. At the lodging of Madame du Deffand, D'Alembert met Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, a species of companion to Madame. She was the illegitimate daughter of a woman of fashion, as D'Alembert was the son. The circumstance was too common in Parisian high life, to involve any censure on the parents, or any disgrace on the children; but it may have produced a degree of sympathy, which suddenly rose to its height by their taking a lodging together! Those things, too, were so frequent in France, that, except the laugh of the moment, no one seems to have taken notice of the connexion; and they continued to carry it on, as well received as ever, and holding their evening coterie with undiminished applause.

"No one," observes the noble biographer, "whispered a syllable of suspicion, respecting a connexion which all were fully convinced could be only of the most innocent kind." This French credulity is too simple for our credence. That a he and she philosophic pair should have lived in the same apartments for a dozen years with perfect innocence, may have been the case in Paris; but the story would not be believed in any less immaculate region on the face of the earth. The plain truth seems to be, that the general looseness of Parisian society saw nothing gross in the grossest connexion. Even where they affected virtue, they palpably preferred their having an evening lounge open to them, to any consideration grounded on common propriety and a sense of shame.

But the philosopher was a dirty fellow after all, and it only does credit to his noble biographer's sense of propriety to admit, that "his conduct must seem strange to all men of right and honourable feelings." In fact, the philosopher seems to have lent his aid very zealously to a correspondence carried on by his sensitive fellow-lodger! with a view to a marriage with a Spanish Marquis Mora. Among other proofs, he went every morning to the post-office to receive the Spaniard's letters for the lady. "I confess," says Lord Brougham, "I am driven, how reluctantly soever, to the painful conclusion, that he lent himself to the plan of her *inveigling* the Spaniard into a marriage." And this was not the only instance of his by-play. Mademoiselle professed also to have fallen in love with a M. Guibert, known as a military writer. Guibert exhibited his best tactics, in keeping clear of the lady. "All this time, she continued," says his lordship, "to make D'Alembert believe, that she had no real passion for any one but himself." No one can easily suppose that they were not connected in a plan of obtaining for her a settlement in life by marriage. But, if this marriage-intrigue was in every sense, and on all sides, contemptible; what are we to think of the nature of the connexion existing between this sensitive lady and D'Alembert, living for years under the same roof? The whole matter would be too repulsive for the decorums of biography, if it were not among the evidences of that utter corruption of morals, and callousness of feeling, which were finally avenged in the havoc of the Revolution.

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D'Alembert's income had been increased by his appointment to the office of secretary to the Academy, in 1772. Unfortunately for his literary fame, it became a part of his duty to write the *éloges* of the deceased members, an office which he fulfilled with equal diligence and unproductiveness; for, of those unfortunate performances he wrote no less than eighty-three. But the French are fond of fooleries of this kind; a few sounding sentences with them are biography; a few rambling sketches fill up the outline to their taste; and the whole forms a specimen of that eloquence which men are content to admire on the other side of the Channel.

At length his career drew to a close. Towards his sixty-fourth year, his health began to decline. It had never been robust, though his habits had been temperate; but feebleness of stomach, and an organic disease, predicted the approach of his dissolution. He died on the 29th of October 1783, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. Notwithstanding his feebleness of body, his intellectual vigour remained—thus adding one to the many proofs of the distinct natures of mind and body. In his intervals of ease, he continued to occupy himself with mathematical investigations. With a deplorable want of feeling, he talked with levity of his approaching departure—an event awful to the best, and, to the wisest, solemn in proportion to their wisdom. He died in the fulness of that scientific reputation which he deserved, and of that literary reputation which he did not deserve; but, by the combination of both, ranking

as the most distinguished intellectual name of Europe in his day.

The life of a later philosopher, the unfortunate Lavoisier, gives Lord Brougham an opportunity of rendering justice to an eminent foreigner, and of vindicating the claims of his own still more memorable countrymen, Black and Watt. Chemistry is especially the science of the eighteenth century, as geometry was of the seventeenth. It is a characteristic of that great, however slow, change, which is now evidently in progress through Europe, that those sciences which most promote the comforts, the powers, and the progress of the multitude, obviously occupy the largest share of mental illustration. Of all the sciences, chemistry is that one which contributes most largely to the dominion of man over nature. It is the very handmaid of Wisdom, instructing us in the properties of things, and continually developing more and more the secrets of those vast and beneficent processes by which the physical frame of creation is rendered productive to man. It must thus be regarded as the most essential instrument of our physical well-being. It takes a part in all that administers to our wants and enjoyments. Our clothing, our medicine, our food; the cultivation of the ground, the salubrity of the atmosphere; the very blood, bone, and muscle of man, all depend on chemical evolutions. But it has its still loftier secrets; and the experimental philosopher is constantly stimulated and delighted by his approach to at least the borders of discoveries which promise to give a nobler insight into the laws of matter; to exhibit more fully the mechanism formed and moved by the Divine hand; and to develop the glories of the universe on a scale continually enlarging, and continually more luminous.

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A matchless source of interest in this most effective and essential of all the sciences, is, that it seems capable of an infinite progress. The chemical philosopher cannot even conceive any limit to its variety, multitude, or utility of purpose. The more he discovers, the more he finds is still to be discovered. Every new property awakens him to the existence of some other property, more capacious and more profound. Every difficulty mastered, only leads him towards some deeper and more tempting problem. And, in addition to the ardour derived from this triumph of our intellectual ambition—as if all the incentives that can act upon man were expressly accumulated upon this pursuit—there is no science in which the actual triumphs are more directly connected with personal opulence. The invention of a new acid or alkali might create unbounded wealth. The discovery of a new principle of the most vulgar use—for tanning leather, for extracting oils, for strengthening soap, for purifying tallow, might place the discoverer in possession of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. But a loftier ambition may still find its field in this science. A chemical discovery might change the face of the world. Gunpowder had already changed the whole form of European society. A chemical discovery might give us the power of managing at our will the storm and the lightning, of averting the pestilence, or of ensuring the fertility of the soil, and the regularity of the seasons. The Divine intention in placing us here, was evidently the perpetual exercise of the human understanding. For that purpose were given the wants, and the remedies of the wants, of man; for that purpose all sciences are perhaps inexhaustible; but of all, the most palpably inexhaustible, the most teeming with immediate results, and the most remedial as to human necessities, is Chemistry—fitted by its extent to supply the largest proportion of human objects, by its power to excite the most eager inquiry, and by its richness to reward the intelligent labour of man, to the last ages of the world.

Antoine Laurent Lavoisier was born in Paris in 1743, the son of one of the "farmers-general." As the office was nearly hereditary, and was proverbially connected with great opulence, the son of the rich functionary was highly educated. But science soon attracted all his study, and, devoting himself especially to chemistry, he made himself conspicuous among the leading philosophers of his time.

At the age of twenty-two, he presented to the Academy of Sciences an analysis of gypsum. At twenty-five he was admitted a member of the Academy, an unusually early age. In his next year he succeeded his father in his lucrative office. He then married the daughter of another farmer-general, and having made this provision for a life of luxury or public employment, with all that political ambition might offer in the old *régime* of France, he collected his books about him, shut himself up in his study, and gave up his time, fortune, and energy to the advancement of science.

After occupying himself for a brief period with geology, he commenced his chemical career by refuting the theories alike of Margraff and Stahl on the conversion of water into earth. The chemistry of the gases had made rapid progress in England; and the names of Black, Priestley, and Cavendish, had already attracted the attention of scientific Europe. Lavoisier followed in their track by a series of experiments in the calcination of metals, pursued with remarkable intelligence and industry. The biographer observes that he was now on the verge of two dazzling discoveries—the composition of the atmosphere, and the identity of the diamond with carbon. But he stopped short, and left the glory to more fortunate investigators.

We hasten from the controversies to which the claim of priority in those distinguished discoveries gave rise, and come to the more authentic services of Lavoisier. He was appointed by the minister to superintend the royal manufacture of gunpowder, which his chemical knowledge enabled him greatly to improve. He next, by appointment of the National Assembly, drew up his laborious and valuable memoir on the *Territorial Wealth of France*. He was now appointed one of the commissioners of the treasury, and introduced an unexampled regularity into the public accounts. He aided the formation of the metrical

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system, the security of the assignats against forgery, and seems to have borne an active part in every public matter in which practical science was concerned. In the mean time he employed himself in scientific agriculture, and set apart a tract of land on his estate for experimental farming. His style of living in Paris was at once rational and splendid. His house was open twice a-week for the reception of distinguished persons, both foreigners and natives, and especially if they brought with them the recommendation of scientific ability. With the finest philosophical apparatus in the possession of any individual in France, he was constantly carrying on experiments on his own account, or performing them for others whose means could not meet their expense. This conduct, united to remarkable amiability of manners, made him popular, and placed him at the head of French science in his day. But the evil time had come when opulence was to be a crime, and virtue was to be no longer a safe-guard. The democratic triumvirate of 1794 issued an order for the seizure of twenty-seven individuals who had been farmers-general before the Revolution. The true charge was the crime of being opulent. The popular and ridiculous charge was, their having mixed deleterious ingredients with the tobacco. Lavoisier having received information that the order was about to be executed, fled, and remained for some days in concealment. On understanding that his flight might injure the other prisoners, and as his father-in-law was among them, he, with a rash reliance on the public justice, yet with manly generosity, returned to Paris, and gave himself up to his oppressors. The course of the Revolution had been so palpably that of general plunder, that he had long expected the loss of fortune, and proposed, in case of ruin, to begin the world again, and live by the profession of medicine.

But, by a furious act of violence, he was condemned to die. He asked only a few days to complete some experiments which were going on during his imprisonment. The scoffing answer of this merciless tribunal was, that the Republic had no need of philosophers; and on the day after this sentence, the 8th of May 1794, he was hurried to the guillotine with no less than one hundred and twenty-three other victims, who all died within a few hours.

On this melancholy and desperate atrocity of republicanism, Lord Brougham makes the following remark, which, though natural in the lips of any human being, has double force as coming from one who has seen the operation of the revolutionary spirit on so large a scale, and during so extended a portion of his public career.

"The lustre," he observes, "which the labours of Lavoisier had shed over the scientific renown of France, the valuable services which he had rendered her in so many important departments of her affairs, the virtues which adorned his character and made his philosophy beloved as well as revered, were all destined to meet the reward with which the tyranny of *vulgar faction* is sure to recompense the good and the wise, as often as the *base unlettered multitude* are permitted to bear sway, and to place in the seat of dominion their idols, who *dupe to betray*, and finally punish them."

Lord Brougham justly reprobates the suspicious silence of the celebrated Carnot on this occasion, and the still more scandalous apathy of Fourcroy, who had been the pupil and panegyrist of the great chemist during many years. He acquits him of the deadly imputation, that he had even been instrumental in sending his master to the guillotine. But he praises, in contradistinction, M. Hallé, who had the honest courage to proclaim Lavoisier's public services before the dreadful tribunal, while he consigns the pupil to perpetual scorn. He was murdered in his fifty-first year.

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Lord Brougham's French predilections do credit to his sense of cosmopolitanism; but he appears to us somewhat more disposed to conciliate the jealousy of his very irritable French *confrères*, than to deal rigorous justice. No man deserves the reputation of science but a discoverer. To know all that has been hitherto known on a subject, deserves the character of diligence; to promote the progress of a science by largeness of expenditure, or steadiness of exertion, deserves the praise of liberality and labour; but the man who adds to the science by original invention, who enlarges its boundaries, and detects new principles, is the man alone to whom the name of genius can be applied. Lavoisier was, unquestionably, an important minister of science; he possessed singular assiduity, unwearied zeal, and remarkable sagacity. What these could do, he did; what knowledge could accomplish, he performed; but the inventors were of another country, and of a higher order, and he must be content with the honours due to imitation. Yet he had considerable happiness in the difficult art of communicating his knowledge. His *Treatise on Chemistry*, though now superseded by subsequent arrangements, is singularly clear; and no great teacher of chemistry has hitherto given the world a more striking example of exactness in detail, and clearness in conception.

His cruel death, too, may be almost said to have continued his services to society. It proved, with irresistible force, the true character of Infidel Revolution. It showed a noble-minded and benevolent man the victim of revolutionary rage; an intelligent, studious, and retired man, obnoxious to the rabble love of ruin; a mild, generous, and patriotic man, the instant prey of revolutionary government, which boasted of its superiority to the vices of kings, of its homage to intellect, and of its supreme value for the virtues of private life. Yet it murdered Lavoisier without a moment's hesitation, or a moment's remorse, and flung the first philosopher of France into a felon's grave.

The biography of Adam Smith gives Lord Brougham an opportunity of pouring out, at the distance of nearly half a century, that knowledge of Political Economy which first brought him into notice. His *Colonial Policy*, a remarkable performance for a student of eighteen,

exhibited in miniature the principles and propensities which his long career has been expended in maturing and moulding. Adam Smith was the idol of all Scottish worship in the last century; and his originality of conception, the weight of his subject, and the clearness of his judgment, made him worthy of the elevation.

Adam Smith's birth was of a higher order than is often to be found in the instance of men destined to literary eminence. He was the son of a comptroller of the customs, who had been private secretary to Lord Loudoun, secretary of state, and keeper of the great seal.

An accident in infancy had nearly deprived the age of its first philosopher, even if it had not trained him to be hanged. At three years of age he was stolen by travelling tinkers, a race resembling the gipsies, and which in that day formed a numerous population in Scotland. But a pursuit being speedily set on foot, he was fortunately recovered. He was well educated, and, after the routine of school, was sent to Glasgow for three years, where he obtained an Exhibition to Baliol College. At Oxford he remained for seven years, chiefly addicted to mathematics—a study, however, which he subsequently wholly abandoned. He had been intended for the Church of England; but whether from dislike of its discipline, or from disappointment in his views, he retired to Scotland, to take his chance of employment in its colleges. In 1748 he settled in Edinburgh, and, for three years, read a course of lectures on rhetoric. His contemporaries, then obscure, became, in some instances, conspicuous; for among them were Hume, Robertson, and Wedderburne. In 1751, Smith was elected to the professorship of Logic in the University of Glasgow, which he soon after exchanged for that of Moral Philosophy.

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Thus far we run on smoothly with Lord Brougham; but when he comes to discuss religion, we must occasionally doubt his guidance. For example, in speaking of Smith's lectures on Natural Theology, he denounces the jealousy of those who regard it as other than "the very foundation essential to support its fabric." From this opinion we totally dissent. It is perfectly true that natural religion and revelation are consistent with each other, as must be presumed from their being the work of the same Divine wisdom. But their foundations are wholly distinct. Why did the Jew believe the Mosaic revelation? Simply and solely, because it was delivered to him with such evidences of supernatural origin, in the thunders of Sinai, and substantiated at subsequent periods by miracle and prophecy, that he must receive it as divine. Why did the early converts receive Christianity? Simply on the same direct evidence supplied to their senses. No apostle sent them to examine their notions of the Godhead, or left them to inculcate the doctrines of the gospel by their reason. But he declared his doctrine as a new truth, and gave proof of its truth being divine, by working wonders palpably beyond the power of man. Of course, unless man knew what was meant by the power of the Deity, he could not have comprehended the simplest communication of the apostle. But we are speaking of the foundation of a belief—not the intelligibility of a language. We are entitled to go further still, and say, that the first idea of the being of a God was itself a revelation—a much plainer solution of the extraordinary circumstance, that so lofty and recondite a conception should have existed in the earliest and rudest ages of society; than to suppose that the antediluvian shepherd, or the postdiluvian hunter, should have ever thought of tracing effects and causes up to that extreme elevation, where a pure and supreme Spirit creates and governs the whole. We are entitled even to doubt whether the idea of Spirit was ever *naturally* conceived in the mind of any human being, difficult as is the conception to a creature surrounded with materiality, with every thought derived from his senses, and with the total incapacity of defining to this hour, or even imagining, the nature of Spirit. It will be fully admitted, that when the idea was once communicated, its reality was substantiated by the frame of nature, by the regularity, the extent, and the beneficence of the great physical system. But the origin was revelation. Lord Brougham quotes Tillotson; but the archbishop had earned his mitre by other means than the vigour of his understanding, and often trifles like other men.

In 1759, Smith published his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*—a work of skill and invention, but which has long since fallen into disuse with the intelligent world. It, however, had the rare good fortune of attracting the notice of an individual, possessed at once of the taste to honour, and the will to befriend, a man of original ability. This volume fell into the hands of the celebrated Charles Townsend, who proposed that the author should take charge of the young Duke of Buccleuch, whose mother, the dowager-duchess, he had married. Nothing in the life of Townsend was more honourable to him than this choice, not only for its judgment but for its rarity. The generality of men in possession of affluence think only of themselves, and would value the most common-place gratification more highly than the encouragement of the obscure genius, which wanted only that encouragement to shed a new lustre on its generation. The man of power in general feels its possession the primary object of his patronage, and sees no purpose in the immense opportunity given to him by his rank, but to obtain adherents, and make his power impregnable. Though there may be exceptions, such is the rule; and with this recollection of the established course of things, we give all honour to the memory of the man, without whose patronage the world would probably have lost the ablest work of its century, the immortal *Wealth of Nations*.

In 1763, Smith was appointed tutor to the young nobleman, resigned his professorship, and went with his pupil to France. After a residence of a year and a half at Toulouse, he travelled in Switzerland, and then, returning to Paris, spent ten months there. His French residence was peculiarly fortunate. It rubbed off the rust of his seclusion; it introduced him to the best

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society of courtly life; and it brought him into direct intercourse with that whole circle of active intellect and novel philosophy, which made the Parisian coteries at once the most bustling and brilliant of Europe. However the horrid profligacy of the court, and the contemptuous infidelity of high life, might have either disgusted the morals, or startled even the scepticism of the stranger, there can be no doubt of the interest which he felt in the society of such men as Turgot, Necker, D'Alembert, and Quesnay. Smith, some fifteen or twenty years before, had drawn up a sketch of the principles which he afterwards developed in his *Wealth of Nations*. Political economy was then beginning to take a form in French science. Whether it ever deserved the name of science, or will ever deserve it, may be a grave question. It depends upon such a multitude of facts, and the facts themselves vary so perpetually, the "principles" derived from those facts are so feeble and fluctuating, and common experience so provokingly contradicts, from day to day, the most laboured conclusions, that every new professor has a new theory, and every new theory turns the former into ridicule, itself to be burlesqued by the next that follows. This at least is known, that Fox declared his suspicion of the whole, saying, that it was at once too daring to be intelligible, and too indefinite to be reducible to practice. Even in our day, no two authors on the subject agree; all the successful measures of revenue and finance have been adopted in utter defiance of its dogmas; while all the modern attempts to act upon what are called its principles, have only convulsed commerce, shaken public credit, and substituted fantastic visions of prosperity for the old substantial wealth of England. No occupation could have been fitter for the half-frivolous, half-factious spirit of France. A revolution in revenue was openly regarded as the first step to revolution in power; the political economists indulged themselves in a philosophic conspiracy, and vented their sneers against the government, under pretext of recognising the rights of trade. It took but a little more than twenty years to mature this dexterous contrivance, and the meek friends of free trade had the happiness of seeing France in a blaze.

Smith, on his return, shut himself up in his study in Kirkcaldy for ten years. His friends in vain attempted to draw him from his solitude to Edinburgh: he steadily, we may almost say magnanimously, refused; and at the end of the tenth year, in 1776, he explained the mystery, by the publication of the two quarto volumes of his *Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. The work was received with general congratulation; it was regarded as a new science, although it is well-known, as stated in the introduction to the biography, that many others had previously discussed the same subjects. Smith's views, however, were so much more comprehensive, his division so much more distinct, and his remarks so much more practical, that he deserved all the credit of the architect who combines in beauty and utility the beams and pillars which he finds scattered on the ground. And here we advert to the obvious benefit of that patronage which had been extended to this very able man by Townsend. The annuity which had been settled on him as tutor, had enabled Smith to give up the whole of his time, and the whole powers of his mind, during those ten years, to this great work. During nearly twenty years of lecturing, on the other hand, in which his pen was necessarily employed without ceasing, he seems to have published but one work, *The Theory of Moral Sentiment*. That he constantly formed ingenious conceptions, may be easily admitted; but that he wanted either time or inclination to complete them, is evident from the fact, that he never suffered them to appear in print, and that one of his dying directions was, that they should be destroyed by his executors.

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He was now a man of fame, and to enjoy it came up to London, where he resided for two years in the midst of the best society, political and literary, to be found in England. He was now to be a man of fortune as well as of fame; he was appointed a commissioner of the customs in Scotland. He returned to Edinburgh, and commenced the agreeable life of a man at once distinguished, and opulent to the full extent of his simple desires, in a society whose names are still regarded as the lights of Scotland. He lived hospitably, and entertained good society, but he wrote no more; he was growing old, and Lord Brougham evidently thinks that the duties of his office exhausted his spirits and occupied his time. But those duties always partook largely of the nature of a sinecure; and there is every reason to doubt whether they could have worn down a man of regular habits, and who had been trained to the routine of daily business by an apprenticeship of a quarter of a century. The greater probability is, that Smith felt that he had done enough for fame; that, knowing the world, he was unwilling to expose himself to the caprices of critical applause; and that he even felt how inadequate the early theories which found admirers in the lecture-room, might be to sustain a character already brought into full publicity by his own volumes. The fact is certain, that he produced nothing more. In July 1790, he died, at the age of sixty-seven. It was his custom to give a supper on the Sunday evening to a numerous circle of friends. How far this entertainment, which was more consistent with the latitude of his Paris recollections, was reconcilable with the decorums of Scotland, we cannot say. But on one evening, after having destroyed his manuscripts, finding himself not so well as usual, he retired to bed before supper, and as he went, said to his friends, "I believe we must adjourn this meeting to some other place." He died in a very few days afterwards.

Lord Brougham has obviously expended his chief labour on the life of this favourite philosopher, of whom, fifty years ago, every Scottish economist was a devoted pupil. Times are changed, yet this intelligent biographer has given a very ample and accurate, so far as we can judge, analysis of the *Enquiry*. But he would have greatly increased the obligations of the reader, by giving some portion of his treatise to the questions which modern artifice has devised, and modern infatuation has adopted.

An interesting "memoir" of Johnson commences the volume; but the topic would lead us too far. The biographer gives that literary Samson full applause for the strength of his understanding, the boldness of his morality, and the pungency of his wit. Rather to our surprise, he pours out an eloquent panegyric on Boswell. That we are indebted to this versatile personage for one of the most amusing and instructive collections of reminiscences in the history of authorship, will be readily conceded. But this is the first time of our hearing a demand that we should pay him any more peculiar homage. But Lord Brougham is himself the head of a school: his *ipse dixit* demands acquiescence, and none can doubt that, if he is singular in his dogmas, he deserves attention for the vigour of his advocacy.

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## REYNARD THE FOX. [2]

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The natural history of the Cockney has been frequently illustrated, and never so successfully as in time past in the pages of Maga. But nature is inexhaustible in all her creations. You might study a lifetime, and yet not fully master the properties of one of those little Infusoria that wriggle or spin about in a phial of foul or fair water, and a still wider subject of study is of course supplied by any larger animal, such as a Cockney, placed as he is a little lower than the angels, and half-way down, or thereabouts, between a man and a chimpanzee.

Upon careful inquiry it would probably be found, that in most nations the population, though all purporting to be men and women, consists in a good measure of beings that stand several degrees below the point of humanity. France, among several specimens of a higher order, has occasionally shown that a considerable proportion of its inhabitants was a hideous cross between the tiger and the baboon. Holland has had its Grotius and its Erasmus, but the otter and the beaver breed make up the mass of those who go by the name of Dutchmen. There has been no want in Germany of clear-sighted men, but the mole, the bat, and the owl furnish a large contingent to the ranks of its *litterati*. In other nations we see a greater or less preponderance of the wolf or the bear, the goat or the goose, the ass, the hog, or the hippopotamus. Such being the universal condition of the world, we should rather be proud than otherwise, that, in England, we can boast of a secondary tribe, made, perhaps, by some of nature's journeymen, but that yet imitate humanity so respectably, so amiably, and so amusingly, as the Cockney must be admitted to do.

A Cockney is by locality very much what a tailor is by trade. Though a remote sub-multiple of a man, he is enterprising, indefatigable, cutting his way to his object through every thing with a ready tongue and a quick wit. Yet he is deficient in some qualities indispensable to the species *homo*. Courage the Cockney undoubtedly possesses, because he is always among those who are said to rush in where others fear to tread. But veneration is utterly wanting in his composition; and here the resemblance to the tailor is conspicuous; as we never knew a single snip that had the slightest reverence for any thing under heaven—if, indeed, the assertion should not be made in still broader terms. In the tailor this effect, defective, comes by an obvious cause. The intolerable liberties which the vulgar fraction is permitted to take with people's persons, divesting the best and bravest of us of the halo of heroism that surrounds us at a distance; and the fact that the great mysteries of dress, the paraphernalia of our dignity and decency, and the chief emblems of our manhood and domestic authority, emerge exclusively from the hands of this insignificant but indispensable maker of men, are enough to extinguish within him all sentiment of respect for any thing human or divine. The Cockney arrives at a similar state of easy and impudent *non-chalance* by a different process. Littered in London, and living there all his life, he is proud of its position among cities; and he comes, by a natural process of reasoning, to ascribe its importance to its connexion with his own person and people, and to see nothing better or greater in the universe than himself and what belongs to him. The feeling grows with his growth, and is fed by a full indulgence in all the good things with which the land of Cockayne abounds, and which the most morose of mortals must admit to be eminently conducive to self-complacency.

The Cockney, thus devoid of all diffidence in himself, is prepared for every thing in the scale of human thought or action; pleasuring or politics, theatricals or theology, an Epping hunt or an Epic poem. In literature we may say of him, nearly in the words applied by Dr Johnson to Goldsmith, that there is scarcely any kind of composition that he does not handle, and none that he handles which he does not adorn with graces all his own.

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It is wonderful, however, to see with what success a Cockney can sometimes disguise himself. He will write you a book, in which, several pages on end, you think you are reading the thoughts of some ordinary mortal. But the cloven foot always appears before you are done with him. In poetry, indeed, you can go but a short way till the cat is let out of the bag. That unfortunate letter R! No lessons in elocution, no change of climate, can eradicate the deep-seated mischief of its mispronunciation in a Cockney whose years of pupilarity have been passed on the spot of his birth.

These remarks have been elicited by a disappointment we have recently suffered, in being

led to purchase the book referred to at the commencement of this article. We saw it advertised by an alluring title—"REYNARD THE FOX—a renowned Apologue of the Middle Ages reproduced in Rhyme." We bought the book, and were delighted with its appearance. A quaint, antique, cream-coloured binding—a golden vignette on the outside, of the fox making his obeisance to Noble the king of the beasts, and the lioness his spouse—a beautiful paper and type within, with red and blue illuminations interspersed at the heads of chapters and paragraphs;—all this combined to whet our appetite for a delicious treat. We read the preface and introduction, if not with pleasure, at least with patience, and with wonderfully few misgivings as to the truth, the worst feature in them being the tendency to Carlyleism, to which, however offensive in itself, custom has made us somewhat callous. But we had not perused a page or two of the reproduction in rhyme itself, when we discovered that we were wandering in the regions of Cockneyland, with one of its most distinguished natives for our guide.

Our immediate purpose is to offer an exposition, not of the old Reynard, but of its present "reproduction." We may say, however, that we think the original work is one peculiarly ill-suited to be appreciated or reproduced by one of Mr Naylor's compatriots. It is a product of true genius, humour, and sagacity. The author must have looked at beasts and men with a keen eye, and from the vantage ground of a contemplative mind; and he has worked out his thoughts in a plain and simple style of illustration, and embodied them in easy and natural language. There is much merriment in his work, but no straining after wit. There is all the knowledge of the day that an accomplished man could be expected to possess, but no parade of learning. There is no quaintness in the style, and no effort in the verse. The age of *Hudibras* had not come; and that of the *Ingoldsby Legends*, or *Miss Kilmansegg*, was still further off. The old Flemish writers of Reynard exhibit judgment as well as talent, and their Low Saxon successor, though himself a reproducer, has asserted a claim both to freedom and originality. The quiet, sensible, unaffected treatment of their subject, which these old versifiers exhibit, where the topics offered so much temptation to burlesque and extravagance, is the thing of all others least likely to be comprehended or relished in the meridian of Bow Bells.

But, then, Goethe has successfully translated the book; and, therefore, Mr Naylor must do the same. This is a common mode of syllogising in Cockayne. Homer, Dante, Milton, Goethe, Wordsworth, have done such and such things, and therefore a Cockney is to do them also. Whatever may be the precise minor premise involved in this argument, we venture to suggest a doubt of its soundness. Mr Naylor tells us he has followed Alkmar's and Goethe's example, "mindful ever of the requisitions insisted on by Novalis in all paraphrastic translations, that they should convey accurately an idea of the first type, whilst, at the same time, the translator made his author speak after that appreciation of his work which exists in his own mind, no less than according to the poet's original conception." Mr Naylor may have succeeded in making his author speak after that appreciation of his work which exists in his own mind; but if the "first type" of Reynard had been no better than the reproduction gives us an idea of, the shapeless and sickly cub would not have lived an hour into the thirteenth century.

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Before Mr Naylor resolved on reproducing Reynard in English rhyme, he should have inquired whether it was not already as well done as he was likely to do it. In his elaborate enumeration of his predecessors in the task of translation, he thus writes:—"There is also said to be a translation of Reynard into English *doggerel*, by *one* Soltau, a German"—"known," as he adds in a note, "as the translator of *Hudibras* into German." We have now before us the translation so slightly alluded to, published at Hamburg in 1826. In all external and physical recommendations, this homely volume is far inferior to the London reproduction; but we shall immediately give our readers an opportunity of judging whether the *doggerel* of "one Soltau, a German," is not at least as good as that of "one Naylor, a Cockney."

Take the opening of the poem, which, in the original, is full of freshness and spirit, with all the joyousness of a holiday scene.

SOLTAU.

"It happen'd on a Whitsunday,  
When woods and fields look'd green and gay,  
When balmy flow'rs and herbs were springing,  
And feather'd folks were sweetly singing;  
The morn was fine, the weather clear,  
And fragrant odours fill'd the air,  
When Noble, sov'reign king of beasts,  
Proclaim'd a court and public feasts.  
His loyal subjects, lords and commons,  
Obey'd their master's royal summons;  
And many a valiant knight and squire  
To court repair'd in grand attire,  
With their attendants, great and small—  
'Twas difficult to count them all."



"Now Pentecost, the feast, by some  
 Call'd 'merry Whitsuntide,' was come!  
 The fields show'd brave, with kingcups dight,  
 And hawthorns kercheft were in white:  
 Her low-breathed lute the fresh'ning rill  
 Unto the waken'd woods 'gan trill;  
 Whilst, hid in leafy bower remote,  
 The cuckoo tuned his herald-note;  
 The meads were pranked in gold and green,  
 And 'leetel fowles' of liveried sheen,  
 Their pipes with JUBILATE! swelling,  
 From bush and spray were philomelling—  
 The breeze came balmy from the west,  
 And April, harness'd in her best,  
 The laughing sun led forth to see—  
 When Noble (lion-king was he,  
 And sceptre sway'd o'er bird and beast,)  
 Held ancient ways, and kept the feast,  
 The trumpets clang'd loud proclamation—  
 The couriers coursed throughout the nation—  
 Full many a Brave and many a Bold  
 Came hastening in troops untold."

The German translator here keeps precisely within the same compass of fourteen lines with his "first type," while the Londoner has one-half more. But this is not the main difference. The German is neater and more natural, and nearer the spirit as well as the letter of his model. All the trash in the new reproduction about hawthorns "kercheft in white," the low-breathed lute of the rill trilling, the cuckoo and his herald note, the 'leetel fowles' swelling and philomelling, and April harnessed in her best, are mere frippery sewed on by the reproducer, to make the venerable old garment look finer in the eyes of his co-Cockneys.

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We next give the two translations of that part of the poem which represents the Cock's complaints against Reynard, for killing his daughter, and which is supposed to give so accurate a representation of the form of process in the Middle Ages in an accusation of murder.

## SOLTAU.

"Gray scarce had done, when Chanticleer  
 The Cock in mourning did appear;  
 Two sons accompanied their sire,  
 Like him in funeral attire,  
 With hoods of crape and torches lighted,  
 And doleful lays they both recited.  
 Two others follow'd with a bier;  
 Mournful and slowly they drew near,  
 With heartfelt sighs and deepest groan,  
 Their fav'rite sister to bemoan.  
 "The Cock in tears the throne approach'd,  
 And thus his sad harangue he broach'd:  
 'My Liege, have pity on a man,  
 The most distressed of his clan,  
 Who, with his children here before You,  
 Is come, for vengeance to implore You  
 On Reynard, who, with fell design,  
 Hath done great harm to me and mine.  
 When hoary Winter left the plain,  
 And Spring smiled on the world again,  
 When leaves were budding, daisies springing,  
 And tuneful birds in thickets singing,  
 The sun at dawn of morning found me  
 With my young family around me;  
 Ten sons and fourteen daughters fair,  
 Breathing with joy the genial air,  
 All of one breed, and full of life,  
 Brought up by my good prudent wife.  
 Protected by a massy wall  
 And six bold mastiffs, stout and tall,  
 They lived, in spite of Reynard crafty,  
 Within a cloister-yard in safety.  
 "But lo! our enemy contrived  
 Our joy, alas! should be short-lived.  
 In hermit's garb the traitor came,  
 With letters, written in your name,

Where strictest orders were express'd,  
To keep peace between bird and beast.  
He said, he scorn'd the joys of sense,  
And led a life of penitence,  
To expiate his former guilt,  
And streams of blood, which he had spilt;  
He vow'd, in future he would eat  
No poultry, nor forbidden meat.

"All joyful, to my little crew,  
To tell the happy news I flew,  
That Reynard friar's garments wore,  
And was our enemy no more.  
Now for the first time we did venture  
Out of our gate. A dire adventure  
Awaited us; for whilst we stray'd  
And sported on a sunny glade,  
Reynard, conceal'd below a bush,  
Upon us suddenly did rush;  
One of my hopeful sons he slew,  
And of my fairest daughters two.—  
Five only out of twenty-four  
Are left; the rest he did devour.  
My daughter Rake-up, on this bier,  
Slain by the murderer, lies here;  
He bit her neck off yesterday—  
Revenge her death, my liege, I pray.'

"Sir Gray, (quoth Noble,) did you hear?  
Fine things of th' hermit-fox appear.  
Was't thus, that with his fasts he meant it?  
Sure as I live he shall repent it!

"Good Cock, we've heard your mournful tale,  
And we your daughter's fate bewail;  
Thus, first of all, we'll see the honour  
Of funeral rites bestow'd upon her;  
Next with our Council we shall further  
Consult, how to revenge this murther."

NAYLOR.

"He ceased; and scarce a sand had run  
When Chanticleer and all his clan  
Appear'd in court: right in the van  
A pullet's corse accompanied,  
'Clept Dem'selle Scratchclaw ere she died;  
By Reynard's bite decapitated—  
This wise the tidings were related.  
Close to the throne the Cock drew nigh:  
Deep anguish dimm'd his upturn'd eye:  
Two little Bantams, right and left,  
Wept bitter tears, as birds bereft.  
Sir Flapwing was of high degree,  
As fine a bantling as you'd see  
'Twixt Amsterdam and Paris, he.  
Sir Strain-neck was the other 'clept,  
And, like the first one, proudly stept.  
Before them each a torch they bear,  
Alike the same; for twins they were.  
Young Cocks yet twain bare up the pall,  
And help'd the wail with voices small.  
Then Chanticleer, before the King  
Commenced, in tones deep harrowing:  
'Ah, gracious Lord and King! give ear  
To my disastrous tale! The tear  
Of pity shed on us who stand  
For justice, suppliants at your hand.  
Sire! thus it chanced;—The frosted beard  
Of Winter scarce had disappear'd;  
Scarce had the thorny brake put by  
Its hosiery of fleece, and I  
As happy felt as though a chicken;  
About me, strutting, crowing, picking,  
In comeliness my little ones:  
I counted up ten stalwart sons;  
Of daughters, too, a wondrous store,—

Plump Ortolans, and full a score.  
 My dame, the thoughtful prudent Hen,  
 Had train'd their youth beneath her ken  
 All virtues cardinal to practise,  
 Best learned from mothers, as the fact is.  
 Our house was in the convent yard,  
 High wall'd around: six dogs stood guard;—  
 All kept for our peculiar care,  
 By night and day to shield us there.  
 Now, gracious Liege! mark what I tell.  
 Reynard, (the knave!) with cockle-shell  
 And pilgrim's staff, wellworn, appears,  
 Bearing a packet: as he nears,  
 I note your royal seal, and read  
 Announcement of the truce decreed:  
 No more, he said, he played the royster,  
 But sought repentance in a cloister:  
 Observed the rule o' th' strictest sect,  
 His sins to purge with sure effect;  
 Whereby myself might to the end  
 My life secure and fearless spend.  
 Said he, 'flesh diet I have sworn  
 Never to touch from night to morn.'—  
 Unto my children all, I stated  
 The royal message, then related  
 How Reynard had assumed the cowl,  
 And left off hankering after fowl.  
 Myself I led them far and wide,  
 When lo! the Fox's guile defied  
 My anxious cares: in that same hour  
 He'd mark'd a victim for his power!  
 Perdu behind a bush he lay,  
 And took, before mine eyes, his prey!  
 The best of all my brood he seized,  
 And ate her up. The morsel pleased  
 His scoundrel maw—'twas dainty meat—  
 And soon he sought another treat.—  
 Full four-and twenty hopeful chicks  
 As e'er peck'd corn from out fresh ricks  
 Were mine,—and now, as I'm alive,  
 The villain's kill'd them all but five!  
 Pity, O King! my sorrowing tale:  
 Grant succour in this hour of wail!  
 But yesterday, the huntsman's cry  
 Surprised him in the act to fly  
 With Scratchclaw's body, which you see  
 Kill'd by his murd'rous tooth—ah me!  
 'Tis here as witness of my woe—  
 Oh that my hardhap to your heart may go!  
 Enraged, the King: 'Sir Badger, ho!  
 The monk your uncle (troth!) doth know  
 To keep his fast,—the holy man!—  
 Match me the like of this who can?  
 What need of further question here?  
 Draw nigh and listen, Chanticleer!  
 Ourselves your daughter dead will see  
 Entomb'd with all solemnity  
 Of dirge and mass, in her last slumber,  
 And vigils also without number.  
 This done, from these our lieges true  
 We'll crave their help and counsel too,  
 Touching the murder and the vengeance due.'  
 To Bruin then the King thus spake:  
 'Bruin! look well you undertake  
 This journey with dispatch—'Tis I,  
 Your Sov'reign, calls upon you—fly!  
 Be wise and wary: Reynard's guile  
 Is practised in each crafty wile.'"

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Neither of the translators is here very good, and Naylor is perhaps as near hitting the nail on the point (to use the phrase of a friend of ours of the Fogie Club) as his competitor. He still gives us, however, a great many silly superfluties, though some of them we have ventured to cut out.

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Finally, as our readers may begin to think they have enough of this, we shall close our

comparative view by some quotations from the Wager of Battle, by which the Wolf and the Fox ultimately terminate their disputes.

SOLTAU.

"The trumpets then began to sound,  
And next the wardens did appear,  
And call'd the champions forth, to swear.  
Growler advanced, his oath to take;  
He swore, that Reynard was a rake,  
A murd'rer, and a treach'rous wight,  
For which assertion he would fight.

"Then Reynard in his turn did swear,  
That Growler was a perjurer;  
To prove his charge, he did defy him,  
Because he basely did belie him.

"The wardens then admonish'd both,  
To fight with honour and good troth.  
This being done, the lists were clear'd,  
Where both the combatants appear'd.

"The combatants with equal rage  
And fury now began t'engage.  
The Wolf, by dint of strength and art,  
Attack'd the Fox with leap and start;  
But Reynard, being shrewd and light,  
Avoided him by cunning flight,  
And while he ran, he did not fail  
To water well his rugged tail.  
When Growler meant to hold him fast,  
He nimbly veer'd about at last,  
And with his tail the dust and dirt  
He full into his face did flirt.

Whilst Growler rubb'd his eyes with pain,  
Reynard his flirts renew'd again,  
Till Growler was quite spent at last,  
And by the throat he held him fast.  
'Sir Wolf,(he said,)if heretofore  
Poor lambs and kids you oft have tore,  
It is high time now to repent,  
Before your last breath you have spent,  
And with contrition to behave,  
If you would wish your soul to save.'

"In this provoking style he spoke,  
Striving his enemy to choke;  
But Growler was for him too strong,  
And broke loose from his hold erelong;  
Though ere he got out of his jaws,  
Reynard gall'd him with teeth and claws;  
One of his eyes was almost out,  
And streams of blood ran down his snout.

"As soon as he his blood did view,  
At Reynard in a rage he flew;  
He got him under, and his paw  
He seized, and held it in his jaw.  
'You caitiff, your last hour has come,  
(Said he,) and you'll meet with your doom.  
'T shall not avail you now, to shear,  
To flirt, kick up a dust, and smear.  
I'll make you pay for all your lies,  
And for the damage of my eyes.'

"Whilst Growler kept hold of the paw,  
Sly Reynard with his other claw  
Seiz'd him in such a tender part,  
That it made Growler howl with smart,  
And forced him soon to ope his jaw,  
And to let go the imprison'd paw.  
Reynard now tugg'd, and pull'd, and tore,  
And made the Wolf spit blood and gore;  
He brought him senseless to the ground,  
And dragg'd him through the lists around.

"When this his wife and friends perceived,  
They were much terrified and grieved.  
Then pray'd the king to use his right,  
And to suspend the bloody fight.

"The king took their request to heart,

And bade the champions straight to part,  
 To whom the leopard and the ounce,  
 As wardens, did his will announce.  
 "Reynard," they said, "the king has sent  
 To let you know 'tis his intent  
 To put an end to all your strife.  
 He bids you to spare Growler's life;  
 For 'twould be a pity after all,  
 If either of you both should fall.  
 Meantime all, who are present, say  
 That you at last have won the day."

NAYLOR.

"Hark! hark! the tuckets sound on high!  
 'He comes! Sir Isengrim!' they cry.  
 The Wolf and all his kith and kin  
 Approach in long array! The din  
 Their multitudinous trampling made  
 Resounded like a cavalcade  
 Of mailed warriors on the march,  
 Or winds that, through a wood of larch,  
 The groaning branches swing and sway,  
 And thunder out and roar away.  
 Still forward they their course observe,  
 Neither to right nor left they swerve;  
 But onward to the lists the band  
 March up, then halt, and take their stand.  
 When first the Wolf—'I here repeat  
 The Fox a villain is, and cheat!  
 I brand him murderer to boot!  
 Adulterer! with heart, as soot  
 Is, black! that solemn truth do I  
 Wager on hazard of this die!'—  
 Then Reynard—'What the Wolf alleges  
 Are lies! I'll prove it! and my pledge is  
 The victory, which I by battle,  
 This day will gain o'er yon *base cattle!*'  
 The marshal of the lists then cried:  
 'The right shall by the might be tried,  
 What fair and fetis is, that do!  
 The god of battles prosper you!'—  
 He said, then towards the side withdrew.  
 The rest soon follow'd; save the two,  
 Who occupied alone the space,  
 And stood for action face to face!  
 The marshal now, with plumed hat on,  
 Beside the barrier stood; his baton  
 Of office thrice he whirled aloft;  
 And not a soul or spake or *cough'd*.  
 'Oyez! oyez! oyez!' he cried,  
 'Will each of ye the issue bide?'  
 'We will!' they answer. 'Are ye ready?'  
 'Yes!' 'Yes!'—'Then LAISSEZ ALLER!' said he.  
 Reynard address'd him then to fight;  
 And Isengrim commenced to bite  
 The air, and show'd his teeth, by way  
 Of prelude to the coming fray;  
 Next, rear'd his snout, and brought the jowl  
 To Reynard's level; one loud howl  
 He utter'd, ere he crouch'd, then bounded  
 To where the Fox, no whit astounded  
 By noises so unknighly, stood;  
 For raising lofty as he could  
 His voice, the foe the terms defied.  
 'Come on,' he resolutely cried.  
 The struggle was commenced! The sternest  
 There present felt it was right earnest;  
 The Fox, as smaller of the two,  
 Was favourite; and when he drew  
 'First claret,' at that *tapping* action  
 The mob express'd their satisfaction;  
 Exclaiming, '*go it! ten to one*  
 Upon the varmint little 'un!'

By this time had Dan Phoebus clomb  
 The summit of his glowing dome,  
 And Isengrim his power to feel  
 Began, which made the Wolf to reel.  
 He mourn'd his hapless want of claws,  
 His teeth, too, batter'd by the paws  
 Of Reynard, woefully he miss'd;  
 For grasp'd within his well-clench'd fist,  
 The Fox a flint stone firmly held,  
 With which he deftly aim'd and fell'd  
 One after t'other every fang,  
 Till down his weasand, at each bang,  
 Successively they flew. This thing  
 To Isengrim *so punishing*,  
 Set him forthwith to calculate  
 The odds on his *superior weight*,  
 How best it might the foeman tell on—  
 Which done, he threw himself pêle-mêle on  
 The Fox, to bear him down intending.  
 But Reynard saw: instead of spending  
 His strength in any vain endeavour  
 'Gainst Isengrim, he waited ever  
 Upon the Wolf—so this time he  
 Perceived the rushing enemy,  
 And as he near'd him slipp'd aside.  
 The Wolf came on with awful stride,  
 But meeting not with Reynard there,  
 He buffeted the yielding air  
 Instead, found no impediment,  
 His force him to the barrier sent,  
 Where toppling heels o'er head he went  
 With emphasis—a heavy *flop*,  
 'My eyes, ' *the mob cry*, 'what a whop!'

Then Reynard to the Wolf stepp'd close,  
 And said aloud, 'How lik'st the dose?  
 Friend Isengrim, there yet may be  
 For pardon opportunity  
 Ere thou departest, only speed ye,  
 Or else the wandering ghosts, I rede ye,  
 Of all the lambs and kids thou'st slain  
 Will haunt thee through the wide champain  
 Whither thou'rt ebbing fast, down yonder;  
 But softly, is he kill'd I wonder?'  
 For so it seem'd. Through that vast crowd  
 A pin drop had resounded loud.  
 Thought Reynard, he has got it now!  
 I'll rest awhile, for any how  
 If he the fight again begin  
 I'll try the trick upon his shin.  
 Stunn'd lay the prostrate Wolf quite still  
 And stiff, nor moved a peg until  
 His squires, much fearing for his life,  
 Rush'd in, preceded by his wife;  
 And lifting him upon their knees,  
 They gave him *salts to make him sneeze*,  
 Which thirteen times he did repeat,  
 Then started lively to his feet.  
 A feeling of relief ran through  
 The crowd, whose visages look'd rue,  
 To think their fun forestall'd and spent  
 By that untoward accident.  
 Again the tuckets sound—again  
 The dauntless heroes give the rein  
 To their revenge. The Fox now charges  
 The Wolf, and both his eyes enlarges,  
 With *right and lefters planted well*,  
 And *punches on the nob that tell*;  
 So hard and fast the bangs and thumps,  
 You'd thought that firemen at their pumps  
 Were working—  
 ——crafty Reynard quick  
 Deliver'd him a villain kick  
 Right in the midriff—down he dropp'd!  
 Like some tall forester when lopp'd  
 By stroke of woodman's axe. 'Twas all

He spake, not groaned in his fall,  
 Outstretch'd upon the ground there lay  
 The Wolf—he'd fainted clean away.  
 No herald's voice, no tucket's cheer,  
 The noble Isengrim could hear;  
 An all but victor lately, now  
 Prostrated, palsied by one blow;  
 Nay, not so, by a kick unknighly,  
 Foul aim'd, yet for the mark too rightly,  
 Alas, its only merit that!  
 But what cared Reynard, it was pat,  
 And told, and did its business well;  
 'Twas every thing desirable.  
 The fight was o'er—the Wolf dragg'd out  
 More dead than living, 'mid the shout  
 Of rabble, whilst the heralds cry  
 'Largesse,' the others 'Victory.'  
 The air with noise and din resounded.  
 The friends of Isengrim, confounded,  
 Slunk off, whilst Reynard's stay'd; indeed  
 The very people who agreed  
 The Fox's death a public good  
 Had been, now 'mong the foremost stood,  
 By acclamations to attest  
 Regard outheroing the rest!"

We have not the heart to criticise this last and greatest effort of the reproducer. Its slang speaks for itself, and certainly carries along with it an undeniable "certificate of origin".

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A good translation of any thing is perhaps an impossibility. But it must be confessed, that the attempt of the German foreigner is highly creditable to him, and, with a little amendment, would probably afford our countrymen as fair an idea of the original as they are ever likely to see. Certain it is, that Mr Naylor has not improved upon it.

If our readers think, that in the samples we have given of Mr Naylor's beauties, we have not sufficiently brought forward some of the more striking peculiarities of the Cockney school, we shall meet this complaint by presenting them with the subjoined anthology, the fragrance of which we think will satisfy their highest anticipations.

"The first in consequence at *court*,  
 As foremost in the public *thought*."

"Your cap and gloves you've left in *pawn*,  
 Thus adding ribaldry to *scorn*."

"What visitors had been? they *tell her*  
 How Reynard call'd, and said, 'nice *fellow*.'"

"Malkin should fall! and now the *fork*  
 By Martin turn'd to *tomahawk*."

"No sooner had the foe with *drawn*  
 To howl around the priest *forlorn*."

"Besides, he must have more than *thought once*  
 Upon the very vast *importance*."

"Of solemn asses half-a-*score*,  
 Who kick, when tickled with a *straw*!"

"I left him trapp'd, and then made *sheer off*:  
 His sufferings you can't form *idea of*."

"From underneath the frame I *draw*  
 The pin that propp'd it: with a *roar*."

"Their eggs upon a heap of *straw*,  
 Then loitering hindermost, the *more*."

"When it was bruted round the *court*  
 How Reynard was by greybeard *brought*."

"Grimalkin there one eye had *lost*,  
 His scalp from Bruin's head been *forced*."

"With any thing, in short, to *fasten*  
Guilt on him—burglary—e'en *arson!*"

"Than at the words the Queen, *alarm'd*,  
Nigh swoon'd before her fears were *calm'd.*"

"The son dishonour'd: not a *straw*  
It weigh'd with him, to think how *sore.*"

"There dwelt my father; him they *sought*,  
And plotted, whilst they soak'd his *port.*"

"To practise after my *papa*—  
Through life my light and *exemplar!*"

"Another life to lead he's *sworn*:  
And will to-morrow at the *dawn.*"

"Then, turning to the Queen, *besought*  
Her majesty in merry *sport.*"

"Quoth Reynard, as with sudden *thought*  
Before the portal stopping *short.*"

"We have so many a sally-*port*,  
And *cul-de-sac*, we can't be *caught.*"

"Send far and near the heralds *forth*,  
By blast of trump to tell my *wrath.*"

"At Rome, I on our banker *draw*,  
And when that's gone, I send for *more.*"

"That none dared venture! This he *saw*  
And felt his pluck return once *more.*"

"But I've no *claws*  
And therefore am not fit for *wars.*"

"By envy eaten up, they *saw*  
Me prosper; looking all *before.*"

"And ever, when they walk'd *abroad*  
Each arm'd with hunting-whip and *cord.*"

If any of our readers doubt the authenticity of some of the rhymes above set down, we are willing that they should buy the book, as we have done, and ascertain for themselves.

Merciful as we are by nature, and growing more and more so every day by age, we yet feel that the enormities we have now denounced are beyond endurance. Such poetry as this, neither gods, men, nor booksellers should tolerate; and with the highest respect for the very excellent publishers who have assisted in the birth of this production, and to whom we owe so many useful and admirable contributions to knowledge and literature, we do venture humbly to submit, that their peculiar duty makes them somewhat more responsible for what is thus brought forth, than ordinary obstetrical practitioners can be for what they may help into the world. There is no reason that such a bantling should be born at all, and at least we would recommend the continuance of gestation for nine times the Horatian period. Seriously speaking, we always regret to miss the general security which the title-page should give us, that in what we buy, we shall have something for our money. A bad or inferior book may, inadvertently, issue from the most respectable quarter. But when a work is ushered into the light with such pomp and pageantry of paper, printing, and getting up, as are here lavished, we hold that the public have a right to expect that it has received the imprimatur of some discerning judge, and to enforce the implied warranty that the inside, as well as the outside, is a merchantable commodity in the market of Parnassus.

But the publisher's part of it is the least of the evil. It is obvious that the natives of Cockneyland are forgetting themselves. A new generation has sprung up that do not remember the castigations bestowed on their fathers of yore, and which for a time kept them in tolerable subjection. A young Londoner, who happens to have enthusiasm, or industry, or information, on a particular subject, may deserve commendation for the laudable direction of his private studies; but is he, therefore, entitled to *haspire* to write, and not to write merely, but to write poetry, and to disfigure a venerable old poem under pretence of reproducing it? That is a different question, which needs to be seriously and decidedly dealt with. This is not the first time, within a brief period, that we have been compelled to make an example of similar delinquencies; and, as sure as the crutch is in



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## THE AMERICANS AND THE ABORIGINES

### A TALE OF THE SHORT WAR. PART II.

The conclusion of our first notice of "The Americans and the Aborigines," saw Hodges, the midshipman, on his way to the Mississippi, and, if he could find it, to his ship; whilst Tokeah and his Indians returned to their village upon the banks of the Natchez. There, upon the day after the arrival of the warriors, we find the Indians assembled and deliberating in their council-house. Some important matter is evidently in agitation: an ominous gloom hangs over the village; and Canondah, to whom her father has not spoken since his return, and who is in complete ignorance of what passed between him and Hodges, is shut up in her wigwam with Rosa. The absence of one of the Indians, sent as a guide with the Englishman, the silence of Tokeah, and their state of semi-captivity, render the two girls sad and anxious, and they busy themselves with a thousand conjectures as to what has occurred, when a shrill whistle attracts them to the window. The sight that there presents itself chases the blood from the cheeks of Rosa, and causes her to sink, terrified and half-fainting, into the arms of her friend.

A large boat, of similar build to the one in which Hodges had arrived, ascended the river, impelled by the strokes of six vigorous rowers. Besides these, two other men were seated in the skiff, which now entered the creek where the canoes were moored. The Englishman's boat was amongst the latter, and seemed to attract the particular notice of one of the two men; he glanced sharply at it, and then made a remark to his companion, who nodded his head, as if assenting to his observation. The man who had spoken stepped on shore. He was of the middle height and slightly made, with a sunburnt complexion, hollow cheeks, in which the smallpox had left black, unpleasant-looking scars, and a pointed and rather red nose. The expression of his eyes, which were sunken and of a dark-grey colour, and his enormous whiskers and mustaches, gave him any thing but an agreeable physiognomy. There was an air about him as if he strove to appear natural and unassuming, but at times his false side-glances and malicious smile more than neutralized all his efforts. His dress was a short blue frock, buttoned up to the chin, trousers of the same colour, and a cap. After addressing a few words to his companion, who had also come ashore, he walked with a quick step and military gait towards the Miko's wigwam. Just then the Indian council broke up; the old chief strode slowly and gravely towards his dwelling; whilst the warriors hurried in various directions to their respective wigwams. It seemed as if they avoided the new-comer; for not one of them crossed his path, although he evidently expected them so to do. He gazed silently after the receding groups, shook his head, and entered the Miko's hut.

"Here I am, friend Tokeah!" cried he, with a forced smile, stretching out his hand to the Miko, who was seated upon his couch, calm, and with his head bowed upon his breast. "I'm a man of my word, you see. Arrived only last night in the bay; but the devil take me if I could keep quiet: started off again, and rowed all night and all day; and here you see me, old friend, as hungry as a sea-lawyer, and as dry as a dolphin." He spoke in English, fluently enough, but with a strong French accent.

Tokeah knocked with his finger upon the table, and Canondah came out of her room.

"Canondah!" cried the man, stepping forward with an air of gallantry to salute her. The young girl avoided his embrace, and with the single word, "Welcome!" slipped out at the door. Our guest appeared thunderstruck.

"What does this mean, friend Miko?" cried he. "Am I in disgrace? Should really be sorry for it. As I came across the meadow, your people made all sail from me, as if I had been a privateer; and now you are as cold as a nor'-wester, and your daughter as stiff as a frozen cable. Apropos—you have had a visit. The young Englishman, I see, has been amongst you."

As he spoke these last words, the stranger cast a lowering glance at the old man.

"Of whom does my brother speak?" said the chief.

"Of a prisoner—a young fellow who escaped whilst I was at sea."

"My young brother has been here and is gone," replied Tokeah, dryly.

"Gone!" repeated the other; "you probably did not know that he had escaped from me. But it matters not," added he, indifferently.

"The Miko knew," replied the old man in a firm tone, "that his young brother had escaped from the chief of the Salt Lake. My brother ought not to have made him prisoner."

"What! would not the Miko of the Oconees seize the Yankee who came as a spy into his wigwam?"

"And was my young brother a Yankee?" inquired Tokeah, with a penetrating glance.

"Not exactly; but an enemy"—

"My brother," interrupted the Miko, "has too many enemies—the Yankees, and the warriors of the great father of the Canadas."

The man bit his lips. "Pshaw!" said he; "you have the Americans on the wrong side of your heart, and I have both. That's all the difference."

"The Miko," said the old chief, "lifts the war-hatchet to protect his people against the palefaces, and to avenge his slain brethren. But my brother has lifted the tomahawk against every one, and, like a thief, steals women and children."

A burning crimson overspread the countenance of Tokeah's visitor, and his teeth chattered with rage. "Truly, Miko," said he, "you say things which I can hardly stomach;" and with gleaming eye he measured the old man from head to foot. Suddenly, however, resuming his former smile—"Nonsense," said he; "we won't quarrel about trifles. Let every man do what he likes, and answer for what he does."

"When the Miko of the Oconees gave his right hand to the chief of the Salt Lake, and welcomed him to his wigwam, he held him for a friend and a brother, who had declared war against the Yengheese. Had he known that he was a thief"—

"Monsieur Miko!" interrupted the pirate, threateningly.

"He would not have taken him for his friend. Tokeah," continued the Indian with dignity, "lifted the tomahawk against the palefaces as the Miko of his people, but the chief of the Salt Lake has made him a robber. What shall he, the chief of the Oconees, say to the Yengheese warriors when he falls into their snares? They will hang him on a tree."

The truth, thus fearlessly and decidedly spoken, made an impression upon the pirate. He walked several times hastily up and down the room, and then again stopped opposite to the old man.

"We'll say no more about that, friend Tokeah," said he. "I do not count the scalps that you have stripped from the skulls of the Yankees, and you must not reckon too severely with me. What is done is done; but the future will be very different. I am fully decided to abandon my wild course of life, and then we'll sit down quietly, and live together in a little paradise, half à l'Indienne, half à la Francaise. Jovial and joyous."

"The Miko of the Oconees," replied Tokeah, "has never stained his hand with the blood of his friends. He is poor, but his hand has never touched what belonged not to him. His fathers would look down on him with grief, if he lived in friendship with a thief; the Great Spirit would hide his face, if he disgraced his people by an alliance with the robber."

The Frenchman had listened to these words more tranquilly than might have been expected, but with a slight twitching of his features, that showed they touched him to the quick. Suddenly he turned away.

"Is that your way of thinking?" said he. "You fancy you can get on better without Lafitte? I've no objection. If I had known it sooner, I would have spared myself the trouble of listening to your insolence, and you that of uttering it. Adieu! Monsieur Miko."

"My brother is hungry," said the Indian, starting up, and greatly shocked. "He must eat. Canondah has prepared his favourite repast."

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"And after he has eaten, he may make himself scarce?" said the pirate, surlily.

"My brother is welcome in the wigwam of the Miko. His hand never closes when it has once been opened," said the old nan, soothingly.

"Come, that sounds like reason. I thought my old friend had only caught a fit of spleen from the Englishman. I trust it will soon be over. Meanwhile, we'll see what the ladies are doing."

He stepped up to the curtain, and tried to open it, but in vain.

"Is it not allowed?" said he to the old man.

"My brother must seek another squaw. Rosa shall not enter his wigwam."

In the adjoining chamber a sound was heard. It resembled a cry of joy, but presently subsided into a gentle murmur, of one in prayer.

The pirate stood stupefied opposite to the curtain. "Our alliance broken off, the door shut in my face!" muttered he. "*Eh bien! nous verrons.*" And so saying, he left the hut. The next minute he again put his head in at the door.

"I suppose I may make use of my own boat?" said he. "It is likely that I may have unwelcome visitors during my absence."

"When the chief of the Salt Lake is on the war-path, he knows how to meet his foes."

"Sensibly spoken for once," said the pirate.

"My brother is hungry," said the Miko, pointing to his daughter, who now entered the room with several dishes.

"We'll come directly. Duty before pleasure."

And so saying, the bucanier hurried down to the shore, and approached his companion, a short square-built man, who was walking up and down with folded arms, and whose dark olive countenance was so buried in an enormous beard, that scarcely any part of it, except a long fiery Bardolphian nose was visible. This man, so soon as he saw the pirate, assumed a less *nonchalant* attitude, and his hands fell by his side into the position proper to a subordinate.

"Nothing happened, lieutenant?" said Lafitte.

"So little, that I should almost doubt this to be the Miko's village, did not my eyes convince me of it. Beg pardon, captain, but what does it all mean?"

"I might ask you the same question," replied the other, sulkily.

"On our former visits," continued the lieutenant, "it was like a fair; but to-day not a creature comes near us. The squaws and girls seemed inclined to come down, but the men prevented them."

The lieutenant paused, for his commanding-officer was evidently getting more and more out of humour.

"How many hands have we below on Lake Sabine?"

"Thirty," was the reply. "To-morrow, the others will have finished clearing out."

"Giacomo and George," said the pirate, in a sharp peremptory tone, "will go back and take them orders to come up here. Let every man bring his musket and bayonet, pistols and hanger, and let them wait instructions in the great bend of the river, two miles below this place. Don't look down stream, and then at me," said he angrily to the lieutenant, who had cast a glance down the river. "The young Englishman has been here, and the old savage has let him go."

"That's what you did with his companions, captain. I wouldn't have done it."

"There are many things that Monsieur Cloraud would not have done," replied the pirate, sarcastically. "But this younger has made an infernal confusion."

"Any thing else happened, captain?"

"Nothing particular, except that the old man is tired of our alliance."

"Pshaw! we don't want him any more, and may well indulge the people with a merry hour."

The bucanier glanced at his subordinate with unspeakable scorn.

"And therefore, as Monsieur Cloraud thinks, do I send for the men. The hour's pleasure would be dearly bought. I hate such folly. You shall learn my intentions hereafter."

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The lieutenant's low bow showed that the lawless pirate was on no very familiar footing even with his first officer, and that he well knew how to make his captain's dignity respected. Monsieur Cloraud now turned to the rowers, and communicated to them the orders he had received. In a few seconds, the boat, in which the Englishman had come, was pushed off, and glided swiftly down the stream.

"Now then, to dinner. Have some wine brought up, lieutenant."

The person addressed made a sign to one of the sailors; the man took up several bottles, and followed his officers to the wigwam of the chief.

"Take no notice, lieutenant," said Lafitte; "be as cheerful and natural as possible. We must try and find out what the old fellow has got upon his mind."

The two men entered the wigwam, and took their places at the table. A buffalo hump, that most delicious of all roast-beef, which Canondah had carefully cooked under the embers, was smoking upon it.

"You won't refuse to drink with me?" said the pirate, filling three glasses, and offering one to the chief.

"Tokeah is not thirsty," was the reply.

"Well, then, rum?" said Lafitte. "Have a bottle brought, lieutenant."

"Tokeah is not thirsty," repeated the chief in a louder tone.

"As you please," said the pirate, carelessly. "Isn't it strange," continued he to his lieutenant,

"that the whole juice and strength of the beast should centre in this hump? If this is to be the food of the Indians in their happy hunting-grounds, it would be almost worth while turning Indian. Enjoyments of this kind are rather more substantial than the lies of our hungry priests."

As in duty bound, the lieutenant laughed heartily at the facetiousness of his commander. The Miko, who was sitting in his usual attitude, his head sunk upon his breast, looked up, gazed for a few seconds at the pirate, and then relapsed into his previous brooding mood.

"Make the most of it, lieutenant," said the pirate. "We shall not enjoy many more such tit-bits. The Great Spirit would hide his face from us if we despised his gifts. But come, friend Miko, you must empty a glass to the health of your guests, unless you wish to see them depart this very night. I like a little pride, but too much is unwholesome."

"My brother," said the Miko, "is welcome. Tokeah has never raised his tomahawk against the stranger whom he received in his hut, nor has he counted the suns that he dwelt with him."

"I am certain," said the Frenchman, "that Tokeah is my friend; and, if an evil tongue has sown discord on the path between us, the wise Miko will know how to step over it."

"The Oconees are men and warriors," said the chief; "they listen to the words of the Miko, but their hands are free."

"Yes, yes, I know that. Yours is a sort of republic, of which you are hereditary consul. Well, for to-night let the matter rest. To-morrow we will discuss it further."

The lieutenant had left the wigwam; night had come on, and the moon's slender crescent sank behind the summits of the western trees. The old Indian arose, and with his guest stepped silently out before the door.

"My brother," said he, with emotion in his voice, "is no longer young; but his words are more silly than those of a foolish girl, who for the first time hangs glass beads around her neck. My brother has foes sufficient; he needs not to make an enemy of the Great Spirit."

"Oh!" said the pirate laughing, "we won't bother our heads about him."

"My brother," continued the Indian, "has long deceived the eyes of the Miko; but the Great Spirit has at last opened them, that he may warn his people. See," said he, and his long meagre form seemed to increase to a gigantic stature as he pointed to the moon swimming behind the topmost branches of the trees; "that great light shines on the shores of the Natchez, and it shines in the villages of the whites; neither the chief of the Salt Lake nor the Miko of the Oconees made it; it is the Great Spirit who gave it brightness. Here," said he, pointing to the palmetto field, whose soft rustle came murmuring across the meadow, "here is heard the sighing of the Miko's fathers; in the forest where he was born it howls in the storm; both are the breath of the Great Spirit, the winds which he places in the mouths of the departed, who are his messengers. Listen!" he continued, again drawing up his weather-beaten form to its utmost height; "the Miko has read your book of life; when yet a young man he learned your letters, for he saw that the cunning of the palefaces came from their dead friends. That book says, what the wise men of his people have also told him, that there is one Great Spirit, one great father. The Miko," he resumed, after a moment's pause, "was sent from his people to the great father of the palefaces, and when he came with the other chiefs to the villages where the whites worship the Great Spirit in the lofty council wigwams, he found them very good, and they received him and his as brothers. Tokeah spoke with the great father—see, this is from him"—he showed a silver medal with the head of Washington. "He asked the great father, who was a wise father and a very great warrior, if he believed in the Great Spirit of his book, and he answered that he did believe, and that his Great Spirit was the same whom the Red men worship. When the Miko returned to his wigwam and came towards the setting sun, his soul remembered the words of the great father, and his eyes were wide open. So long as he saw the high walls of the council wigwams, where the palefaces pray to their Great Spirit, the Red men were treated as brothers; but when they approached their own forests, the countenances of the white men grew dark, because the Great Spirit no longer lighted them up. Tokeah saw that the men who did not worship the Great Spirit were not good men. And my brother scoffs at the Great Spirit, and yet would be a friend of the Oconees? He would be a friend of the Miko, who would already have sunk under his burden had not his fathers beckoned to him from the happy hunting-grounds! Go," said the old man, turning away from the pirate with a gesture of disgust; "you would rob the Miko and his people of their last hope."

"Good-night," said Lafitte, yawning. "There's been a good Methodist parson spoilt in you." And so saying he turned towards the council wigwam, his usual dwelling when at the village. Tokeah stepped back into his hut. No night-song soothed the oppressed spirit of the old chief; and only the shrill whistle of the watch, repeated every two hours from the shore and before the wigwam of the pirate, told of the presence of living creatures in the village.

Upon the following morning Lafitte's lieutenant rouses him from his sleep, and informs him that there is an unusual stir and bustle amongst the Indians. The pirate hastily dresses, and repairs to the wigwam of the Miko, whom he finds restless and excited. The cause of this soon becomes apparent.

On a sudden the village resounded with a long joyous shout, which, spreading like wildfire from hut to hut, swelled at last into one wild and universal chorus, in which men, women, and children united their voices. The Miko had betaken himself in haste to the council wigwam, and the whole village was in an uproar. From behind each hedge, from out of every hut, the Oconees emerged and rushed towards the council-house; even the presence of Tokeah was insufficient to keep them within bounds. On the further side of the Natchez was seen a party of thirty Indians, all on horseback. Some of them were seeking a ford; but presently a young man, impatient of the delay, plunged with his horse into the water, and all thirty followed him, in the same order in which they had approached the river. The breadth of the stream, opposite to the wigwam, was about five hundred feet, and the depth considerable. Nevertheless the gallant little troop seemed in their element, and, almost without breaking their ranks, they swam their steeds across. Meanwhile the pirate stood upon the shore, watching their approach with the most uncontrolled fury depicted on his countenance.

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"Had we but ten good marksmen," muttered he to the lieutenant.

"*Pardon, capitaine*, they are not Oconees, but those devils of Comanches. I made their acquaintance in my Mexican campaigns."

The little squadron had now reached the creek. Swinging their legs over their horses, they sprang upon shore, drew the animals after them, and again flung themselves upon their backs with a swiftness and dexterity that recalled the fable of the centaur. The foremost of the strangers had arrived within a few paces of the Oconees, who, with the Miko at their head, were assembled in front of the council-house, when the circle opened, and Tokeah stepped forward, his hand outstretched.

"The great chief of the mighty Comanches, and of the Pawnees of the Toyask, is welcome," said he, gravely.

The young Indian to whom these words were addressed, halted and listened attentively, and with head reverently bowed, to the greeting. When the old chief had spoken, he sprang from his horse and advanced towards him, his right hand extended. Coming close up to Tokeah, he again bowed himself, took the Miko's hand, and placed it upon his own head. The interchange of greetings was remarkable for dignity, and derived a peculiar interest from the contrast between the two chiefs. Nothing could be in stronger opposition than the gaunt meagre form of the Miko, who stood like the weather-beaten trunk of some gigantic tree, stiff, mute, and melancholy, and the open, manly, dignified and yet gentle aspect of the young chief of the Comanches. His oval-shaped head was covered with a picturesque head-dress of fur and feathers; his high, arched forehead, and blooming complexion of a light copper colour, scorned the wild war-paint of his companions; the expressive black eyes and aquiline nose were in admirable harmony with the manly contour of his person, which his style of dress and equipment showed off to the greatest advantage. A doublet of blue fox fur covered his breast, and from his shoulders, on which it was fastened by golden clasps, hung the skin of a panther, draping a form that would have enchanted Thorwaldsen or Canova. It was a magnificent model of manly beauty, that had grown up untrammelled and without blemish in the enchanting prairies of Mexico, and in the midst of a mighty people owning no master but the Great Spirit. A dagger, with a hilt of wrought gold, a short rifle, and a lance nine feet long, decorated with a horse-tail, completed an equipment which for richness and utility combined could scarcely be surpassed. The young chief's horse, of extraordinary beauty, was almost covered with a panther skin, secured on its back and shoulders by four golden buckles. It had neither saddle nor stirrups, but on either side, at the end of a strap, hung a small leathern bucket, in which the muzzle of the rifle and butt of the lance reposed.

Similar to those above described were the dress and arms of other four of the warriors, also belonging to the powerful Indian tribe of the Comanches. They wore their hair combed back on either side of the forehead; their complexion was a mixture of olive and copper-colour. Their bearing was proud, and they seemed almost to look down upon the Pawnees who accompanied them. Round the necks of their steeds hung the lasso, that terrible weapon with which the Mexican riders capture, with wonderful skill and dexterity, the horse, the buffalo, or a human foe.

The remainder of the troop were Pawnees of the Toyask tribe. Their heads were clean shaven, excepting of one carefully plaited tuft upon the crown. Upon their shoulders were buffalo skins, the leather dyed red, the hair worn inwards; and similar hides served them for saddles. They wore broad girdles, to which their calico under-garment was fastened. About half of them were armed with muskets and rifles, but all had lances, a long knife, or rather hanger, and the tomahawk. They were well-made and powerful men, compared with whom the thin-armed, narrow-shouldered Oconees had the appearance of children.

"My brother is thrice welcome," repeated the Miko after a pause, during which his eyes dwelt with an expression of the purest satisfaction upon his stately guest and his companions. "Has the great El Sol reflected on the words which Tokeah sent him through his runners?"

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"His ears are open and his heart large," replied the young chief gravely. "Are the words of the great Miko for El Sol alone, or may the warriors of the Comanches and Pawnees also hear them?"

"The chiefs and warriors of the Comanches and Pawnees are welcome in the council wigwam of the Oconees. They are their brothers."

When the Miko had spoken these words, the four Comanches and a like number of Pawnees dismounted from their horses, and followed the chiefs to the council wigwam. The others also dismounted, and forming a semi-circle, stood leaning against their horses' shoulders. Nearer to the council-house were ranged the Oconee warriors, armed only with their long scalping-knives; and behind them, at a respectful distance, the young men of the village had stationed themselves, also in a half circle. Again, far behind these, were the squaws and children, to whom the strict rules of Indian etiquette did not allow a nearer approach. The village had gradually assumed the appearance of a little camp, with various corps of troops formed up in it. On the shore stood the four pirates leaning on their muskets, whilst their captain and lieutenant paced up and down among the bushes. With the exception of a sharp quick glance occasionally cast towards the groups of Indians, they appeared to take no particular interest in what was passing.

El Sol, the young chief of the Comanches, is the affianced husband of Canondah, whom he has come to make his bride. In the council now held, it is decided that the alliance between Tokeah and the pirate shall be broken off, and that the remnant of the Oconees shall be incorporated with the powerful tribes of the Comanches and Pawnees. The former part of this decision is communicated to Lafitte who makes violent but unsuccessful claim upon the hand of Rosa, and finally enters his boat and descends the stream. El Sol, who greatly distrusts him, advises Tokeah to be on his guard against treachery; but the Miko denies the possibility of danger, on account of the distance of the pirate's haunt, and because, on the following morning, the village is to be abandoned, and the Oconees and their visitors are to proceed together to the country of the Comanches. He either forgets that the pirate had sent off a boat on the preceding morning, or thinks it unnecessary to increase the uneasiness of his guest by adverting to so unimportant a circumstance. In spite of what he has recently learned, he still entertains a feeling of kindness for Lafitte, with whom he has so long been on terms of friendship, and thinks him incapable of acting towards him in a base or hostile manner.

That evening the nuptials of Canondah and El Sol are celebrated; but the Indian maiden, although fondly attached to the young chief, is weighed down by a foreboding of evil which she finds it impossible to shake off. On her marriage day she is sad and in tears.

"And does Canondah," said the bridegroom mildly, "enter the wigwam of El Sol with a sorrowful heart?"

"El Sol," replied the maiden, "is dearer to Canondah than her own life; his voice is music in her ears, and his love the limit of her wishes; but Canondah's heart is heavy to bursting. The Great Spirit whispers to her, and she has no words to express his whisperings." She clasped Rosa in her arms, and pressed a long and feverish kiss upon her lips. "Rosa," said she, in a stifled voice, "will you be a daughter to the Miko when Canondah is no more?"

"I will," sobbed Rosa.

"Will you promise, by the Great Spirit, not to forsake him?"

"I promise it," replied Rosa, her tears flowing fast.

The Miko, who stood silent, and sunk in thought, now made a sign; El Sol threw his arm round Canondah, and led her away in the direction of the council wigwam.

The wedding has been celebrated with great rejoicings; the Indians, who have indulged largely, many of them to excess, in the fire-water of the palefaces, retire to their huts, to sleep off the effects of their libations, and soon the village is sunk in silence and repose. We extract the chapter that follows:—

It was past midnight, and the village and its environs were buried in profound repose, when a man, carrying a naked sabre under his arm, advanced with stealthy steps from the shore, towards the Miko's wigwam. He reached the trees in front of the dwelling; and after casting a cautious and searching glance around him, was about to retrace his steps, when, with the quickness of light, a noose of buffalo hide encircled his neck, and he was thrown to the ground with a shock so sudden and irresistible, that it seemed caused by a supernatural rather than a human power. His sabre fell from his hand, before he had time to raise it to his neck and sever the noose; and so rapidly and silently did all this take place, that a group of armed men, stationed between the creek and the cottage, at scarcely forty paces from the latter, were perfectly unaware of what occurred. Now, however, a yell that might have roused the dead from their graves was heard; the door of the council wigwam, in which the bridal-bed of Canondah and El Sol had been spread was burst furiously open; and by the flash of several muskets, just then fired from the shore, a powerful figure, bearing something heavy in its arms, was seen to rush out and plunge into the neighbouring thicket. Other cries, proceeding apparently from a thousand throats, multiplied themselves in every direction, behind hedge and bush, over land and water, in accents as wild and fierce as if the demons of hell had been unchained, and were rejoicing in a nocturnal revel. Simultaneously with this uproar, a regular platoon fire commenced upon the shore, and blue flames issued from various cottages of the peaceful Indian hamlet, rapidly increasing till they burst out into a bright red blaze, that spread hissing and crackling over wall and roof. In the midst of

this frightful tumult another shout was uttered, resembling the roar of the lion when he rages in his utmost fury. It was the war-whoop of El Sol.

The noble Mexican had been lulled to sleep by the night-song of his bride, when the well-known yell of his tribe awakened him. Claspings his beloved wife with one arm, he grasped his knife and rifle, and darted through the door of the wigwam. A discharge of musketry greeted his appearance. The chief felt his left arm pierced by a ball; he trembled, and a slight shudder came over him. "Canondah!" cried he, in a hoarse tone, leaping the hedges like a wounded deer, and hurrying towards the forest; "Canondah, fear nothing—you are in the arms of El Sol!"

She answered not; her head had sunk upon her breast, her body writhed with a convulsive spasm, and then again stretched itself out. For one moment a horrible thought paralysed the very soul of her husband;—but no—it was impossible; his arm had received the bullet, her silence was the result of sudden terror, the blood that flowed over him was from his own wound. He was still flying from his treacherous and invisible foe, when his howling warriors came almost instinctively to join him; and, before he reached the forest, he found himself surrounded by the most trusty of his followers. "It is the pirate," he whispered to his wife; and then, pressing a kiss upon her lips, he laid her softly upon the grass, stepped forward into the midst of his warriors, and uttered his terrible war-cry. "Behold," cried he, pointing to the blazing cottages, "the faith of the white thief!"

It was a wildly beautiful, almost an awful sight. Already more than thirty huts were converted into blazing piles, lighting up the whole of that glorious shore, reflected in ruddy brilliancy from the still surface of the water, and illuminating the avenues of cypress and mangroves with long streaks of flame. Scattered shots were still heard, and after each report another hut began to blaze. In the group of Indians assembled round El Sol a deep silence now reigned, only broken by the tardy arrival of some yelling Pawnee or Oconee, who, roused out of his drunken slumber, was scarcely even yet aware of the cause of the uproar.

"Where is the Miko?" fifty voices suddenly demanded.

There was no reply. Just then a woman's scream was heard, proceeding from the brink of the water. El Sol had stood silent, his eyes fixed upon the burning huts, beyond which, near to the crest of the shore, the polished musket-barrels of the pirates gleamed in the firelight. Not more than five minutes had elapsed since the first yell proclaimed the presence of a foe, but already the young warrior had combined his plan, and he now gave his orders in a short decided tone, betraying the habit of command, and the certainty of prompt and implicit obedience. One of the Comanches, followed by the majority of the Pawnees and Oconees, glided away through the thick bushes; whilst El Sol himself, with the three remaining Comanches, and a troop of chosen Pawnees, hurried rapidly along the skirt of the forest.

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The broad belt of land over which the village was scattered, rose near the shore, as already mentioned, into a sort of crest overgrown with mangroves and myrtle bushes, through the middle of which ran a broad footpath. The elevation of this ridge was about twenty feet, and it continued along the whole length of the hamlet, excepting opposite to the creek, where nature had broken it down into a small harbour. Near this the glitter of arms betrayed the presence of a strong picket, placed there doubtless to guard the boats. This picket was each moment strengthened by the return of one or other of the pirates who had been detached to fire the wigwams. Along the bush-crowned ridge several advanced posts were stationed, intended to maintain the communication between the picket at the creek, and a second party which had pressed forward to the habitation of the Miko, and to support either, as need might be. From the whole arrangement, it was evident that the pirate had planned the carrying off the Miko and his adopted daughter; and this he might possibly have accomplished before creating an alarm, had not two of the Comanches taken upon themselves, according to the custom of their nation, to keep guard during the bridal night in front of the wigwam of their chief. These warriors, it is true, had partaken largely of the Miko's extravagant hospitality; but their senses, although duller than usual, were not sufficiently deadened to prevent their overhearing the step of the white men, a sound so easily recognised by Indian ears.

During his two years' intercourse with the Oconees, the pirate had become too well acquainted with their habits, not to appreciate the danger of attacking them in broad daylight, when each of his men would furnish an easy target for the Indians, who, on their side, would be sheltered behind trees and in the brushwood. He had therefore chosen the night for his attack; and, in order to ensure himself as much as possible against a counter-surprise in the darkness, and at the same time to spread terror amongst the assailed, he had caused the huts to be fired. Three practised marksmen were posted at a short distance from the council wigwam, for the express purpose of shooting the young Mexican chief, whom Lafitte justly deemed the most formidable of his opponents. The pirate himself, with a party of picked men, pressed forward to the Miko's dwelling, surrounded it, and seized its two inmates. Tokeah, usually so abstemious, had probably upon this festive occasion overstepped the bounds of sobriety, and he fell unresisting into the hands of his foe. So well arranged, indeed, and rapid had all the movements been, that the first call to arms had hardly died away, when the Miko and Rosa were in the power of the bucaniers. Lafitte then formed his men into a small square, and retreated steadily but in double quick time towards

the shore. Not an Indian was to be seen. The little phalanx was already in the neighbourhood of the creek, and at only a few yards from the picket; another dozen paces and they would be in their boats, which a very few strokes of the oar would send into the middle of the stream, and out of bullet range. A pursuit by canoes, in which each Indian would offer an easy mark, was not to be thought of. Such had been the pirate's calculation, and his plans seemed likely to be crowned with complete success. He was within a step of the shore, when suddenly there was a movement in the bushes immediately opposite to him, and glimpses were caught of the copper-coloured forms of the Indians, glowing redly in the firelight.

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"Steady!" cried the pirate to his men, who marched firmly and calmly onwards, gazing in a sort of wonderment at the bushes, which waved to and fro as if hundreds of anacondas had been winding their way through them. The pirates joined the picket and opened their square.

Lafitte threw Rosa into the arms of a sailor, and then pushed the Miko over the edge of the bank into the boat. The old man sank down like a lifeless mass in the bottom of the skiff, and Lafitte again turned to his men. The picket had already retired behind the ridge, where they were sheltered from the enemy's fire; the square alone was stationary, and seemed destined to observe the movements of the Indians, and to cover the retreat. It was a small but desperate looking band of about four-and-twenty-men, to the composition of which nearly every nation and quarter of the globe, every colour and language, contributed its quota. Thirst of blood gleamed in their eyes as they stood formed in column, in deep silence, and with fixed bayonets, waiting the signal to fire.

Suddenly the Indian warwhoop burst from a hundred throats. A second time the frightful yell was repeated, rendered more hideous by the shrill tones of the squaws and maidens, who struck up the death-song, and were seen running and dancing like demons round the blazing huts. The next instant, with brandished arms and shouts of fury, the Indians rushed towards the creek.

A malicious smile played over the hard features of the pirate as the Red men came charging down upon his band.

"Reserve, forward!" cried he, turning to the picket. The order was obeyed. In profound silence Lafitte allowed the howling Indians to advance to within ten paces of the musket muzzles, and then uttered a hoarse "Fire!" A deadly volley was poured in, and the first rank of the assailants fell to a man. Their comrades started back, but instantly returning to the charge, threw themselves with a desperate leap upon the pirates. The latter coolly tossed their muskets into the hollow of their left arms, and drew their pistols; a second volley in which the fire of the reserve picket mingled, threw the Red men into utter confusion. The slope of the shore was covered with killed and wounded, and the survivors fled howling to the cover of the thicket.

"March!" commanded Lafitte. The picket again approached the boat, followed by the main body.

At that moment, when to all appearance the retreat of the pirates was ensured, four heavy splashes in the water were heard, and Lafitte saw the four men who had been in charge of the boats, rise to the surface of the water and then disappear for ever. At the same time the boats themselves, impelled by some invisible power, shot, with the swiftness of an arrow, into the centre of the stream.

"'Tis the Mexican!" exclaimed the pirate, gnashing his teeth with fury, and firing a brace of pistols at the boat. A hollow laugh replied to the shots. The pirates looked around them, saw that their boats had disappeared, and for a moment stood thunderstruck, but speedily recovering themselves, they reloaded their muskets, and, firm as rocks, awaited a fresh assault. They had not long to wait. A volley from the river warned them of the proximity of a new foe; a second, still better directed, stretched a third of them upon the ground. And now once more the terrible war-cry resounded along the shore, and the Indians, roused to madness by their previous repulses, rushed for a third time upon their enemy. Another volley from the boats, and then the Mexican and his companions sprang like tigers upon the terrified pirates. The struggle was short. Unable to resist the furious attack upon their front and rear, the pirates threw away their weapons, and flung themselves headlong into the river to escape the tomahawks of their raging foes.

Lafitte was the only one who stood firm, and seemed determined to sell his life dearly. His back against the bank, his sabre in his right hand, a pistol in his left, he parried a blow dealt him by an Oconee, who fell, the next instant, with his head nearly severed from his shoulders. A bullet finished another of his assailants, and he was raising his sabre for the second time, when a lasso was flung over his head, and he fell helpless to the ground. The long and terrible yell that now rang along the shore, and was re-echoed from the adjacent forest, proclaimed the complete and bloody triumph of the Red men.

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The bullet that grazed the arm of El Sol pierced the heart of Canondah, and the day subsequent to the sanguinary conflict above described, witnesses her interment, and that of the Indians who fell in the fight. At the funeral a difference of opinion arises between the Oconees and Comanches. The number of slain pirates is insufficient to furnish a scalp to be buried with each of the dead Indians, and, to supply the deficiency, the Oconees are anxious



to immolate Lafitte and twelve of his companions who have fallen alive into their hands. To this El Sol and his warriors, free from many of the barbarous prejudices of their new brethren, object. Two of the pirates are sacrificed to an outbreak of Indian fury, but the others are saved by El Sol, and it then becomes a question how they are to be disposed of. It is proposed to deliver them over to the Americans, that they may deal with them according to their laws; but Tokeah, with a refinement of hatred towards the white men, devises an amendment upon this plan. Sooner or later, he says, they will come to the tree upon which they are to hang. Meanwhile let them go at large, and cause the blood of the palefaces to flow, as that of the Oconees has done.

This singular proposition at first startles the vindictive and bloodthirsty Oconees, but when they fully understand it, they receive it with a burst of applause. Lafitte and his companions are unbound, and allowed to depart.

The funeral over, the Indians set out for the hunting-grounds of the Comanches, but Tokeah does not accompany them. He has had a dream, enjoining him to disinter his father's bones, which lie buried several hundred miles within the limits of the United States, in a district formerly possessed by the Oconees. He wishes Rosa to accompany the tribe to their new residence; but the young girl, mindful of her promise to Canondah, insists upon encountering with him the perils of the long and wearisome journey he is about to undertake. Whilst the main body of the Indians set off in a westerly direction, Rosa, a young Indian girl, Tokeah, El Sol, and four warriors, turn their steps towards the country of the white men. Thither we will now precede them.

It was a bright cool December morning, and the sunbeams had just sufficient power to disperse the fog and mist which at that season frequently hang for a week together over the rivers and lakes of Louisiana. In the county town of Opelousas there was a great and unusual crowd. It seemed astonishing how so many people could have been got together in that thinly populated neighbourhood, and a person who had suddenly arrived in the midst of the concourse would have been sorely puzzled to conjecture its occasion. To judge from the drinking, dancing, fighting, and pranks of all sorts that went on, a sort of festival was celebrating; but weapons were also to be seen; men were formed up by companies and nearly every body had something more or less military in his equipment. Some wore uniforms that had served in the revolutionary war, and were consequently more than thirty years old; others, armed with rifles, ranged themselves in rank and file, and, by a lieutenant of their own election, were manœuvred into a corner, out of which no word of command that he was acquainted with was sufficient to bring them. Another corps had got a band of music, consisting of one fiddler, who marched along at the side of the captain, sawing his catgut with might and main. Those individuals who had not yet attached themselves to any particular corps, shouldered rifles, fowling-pieces, or, in some instances, an old horse-pistol, with nothing wanting but the lock; and the few who had no fire-arms, had provided themselves with stout bludgeons.

These, however, were merely the outposts. In the centre of the town the flower of the citizens was assembled, divided into two groups. One of them, consisting of the younger men, had fixed its headquarters in front of a tavern, the destination of which was indicated by a sign, whose hieroglyphics, according to our firm belief, neither Denon nor Champollion could have deciphered. Under these was written, for those who could read it, the customary announcement of "Entertainment for Man and Beast." In the interior of the establishment a second fiddle was to be heard; the performer upon which, of a less martial turn than his rival, was performing a lively jig for the benefit of a crowd of dancers.

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The other group, more gravely disposed, had chosen a more respectable parade-ground, and established itself in front of a store, containing a miscellany of earthen jugs, rolls of chewing tobacco, felt hats, shoes, knives, forks, and spoons, and (the most essential of all) a cask of whisky and a keg of lead and powder. Above the door was a board, with the inscription, "New Shop—Cheap for Cash;" and on the wall of the crazy frame-house was written in chalk—"Whisky, Brandy, Tobacco, Post-office."

On the stump of a tree stood a man who, to judge from his new beaver hat, clean shirt-collar, and bran-new coat and breeches of a pompadour red, was a candidate for some one of the offices in the gift of the sovereign people. Near him were several other men of equally elegant exterior, to all appearance also aspirants to the vacant post, and who seemed to wait with some impatience for the termination of his harangue. Comparatively speaking, tranquillity and order reigned here, only excepting the noise of the dancers, and the occasional bellowing of some noisy toper stumbling about through the mud, with which the single street of the little town was covered knee-deep. Such interruptions, however, the orator seemed totally to disregard, and he continued in stentorian tones to inform his auditors how he would whip them damned British, whom he hated worse than skunks. This he was setting forth in the clearest possible manner, when the attention of his hearers was in some degree distracted by a loud "Hallo!" proceeding from two boon companions, who, after having for some time floundered about the street, had at last rambled towards the edge of the forest, and now suddenly began to shout violently, and to run as fast as their unsteady condition would allow. Amongst their vociferations, the words, "Stop, you cussed Redskin!" were clearly distinguishable—sounds far too interesting not to create a sensation amongst backwoodsmen. A dozen of the orator's audience slipped away, just to see "what was the matter with the d——d fools, and why they made such a devil of a row." The example

found imitators, and presently not above thirty listeners remained collected round the speaker. Insubordination also broke out in the different corps that were exercising, and a full third of the men left their ranks and scampered towards the wood. Only the group in front of the chandler's store remained grave and steady in the midst of the general excitement.

From out of the dark cypress forest that stretches southwards from the shore of the Atchafalaya, a figure had emerged which judging from its dress, belonged to the Indian race. The savage had crept along the edge of the forest in order to get near the town; but alarmed perhaps by the crowd and noise in the latter, he had not ventured to take the road leading to it, but had struck into a side-path across a cotton field. He was about to climb over the fence, when he was descried by the two idlers already mentioned, who no sooner saw him than, although their heads were tolerably full of whisky, they commenced a rapid pursuit. One of the first took the precaution to place his pint glass in safety behind a hedge, and then followed his companion, a swift-footed son of the west, who already had the Indian in his clutches. The Redskin was so exhausted that he would evidently not have been able to proceed much further. The staggering and unsteady state of his captor, however, did not escape him, and he gave him a sudden push, which stretched him at full length in the mud.

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"Stop!" shouted the backwoodsman, no way disconcerted by his fall; "Stop! or I will so maul your ugly face that you sha'n't be able to eat for a week."

The Indian seemed to understand, and stopped accordingly, at the same time assuming an attitude indicative of a firm resolution to defend himself. He grasped his knife, and boldly confronted his pursuers, who on their part examined him with looks of curiosity and of some suspicion. The appearance of an Indian in this neighbourhood was nothing very unusual, seeing that they had a village scarcely a hundred miles off to the north-west, and that they continually made excursions of several hundred miles into the States in all directions, and even to the capital. For a long time past their diminished numbers had not allowed them to attempt any thing hostile against their white neighbours, who each year drew nearer to them: and their increasing wants, particularly their insatiable greed after the precious fire-water, had reduced them to be, *de facto*, little better than slaves to fur-dealers and storekeepers, for whom they hunted, and who paid the poor wretches in whisky scarcely the tenth part of the value of their skins.

In the present instance the two backwoodsmen had no evil intention against the Indian; all they wanted was to give him a glass of Monongahela, and to amuse themselves a little at his expense. So at least it appeared from the words of the one who had been knocked down, and who, without taking his tumble at all in ill part, now roared out, that "he must drink a half-pint of whisky with him, or he would put him in his pocket."

"Come, young Redskin," cried the other; "come along. You shall help us to fight the cussed Britishers, and drink, ay, drink like a fish."

By this time the little group was surrounded by deserters from the parade-ground, examining the Indian with a rude and unceremonious, but not an ill-natured, curiosity. Without permission or apology they inspected his wardrobe, tried the edge of his scalping-knife, examined his mocassins, and one of them even made an attempt to remove the cap from his head. By these various investigations the stranger seemed more surprised than gratified. His exterior was, it must be confessed, somewhat singular. A foxskin cap covered his head and extended down over his ears, concealing his light brown hair, an attempt at disguise which the long fair down upon his upper lip rendered tolerably unsuccessful. His deerskin doublet denoted the Indian, but his trousers were those of a white man. One of his mocassins—the other he had left in some swamp—was of Indian workmanship; one of his cheeks was still daubed with the red and black war-paint, which had been nearly rubbed off the other; his hands, although burnt brown by the sun, were those of a white man. If any doubt could have remained, his features would have settled it; the bold blue eye could no more have belonged to an Indian than could the full rosy cheek and the well-formed mouth. The crowd stared at him with the same sort of stupefaction which they might have shown had they entered a thicket expecting to find a fat deer, and encountered in its stead a growling bear.

"I should think you've looked at me enough," said the stranger at last, in good English, and in a sort of half-humorous, half-petulant tone; at the same time delivering a blow, with the flat of his knife, upon the horny hand of a backwoodsman, who had again attempted to lift his cap with a view to examine his hair.

It was, as the reader will already have conjectured, our young Englishman, who, having been guided by the Indian runner into the path to the Coshattoes, had at last succeeded in making his way over and through the innumerable swamps, rivers, and forests with which that district is so superabundantly blessed. The comparative coolness of the season, and the shallowness of the swamps and rivers, of the former of which many were entirely dried up and converted into meadows, had favoured his journey, or else he would scarcely have succeeded in reaching the banks of the Atchafalaya. For the preceding three weeks he had lived upon wild-geese and ducks, which he had killed and roasted as the Indians had taught him. He had now just emerged from the wilderness, and, however great his wish undoubtedly was to find himself once more in civilized society, the grim aspect of the Goliath-like backwoodsmen, their keen eyes and sunburnt visages, and long horn-handled

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knives, were so uninviting, that he was almost tempted to wish himself back again. Nevertheless, he seemed rather amused than disconcerted by the frank, forward familiarity of the people he had come amongst.

"And d—n it!" exclaimed one of the men after a long pause, during which Hodges had been the observed of all eyes, "who, in the devil's name, are you? You are no Redskin?"

"No, that I'm not," replied the young man, laughing; "I am an Englishman."

He spoke the last words in the short decided tone, and with all the importance of a baron or count, who, having condescended to arrive in disguise amongst his dependents, on a sudden thinks proper to lay aside his incognito. There was in his look and manner, as he glanced over the crowd, a degree of self-satisfaction, and a curiosity to see the impression made by the announcement, mingled with the feeling of superiority which John Bull willingly entertains, and which he at that time was wont to display towards Brother Jonathan, but which has since entirely disappeared, and given place to a sort of envious uneasiness—a certain proof, in spite of the scorn in which it disguises itself, of his consciousness of the superiority of the detested Brother Jonathan, aforesaid.

"An Englishman!" repeated twenty voices.

"A Britisher!" vociferated fifty more, and amongst these a young man in a grass-green coat, who had just come up with an air of peculiar haste and importance.

"A Britisher!" repeated the gentleman in green; "that's not your only recommendation, is it?"

The person addressed glanced slightly at the speaker, who was measuring him with a pair of lobster-eyes of no very friendly expression, and then carelessly replied—

"For the present, it is my only one."

"And d—n it, what has brought you to Opelousas?" demanded the green man.

"My legs!" replied Hodges. But the joke was not well taken.

"Young man," said an elderly American, "you are in Louisiana state, and see before you citizens of the United States of America. That man there"—he pointed to green-coat—"is the constable. Jokin' is out of place here."

"I come from on board my ship, if you must know."

"From on board his ship!" repeated every body, and every brow visibly knit, and a low murmur ran through the crowd.

The news of the landing of British troops had just reached the town, and the same courier had brought the unwelcome intelligence of the capture of the American gunboats on the Mississippi. Trifling as this disaster was, compared with the brilliant victories achieved on Lakes Champlain and Erie, and on the ocean, at every meeting, by American ships over British, it had, nevertheless, produced a general feeling of exasperation.

The constable stepped aside with several other men, and talked with them in a low voice. When they returned, and again surrounded the Englishman, their conference had produced a marked change in their manner. Their rough familiarity and friendly inquisitiveness had given place to a repulsive coldness; the humorous cheerfulness of their countenances was exchanged for a proud, cold earnestness, and they measured Hodges with keen distrustful glances.

"Stranger," said the constable, in a tone of command, "you are a suspicious person, and must follow me."

"And who may you be, who take upon yourself to show me the way?" demanded the midshipman.

"You have already heard who I am. These men are citizens of the United States, presently at war with your country, as you probably know."

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The green-clad functionary spoke these words with a certain emphasis, and even dignity, which caused the young man to look with rather less disdain at his shining beaver-hat, and verdant inexpressibles.

"I am ready to follow," said he; "but I trust I am in safety amongst you."

"That you will soon see," replied the constable, dryly.

And so saying, he, his prisoner, and the crowd, set off in the direction of the town.

If, as appears from the preceding extract, our author is ready enough to expose the peculiarities and failings of the English, whose foibles, in various parts of this book, he sets forth with at least as much severity as justice, he, on the other hand, and although his sympathies are evidently American, gives some curious specimens of their deficiency in military organization and discipline, and of the loose manner in which public affairs were carried on in the then newly formed state of Louisiana. The young midshipman is taken before our old acquaintance, Squire Copeland, who, with the restlessness characteristic of

his countrymen, has emigrated some three years before from Georgia to the infant town of Opelousas, and holds the double office of justice of the peace and major of militia. Hodges is examined on suspicion of being an emissary from the British, sent to stir up the Indian tribes against the Americans. He scrupulously observes his promise, made to Tokeah and Canondah, not to reveal their place of abode; and, hampered by this pledge, is unable to give a clear account of himself. Suspicion is confirmed by his disguise, and by certain exclamations which he imprudently allows to escape him on hearing Major Copeland and his wife make mention of Tokeah, and of Rosa, their foster-child, of whom they now for seven years have heard nothing. The result of his examination, of which the good-natured and unsuspecting squire, having his hands full of business, and being less skilled in the use of the pen than the rifle, requests the prisoner himself to draw up the report, is, that Major Copeland, the constable, and Hodges, set off for a town upon the Mississippi, then the headquarters of the Louisianian militia. What occurs upon their arrival there, we will relate in a third and final notice of the book before us.

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## THE FALL OF ROME.

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### ITS CAUSES AT WORK IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

The Rise and Fall of the Roman empire is by far the most remarkable and memorable event which has occurred in the whole history of mankind. It is hard to say whether the Rise or the Fall is most worthy of profound study and anxious examination. The former has hitherto most strongly attracted the attention of men, from the extraordinary spectacle it exhibited of human fortitude triumphing over every obstacle, and human perseverance at length attaining universal dominion. It was the spectacle most likely to rivet the attention of strenuous and growing nations—of men in that stage of existence when national ambition is strong and the patriotic passions ardent, and the selfish interests have not yet become so powerful as to have generally extinguished the generous affections. But it may be doubted whether the events that occurred in the later stages of the Roman empire, are not fraught with more valuable and important information than those of its earlier annals. Less interesting to the soldier, less animating to the citizen, less heart-stirring to the student, they are more instructive to the philosopher, more pregnant with warning to the statesman. They contain the only instance yet exhibited among men of a nation sinking from no external shock, but from the mere influence of internal decay; and point alone, of all passages in the annals of the species, to the provision made by nature, in the passions and selfishness of men, against the possibility of universal dominion.

To any one who attentively considers this all-important subject, two things must be apparent, of the very highest consequence in arriving at correct ideas on it. The first is, that the Roman empire did not sink under the external violence of the barbarians, but under the weakness and decline which had arisen in its own bosom. The second, that the causes hitherto assigned by historians and philosophers for this internal decay, are either vague generalities, having no definite meaning, and incapable of any practical application, or can be easily shown, even to the most superficial reader, not to have been the real causes of the phenomenon.

There can be no doubt that some of the irruptions of the barbarians—particularly those of the Goths into Romelia, which led to the fatal battles of Thessalonica and Adrianople; and of Alaric into Italy, which terminated in the capture of the Eternal City—were very formidable inroads, and might, in the best days of the empire, have taxed its strength and resolution to repel. But a little consideration must be sufficient to show, that, formidable as these invasions were, they could without much difficulty have been withstood, if the empire had possessed the strength which it did in the days of the republic, or in the first two centuries of the Cæsars. The Cimbri and Teutones, whom Marius combated and destroyed on the Rhone and in the north of Italy, were at least as formidable a body of barbarians as those which four centuries afterwards overturned the western empire. The forces whom Cæsar conquered in Gaul, Trajan on the Danube, were to the full as powerful as those which carried the standards of the Goths and Vandals to Athens and Carthage. Ætius, in the decline of the empire, and with the mingled Roman and barbarian force of Gaul alone, defeated Attila in the plenitude of his power, at the head of three hundred thousand men, on the field of Chalons.

Belisarius, with fifteen thousand men, recovered Africa from the Vandals; thirty thousand legionary soldiers did the same by Italy under Narses, and overthrew the whole power of the Goths. So high did the Roman soldiers still stand even in the estimation of their enemies, that Totila, the warlike monarch of the Goths, strove to bribe them into his service by offers of high pay. None had yet been approved equal to these legionary soldiers in battle; and the manner in which, with infinitely inferior forces, they repelled the barbarians on all sides, decisively demonstrates this superiority. The vigour and ability of Heraclius so restored the

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empire, when wellnigh sinking under the might of its enemies, that for a century it was regarded with awe by the barbarous nations all round its immense frontier. The five provinces beyond the Euphrates were conquered by the Romans from the Parthians during the decline of the empire. Nothing is so remarkable, in the last three centuries of Roman history, as the *small number* of the forces which combated around the Eagles, and the astonishing victories which, when led by ability, they gained over prodigious bodies of their enemies. The legions had dwindled into battalions, the battalions into cohorts. The four hundred and fifty thousand men who under Augustus guarded the frontiers of the empire, had sunk to one hundred and fifty thousand in the time of Justinian.[3] But this hundred and fifty thousand upheld the Eastern empire for a thousand years. So feeble were the assaults of the barbarians, that for above two centuries of that time the single city of Constantinople, with the aid of the Greek fire, defended itself with scarce any territory from which to draw support. It was not the strength of its enemies, therefore, but the weakness of itself, which, after an existence in the West and East of *two thousand years*, at length extinguished the Roman empire.

What, then, were the causes of decay which proved fatal at length to this immense and enduring dominion? Philosophers in all ages have pondered on the causes; but those hitherto assigned do not seem adequate to explain the phenomenon. Not that the causes of weakness are baseless or imaginary; on the contrary, many of them were most real and substantial sources of evil. But what renders them inadequate to explain the fall of Rome is, that they had *all existed, and were in full operation, at the time when the commonwealth and empire were at their highest point of elevation*, and centuries before either exhibited any symptoms of lasting decay. For example, the ancient historians, from Sallust downwards, are loud in their denunciation of the corruption of public morals, and the selfish vices of the patrician classes of society, as being the chief source of the decay which was going forward, while the growth of the republic had been mainly owing to the extraordinary virtue and energy of a small number of individuals.[4] But the very circumstance of these complaints having been made by Sallust in the time of Augustus, and the fact of the empire of the West having existed for four hundred, that of the East for fourteen hundred years afterwards, affords decisive evidence that this cause cannot be considered as having been mainly instrumental in producing their fall. How is the unexampled grandeur and prosperity of the empire under Nero, Adrian, Trajan, and the two Antonines, whose united reigns extended over eighty years, to be explained, if the seeds of ruin two centuries before had been sown in the vices and corruption of the rich patricians? In truth, so far was general luxury or corruption from being the cause of the ruin of the empire, the cause of its fall was just the reverse. It was the excessive *poverty* of its central provinces, and their inability to pay the taxes, which was the immediate cause of the catastrophe. The nobles and patricians often were luxurious, but they were not a thousandth part of the nation. The people was miserably poor, and got more indigent daily, in the later stages of its decay.

Modern writers, to whom the philosophy of history for the first time in the annals of mankind has become known, and who were aware of the important influence of general causes on social prosperity, independent of the agency of individual men, have assigned a different set of causes more nearly approaching the truth. Montesquieu says, the decay of the Roman empire was the natural consequence of its extension. This sounds well, and looks like an aphorism: but if the matter be considered with attention, it will be found that it is *vox et præterea nihil*. Those who, with so much complacency, rest in the belief that the fall of the Roman empire was the natural result of its extension, forget that its *greatest prosperity was coexistent with that very extension*. It is impossible to hold that the decay of the empire was the consequence of its magnitude, when the glorious era of the Antonines, during which it numbered a hundred and twenty millions of inhabitants under its rule, and embraced nearly the whole known habitable globe within its dominion, immediately succeeded its greatest extension by the victories, unhappily to us so little known, of Trajan.

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More recent writers, seeing that Montesquieu's aphorism was a vague proposition which meant nothing, have gone a step further, and approached much nearer to the real explanation of the phenomenon. Guizot, Sismondi, and Michelet have concurred in assigning as the real cause of the decay of the Roman empire, the prevalence of slavery among its working population, and the great and increasing weight of taxes to support the imperial government. There can be no doubt that these were most powerful causes of weakness; and that they stand prominently forth from the facts recorded by contemporary annalists, as the immediate and *visible* causes of the decline of the empire. The history of these melancholy periods is full of eternal complaints, that men could not be got to fill the legions, nor taxes to replenish the treasury; that the army had to be recruited from the semi-barbarous tribes on the frontier; and that vast tracts of fertile land in the heart of the empire relapsed into a state of nature, or were devoted only to pasturage, from the impossibility of finding cultivators who either would till the land, or could afford to pay the taxes with which it was charged. Doubtless the large proportion—at least a half, perhaps nearly two-thirds—of the people who were slaves, must have weakened the elements of strength in the empire; and the enormous weight of the direct taxes, so grievously felt and loudly complained of, [5] must have paralysed, to a very great degree, both the industry of the people and the resources of government. But a very little consideration must be sufficient to show, that these were not the real sources of the decline of the empire; or rather, that if they had not been aided in their operation by other causes, which truly undermined its strength, it might have been great and flourishing to this hour.

Slavery, it must be recollected, was *universal* in antiquity, and is so over two-thirds of the human race at this hour. Much as we may feel its evils and deprecate its severities, we ourselves, till within these three centuries, were entirely fed by serfs; and a few years only have elapsed since the whole of our colonial produce was raised by slave labour. America and Russia—the two most rising states in existence—are, the former in part, the latter wholly, maintained by slaves. It was an army, in a great measure composed of men originally serfs, which repelled Napoleon's invasion, survived the horrors of the Moscow retreat, and carried the Russian standards to Paris, Erivan, and Adrianople. Alexander the Great conquered Asia with an army of freemen wholly fed by slaves. The Athenians, in the palmy days of their prosperity, had only 21,000 freemen, and 400,000 slaves. Rome itself, in its great and glorious periods, when it vanquished Hannibal, conquered Gaul, subdued the East—in the days of Scipio, Cæsar, and Trajan—was to the full as dependent on slave labour as it was in those of its decrepitude under Honorius or Justinian. Cato was a great dealer in slaves; the Sabine farm was tilled by the arms of slaves; Cincinnatus and Regulus worked their little freeholds entirely by means of slaves. Rome was brought to the verge of destruction, nearer ruin than it had been by the arms of the Carthaginians, by the insurrection of the slaves shortly after the third Punic contest, so well known under the appellation of the Servile war. It is perfectly ridiculous, therefore, to assign as a cause of the destruction of Rome, a circumstance in the social condition of its people which coexisted with their greatest prosperity, which has prevailed in all the most renowned nations of the earth in a certain stage of their progress, and is to be found, in our own times, in states the most powerful, and the most likely to attain vast and long-continued dominion.

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Equally futile is it to point to the weight of the taxes as the main cause of the long decline and final overthrow of Rome. Taxes no doubt are an evil; and if they become excessive, and are levied in a direct form, they may come in the end to ruin industry, and weaken all the public resources to such an extent as to render a nation incapable of defending itself. But a very little consideration must be sufficient to show that it was not, in the case of Rome, the increase of the taxes taken as a whole, *but the decline in the resources of those who paid them*, which rendered them so oppressive. If, indeed, the national establishment of the Roman empire had gone on increasing as it advanced in years, until at length their charges became excessive and crushing to industry, the theory would have been borne out by the fact, and afforded perhaps satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon. But the fact was *just the reverse*. The military establishment of the Roman empire was so much *contracted* as it advanced in years that whereas it amounted to 450,000 men in the days of Augustus, in those of Justinian it had sunk, as already noticed to 150,000. [6] So far were the forces of Rome from being excessive in the later stages of the empire or disproportioned to an empire still, after all its losses, holding so large and fair a portion of the earth under its dominion, that on the other hand they were miserably small; and the disasters it underwent were mainly owing to the government of the Cæsars never being able to equip an adequate army to repel the attacks of the barbarians. The force with which Belisarius reconquered Africa and recovered Italy, never mustered *seventeen thousand men*; and the greater part of his successes were achieved by *six thousand* legionary followers. It was not the weight of the national establishments, therefore, but the diminished resources of those who were to pay them, which really occasioned the destruction of the empire.

There are two other facts of vital importance in considering the real causes of the gradual decay and ultimate ruin of the dominion of the legions.

The first of these is, that the extent of the decay was, in the latter stages of Rome, *very unequal* in the different provinces of the empire; and that while the central provinces, and those in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, were in the most wretched state of decrepitude, the remote districts were *in the highest state of affluence and prosperity*. This important fact is abundantly proved by unquestionable authority, and it sheds a flood of light on the real causes of the ruin which ultimately overtook them all.

The state of agriculture in the Italian plains under the Cæsars, is thus set forth by Gibbon:—

"Since the age of Tiberius, *the decay of agriculture had been felt in Italy*; and it was a just subject of complaint that the life of the Roman people depended on the accidents of the winds and the waves. In the division and decline of the empire, the *tributary harvests of Egypt and Africa* were withdrawn; the numbers of the inhabitants continually diminished with the means of subsistence; and the country was exhausted by the irretrievable losses of war, pestilence, and famine. Pope Gelasius was a subject of Odoacer, and he affirms, with strong exaggeration, that in Emila, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces, the human species was almost extirpated." [7]

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Of the progress and extent of this decay, Gibbon gives the following account in another part of his great work:—

"The agriculture of the Roman provinces was *insensibly ruined*; and in the progress of despotism, which tends to disappoint its own purpose, the emperors were obliged to derive some merit from the forgiveness of debts, or the remission of tributes, which their subjects were utterly incapable of paying. According to the new division of Italy, the fertile and happy province of Campania, the scene of the early victories and of the delicious retirements

of the citizens of Rome, extended between the sea and the Apennines, from the Tiber to the Silarius. Within sixty years after the death of Constantine, and on the evidence of an actual survey, an exemption was granted in favour of 330,000 English acres of *desert and uncultivated land, which amounted to one-eighth of the whole surface of the province*. As the footsteps of the barbarians had not yet been seen in Italy, the cause of this amazing desolation, which is recorded in the laws, (Cod. Theod. lxi. t. 38, l. 2,) can be ascribed only to the administration of the Roman emperors."[\[8\]](#)

Michelet observes, in his late profound and able History of France:—

"The Christian emperors could not remedy the growing depopulation of the country, any more than their heathen predecessors. All their efforts only showed the impotence of government to arrest that dreadful evil. Sometimes, alarmed at the depopulation, they tried to mitigate the lot of the farmer, to shield him against the landlord; upon this the proprietor exclaimed he could no longer pay the taxes. At other times they abandoned the farmer, surrendered him to the landlord, and strove to chain him to the soil; but the unhappy cultivators perished or fled, *and the land became deserted*. Even in the time of Augustus, efforts were made to arrest the depopulation at the expense of morals, by encouraging concubinage. Pertinax granted an immunity from taxes to those who could *occupy the desert lands of Italy, to the cultivators of the distant province and the allied kings*. Aurelian did the same. Probus was obliged to transport from Germany men and oxen to cultivate Gaul.[\[9\]](#) Maximian and Constantius transported the Franks and Germans from Picardy and Hainault into Italy; but the depopulation in the towns and the country alike continued. The people surrendered themselves in the fields to despair, as a beast of burden lies down beneath his load and refuses to rise. In vain the emperor strove, by offers of immunities and exemptions, to recall the cultivator to his deserted fields. Nothing, could do so. *The desert extended daily*. At the commencement of the fifth century there was, *in the Happy Campania, the most fertile province of the empire, 520,000 jugera* (320,000 acres) in a state of nature."[\[10\]](#)

So general, indeed, was the depopulation of the empire in the time of Justinian, that it suggested to many of the emperors the project of repeopling those favoured districts by a fresh influx of inhabitants. "Justinian II. had a great taste for these emigrations. He transported half the population of Cyprus to a new city near Cyzicus, called Justinianopolis after its founder. But it was all in vain. The desolation and ruin of the provinces continued, and up to the very gates of Constantinople, which was maintained entirely by grain *imported at a low price from Egypt, and cattle from the Tauric Chersonesus*."[\[11\]](#)

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As a natural consequence of this entire or principal dependence of Rome on foreign or provincial raising of grain, there was, on any interruption of these foreign supplies, the greatest scarcity and even famine in the metropolis. All the vigilance of the emperors, which was constantly directed to this object, could not prevent this from taking place. Tacitus says, that in the scarcity under Claudius, there only remained a supply of fifteen days for the city. [\[12\]](#) Famine in Rome was frequent under Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero. Claudian laments, that after Egypt had been assigned to Constantinople, Rome had come to derive its subsistence solely from Lybia, and depended on the *double* chances of the seasons and the winds.

—"Nunquam securi futuri,  
Semper inops, ventique fidem poscebat et anni."[\[13\]](#)

"When Africa revolted under Gildo, in the reign of Honorius, Rome," says Gibbon, "was on *the brink of starvation*, from which she was only saved by large importations *from Gaul*."[\[14\]](#) She still depended on her provinces; domestic agriculture was ruined. Claudian represents the genius of ancient Rome bewailing, in pathetic and eloquent terms, her dependence for food on the nations she had conquered, in words which all governments rendering their people dependent on foreign supplies would do well to bear in mind. "Formerly," says the poet, "my prayers used to be that my legions might triumph on the banks of the Araxes, or that the consul might display his eagles at Susa; *now all I ask is a supply of food to avert the extremities of hunger*. The province of Africa, which furnishes corn to my people, is under the power of Gildo. *He intercepts our supplies, and our food is at his mercy*. He sells the harvests which belong to the descendants of Romulus; he possesses the fields purchased by my blood. The warrior people which conquered the world, now dishonoured and in want, endures the miserable punishment of peace; *blockaded by no enemy, they are like the inhabitants of a besieged town*. Death impends at every moment; there remain only doubtful supplies for a few days. *My greatness has been my ruin*; I was safer when my territory was more limited; would that its boundaries were once more at my gates! But, if I am doomed to perish, at least let me have a different fate; let me be conquered by another Porsenna; let my city be burnt by a second Brennus. All things are more tolerable than hunger."[\[15\]](#)

Nor was the state of Greece, in the later stages of the empire, more favourable.

"No description could exaggerate the miseries of Greece in the later stages of the empire. The slave population, which had formerly laboured for the wealthy, had then disappeared,

and the free labourer had sunk into a serf. The uncultivated plains were traversed by bands of armed Slavonians, who settled in great numbers in Thessaly and Macedonia. The cities of Greece ceased to receive the usual supplies of agricultural produce from the country; and even Thessalonica, with *its fertile territory and abundant pastures, was dependent on foreign importation for relief from famine*. The smaller cities, destitute of the same advantages of situation, would naturally be more exposed to depopulation, and sink more rapidly to decay. The roads, after the seizure of the local funds of the Greek cities by Justinian, were allowed to go to ruin, and the transport of provisions by land became difficult. When the Byzantine writers, after the time of Heraclius, mention the Greeks and Peloponnesus, it is with feelings of aversion and contempt."[\[16\]](#)

Nor was Asia Minor in a more prosperous condition in the later stages of the empire. In Asia Minor the decline of the Greek race had been rapid. This decline, too, must be attributed rather to bad governments than to hostile invasions; for from the period of the Persian invasion, in the time of Heraclius, the greater part of that immense country had enjoyed almost a century of uninterrupted peace. The Persian invasions had never been very injurious to the sea-coast, where the *Greek cities were wealthy and numerous*; but the central provinces were entirely ruined. The fact that extensive districts, once populous and wealthy, *were already deserts*, is proved by the colonies which Justinian II. settled in various parts of the country. Population had disappeared even more rapidly than the agricultural resources of the country."[\[17\]](#)

But while this was the state of matters in Italy, Asia Minor, and Greece—that is, the heart of the empire—its remoter provinces, Spain, Lybia, and Egypt, not only exhibited no symptoms of similar decay, but were, down to the very close of the reigns of the Cæsars, in the highest state of wealth, prosperity, and happiness. Listen to Gibbon on this subject in regard to Spain:—

"The situation of Spain, separated on all sides from the enemies of Rome by the sea, the mountains, and intermediate provinces, had secured the long tranquillity of that *remote and sequestered country*; and we may observe, as a sure symptom of domestic happiness, that in a period of four hundred years, Spain furnished very few materials to the history of the Roman empire. The cities of Merida, Cordova, Seville, and Tarragona, were numbered among the most illustrious of the Roman world. The various plenty of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, was improved and manufactured by the skill of an industrious people; and the peculiar advantages of naval stores contributed to support an extensive and profitable trade. Many particulars concerning the fertility of Spain may be found in Huet's *Commerce of the Ancients*, c. 40."[\[18\]](#)

The state of Lybia was equally characteristic of the highest and most general prosperity, especially in relation to agricultural industry, at the time when Italy and Greece were thus languishing in the last stage of decrepitude and decay.

"The long and narrow tract," says Gibbon, "of the African coast was filled, when the Vandals approached its shores, with frequent monuments of Roman art and magnificence; and the respective degrees of improvement might be accurately measured by the distance from Carthage and the Mediterranean. A simple reflection will impress every thinking mind with the clearest idea of its fertility and cultivation. The country was *extremely populous*; the inhabitants reserved a liberal supply for their own use; *and the annual exportation, particularly of wheat*, was so regular and plentiful, that Africa *deserved the name of the common granary of Rome and of mankind*."[\[19\]](#)

Nor was the state of Egypt less prosperous in the last ages of the Roman empire; nor was its condition a less striking contrast to the miserable and languishing condition of the Italian and Grecian plains. It is thus described by Mr Finlay,[\[20\]](#) whose recent work has thrown so much light on the social condition of the inhabitants of the Roman empire in their later days:—"If the accounts of ancient historians can be relied on, the population of Egypt had suffered less from the vicious administration of the Roman empire, and from the Persian invasion, than any other part of their dominions; for at the time of its conquest by the Romans it contained seven millions and a half of inhabitants, exclusive of Alexandria; and in the last days of the empire it nourished almost as great a number. The Nile spread its fertilizing waters over the land; the canals were kept in a state sufficient for irrigation; and the vested capital of Egypt suffered little diminution, whilst war and oppression annihilated the accumulation of ages over the rest of the world. The immense wealth and importance of Alexandria, the only port which Egypt possessed for communicating with the empire, still made it *one of the first cities in the universe for riches and population*, though its strength had received a severe blow from the Persian conquest."[\[21\]](#)

Sicily was another exception from the general decrepitude and ruin of the Roman empire in the latter reigns of the Cæsars. "In the island of Sicily, the great bulk of the population was Greek, and few portions of the Greek race *had succeeded so well in preserving their wealth and property uninjured*."[\[22\]](#)

But in the other parts of the empire, to the north of the Mediterranean, the agricultural population was, in the time of Heraclius, *absolutely destroyed*. "The imperial armies," says Finlay, "which, in the time of Maurice, had waged an active war in Illyria and Thrace, and frequently invaded the territories of the Avars, had melted away during the disorders of the reign of Phocas. The loss was irreparable; for in Europe *no agricultural population remained*



to supply the means of forming a body of local militia, or even a body of irregular troops." [23]

It may readily be supposed, that so entire a destruction of the rural population in Europe, as thus took place under the Emperors in the Roman empire, must have been attended with the most fatal effects to their means of defence and national power. The inhabitants of towns, accustomed to sedentary occupations, and habituated to the luxury of baths, the excitement of theatres, the gratuitous distributions of food, could not endure the fatigue, privations, and hardships of the military life. Substitutes were almost universally sought for, and they, amidst the desolation of the country, could be found only in the semi-barbarous tribes on the frontier. Thus the defence of the empire came to be intrusted almost entirely to the arms of the barbarians, and it was hard to say whether they were most formidable to their friends or foes. Nothing could supply the place of the rural population on the shores of the Mediterranean. The legions gave a master to the Roman world, and the legions were recruited from Gaul, Germany, Britain, and Pannonia. Thus the dominion of the Capitol was really at an end long before it was formally subverted; and Rome had received a master from the barbarians long before the days of Alaric.

This continued splendour and population of the towns, amidst the ruin of the country, in the declining periods of the Roman empire, has attracted the particular notice of one of the greatest historians of modern times. "In the midst," says Sismondi, "of the general desolation of the country, the continued existence and splendour of the great towns is not so easily explained; but the same thing is now to be witnessed in Barbary and Turkey, and in the whole Levant. Wherever despotism oppresses insulated man, he seeks refuge from its outrages in crowds. The great Roman towns, in the first three centuries of the empire, were in great part peopled by artisans, and freedmen, and slaves; but they contained also a number far greater than in our days of men who, limiting their wants to the mere support of existence, spent their lives in indolence. All that population was alike unarmed, unpatriotic, incapable of defence against a foreign enemy; but as it was collected together, and at hand, it always inspired fear to domestic authority. Accordingly, to keep it quiet, there was always a regular gratuitous distribution of corn in the larger towns, and numerous spectacles in the theatres, the amphitheatres, and the circus, maintained at the public expense. The carelessness of the future, the love of pleasure and indolence, which have always characterised the inhabitants of great towns, characterised the Roman provincials even to the latest days of the empire, and in the midst of their greatest calamities. Treves, the capital of the northern prefecture of Gaul, was not the only city of the empire which was surprised and pillaged by the barbarians, at the moment when its citizens, their heads crowned with garlands, were applauding with enthusiasm the victors in the games of the circus." [24]

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The frequent custom of recruiting the legions by means of slaves, in the later period of the empire, which was wholly unknown in the days of the Republic, reveals, in the clearest manner, the weakness to which, in respect of military resources, it had arrived, long before the external symptoms of decay were visible in its fortunes. Even in the time of Marcus Aurelius, the legions which were to combat the Quadi and Marcomanni, on the Danube, were recruited from the servile class. Justinian went so far as to declare, by a public edict, every slave free who had served in the army. [25] "At last the army came to be composed entirely," says Finlay, "of the rudest and most ignorant peasants, of *enfranchised slaves, and naturalised barbarians*. This increased the repugnance, already sufficiently great, felt by the better class of citizens to enter the military life. The mercenaries formed the most valued and brilliant portions of the army, and it became the fashion to copy and admire the dress and manners of the barbarian cavalry." [26]

All the ancient historians concur in representing this impossibility of finding native soldiers in its central provinces, as the main cause of the overthrow of the empire. And that this, and not the power of the barbarians, was the real cause of the destruction of the empire, is proved by the fact, that whenever they were well directed, the superiority of the legions was as clearly evinced as in the days of Marius or Cæsar. "Whenever the invaders," says Finlay, "met with a steady and well-combined resistance, they were defeated without much difficulty. The victorious reigns of Claudius II., Aurelian, and Probus, prove the immense superiority of the Roman armies when properly commanded; but the custom which was constantly gaining ground, of *recruiting the legions from among the barbarians*, reveals the deplorable state of *depopulation and weakness* to which three centuries of despotism and bad administration had reduced the empire." [27]

But amidst this general prostration of the political and military strength of the Roman empire, in consequence of the decline and desolation of the *country*, the *great towns* still continued flourishing, and wealth to an extraordinary and unparalleled extent existed among the chief families, some of patrician, some of plebeian origin. That was the grand characteristic of Rome in its later days. The country, in the European part of the empire at least, was daily growing poorer; the cultivation of the fields was neglected; and the provinces, crushed under the weight of the direct taxes, which had become unavoidable, had in most cases sunk to half their former number of inhabitants. But the metropolis, whether in Italy or on the shores of the Bosphorus, was still the seat of opulence, luxury, and prosperity. The strength of Constantinople was sufficient to repel the barbarians, and prolong the life of the empire of the east, for many centuries after it had ceased to derive effective support from any of its provinces. It is recorded by Ammianus Marcellinus, that

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when Rome was taken by the Goths under Alaric, it was still inhabited by 1,200,000 souls, who were maintained chiefly by the expenditure of seventeen hundred and sixty great families, many of whom had £160,000 of yearly income, equal to at least £300,000 a-year of our money.[28] And of the flourishing condition of the cities of the empire, especially those which were on the shores of the Mediterranean, even so late as the eighth century, Mr Finlay gives the following account:—

"The strongest proof of the *wealth and prosperity of the cities of Greece*, even in the last days of the empire, is to be found in the circumstance of their being able to fit out the expedition which ventured to attempt wresting Constantinople from the grasp of a soldier and statesman such as Leo the Isaurian was known to be, when the Greeks deliberately resolved to overturn his throne. The *rural districts*, in the eighth century, were reduced to a *state of desolation*, and the *towns were flourishing in wealth. Agriculture was at the lowest ebb, and trade in a prosperous condition.*"[29] Sismondi gives his valuable testimony to the same effect:—"It was at this very time, *when industry in the country was declining*, that the *towns of the provinces arrived at their highest degree of opulence*. Adrian excited the emulation of their rich citizens, and he extended to the furthest extremities of the empire the luxury of monuments and decorations, which had hitherto been reserved for the illustrious cities which scorned to be the depots of the civilisation of the world." [30] Such, in a few words, was the condition, generally speaking, of all the part of the empire to the north of the Mediterranean, in the decaying period of its existence. The towns were every where flourishing; but it was in Africa, Sicily, and Spain alone that agriculture was undecayed. And the decay and ruin of rural industry, and of the inhabitants of the country to the north of the Mediterranean, left them no adequate means of resisting the attacks of the brave but artless barbarians, who there pressed upon the yielding frontiers of the empire.

Coexistent with this fatal decline in the rural population and agricultural industry, was the increase of *direct taxation*, which was so keenly felt and loudly complained of in all the later stages of the Roman history. This is a branch of the subject of the very highest importance, because it leads to precisely the same conclusions, as to the real causes of the fall of Rome, as the others which have been already considered.

It is well known that when the Romans first conquered Macedonia, the senate proclaimed a general liberation from taxes and imposts of every kind to the Roman citizens, as the reward of their victories. This state of matters, however, could not long continue in an old state charged with the duty, and under the necessity of keeping up, a large establishment to maintain its dominion over its subject provinces. For some time, indeed, the wealth brought by the conquest of Asia and Egypt into the Roman treasury was so considerable, that the necessity of taxes levied on its own citizens was not felt; and as long as the people had a direct share in the government, they took care to uphold an exemption in their own favour. But when one master was given to the whole Roman world, this invidious system of one class living upon another class was ere long abandoned. "Augustus," says Gibbon, "had no sooner assumed the reins of government, than he frequently intimated the insufficiency of the tributes from the provinces, and the necessity of throwing an equitable proportion of the public burdens upon Rome and Italy. In the prosecution of this unpopular design, however, he advanced with slow and cautious steps. The introduction of customs was followed by the establishment of an excise; and the scheme of taxation was completed by an artful assessment of the real and personal property of the Roman citizens, who had been exempted from every kind of contribution for above a century and a half." [31]

Customs on foreign goods imported into Italy was the first species of taxation attempted on the Roman people. "In the reign of Augustus and his successor," says the same historian, "duties were imposed on every kind of merchandise, which, through a thousand channels, flowed to the great centre of opulence and luxury; and in whatever manner the law was expressed, it was the Roman purchaser, and not the provincial merchant, who paid the tax. The rate of the customs varied from the eighth to the fortieth part of the value of the commodity. There is still extant a long, but imperfect, catalogue of Eastern commodities, which, about the time of Alexander Severus, were subject to the payment of duties. Precious stones, Parthian and Babylonian leather, cottons, silks, raw and manufactured, ebony, ivory, and eunuchs, were among the taxed articles. An excise also was introduced by Augustus, of one *per cent* on whatever was sold in the markets or by public auction; and this extended from the most considerable purchase of lands or houses, to those minute objects which commonly derive their value from their infinite multitude and daily consumption." [32]

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But ere long these indirect taxes proved unproductive, and recourse was had to the lasting scourge of *direct taxes*. One of 5 per cent on legacies and inheritances was first imposed by Augustus, and adhered to by him, in spite of the indignant murmurs of the Roman nobles and people. The rate was raised by Caracalla to a tenth of all inheritances; and, when the privilege of Roman citizenship was extended to the whole provincials of the empire, they were subjected at once both to the former burdens which they had paid as provincials, and the new tax levied on them as Roman citizens.[33] From that time, the direct burdens became daily more oppressive, and at length proved an almost insurmountable bar to industry. "The noxious weed," says Gibbon, "sprung up with the most luxuriant growth, and in the succeeding age darkened the Roman world with its deadly shade. In the course of this history, we shall be too often summoned to explain the land-tax, the capitation, and the heavy contributions in corn, wine, oil, and meat, which were exacted from the provinces for

the use of the court, the army, and the capital."<sup>[34]</sup>

These direct taxes soon became fearfully oppressive, and it is proved, by the clearest evidence, that they were among the leading causes of the decline of the empire. "The whole landed property of the empire," says Gibbon, "without excepting the patrimonial estates of the monarch, was the object of ordinary taxation, and every new purchaser contracted the obligations of the former proprietor. An accurate survey was made of what every citizen should contribute to the public service, and this was made anew every fifteen years. The number of slaves and cattle constituted an essential part of the report; *an oath was administered to the proprietors, which obliged them to disclose the true state of their affairs*; and any attempt to prevaricate or elude the vigilance of the legislature, was severely watched, and punished as a capital crime, which included the double guilt of treason and sacrilege. A large portion of the tribute was paid in money; and, of the current coin of the empire, *gold alone could be legally accepted*. The remainder of the taxes, according to the proportion observed in the annual indiction, was levied in a manner still more direct and still more oppressive. According to the different value of lands, their real produce, in the various articles of wine or oil, corn or barley, wood or iron, was transported by the labour, or at the expense of the provincials, to the imperial magazines, from whence they were occasionally distributed for the use of the court, the army, and the two capitals, Rome and Constantinople. The commissioners of the revenue were so frequently obliged to make *considerable purchases*, that they were strictly prohibited from allowing any compensation, or from receiving in money the value of those articles which were exacted in kind."<sup>[35]</sup>

"Either from accident or design, the mode of assessment seemed to unite the substance of a land to the form of a capitation-tax. The return which was sent from every province and district expressed the number of tributary subjects, and the amount of the public impositions. The latter of these sums was divided by the former; and the estimate, that each province and each head was rated at a certain sum, was universally received not only in the popular but the legal computation. Some idea of the weight of these contributions *per head* may be formed by the details preserved of the taxation of Gaul. The rapacious ministers of Constantine had exhausted the wealth of that province, by exacting twenty-five gold pieces (£12, 10s.) for the annual tribute of every head. The humane policy of his successor reduced the computation to seven pieces. A moderate proportion between these two extremes of extravagant oppression and transient indulgence, therefore, may be fixed at sixteen gold pieces, or about *nine pounds* sterling, as the common standard of the impositions of Gaul. The enormity of this tax is explained by the circumstance, that, as the great bulk of the people were slaves, the rolls of tribute were filled only with the names of citizens in decent circumstances. The taxable citizens in Gaul did not exceed 500,000; and their annual payments were about £4,500,000 of our money; a fourth part only of the modern taxes of France."<sup>[36]</sup> The ordinary land-tax in the eastern provinces was a tenth, though in some cases it rose by the operation of the survey to a fifth, in others fell to a twentieth of the produce. It was valued for a term of years, and paid, unless when exacted in kind, commonly in money.<sup>[37]</sup>

There was one circumstance which rendered the direct taxes peculiarly oppressive in the declining periods of the Roman empire, and that was the *solid* obligation, as the lawyers term it, which attached to the municipalities, into which the whole empire was divided, of making good the amount of their fixed assessment to the public treasury. Of course, if the municipality was declining, and the same quota required to be made up from its assessable inhabitants by the magistracy, who were responsible for its amount, it augmented the burden on those who remained within its limits; and if they dwindled, by public calamities or emigration, to a small number, it might, and often did become of a crushing weight. This system is general over the East; and its oppressive effect in the declining stage of states, is the chief cause of the rapid decay of Oriental empires. There is a remarkable authentic instrument, which attests the ruinous influence of this system in the later stages of the Roman dominion. This is a rescript of the Emperor Majorian, which sets forth:—"The municipal corporations, the lesser senates, as antiquity has justly styled them, deserve to be considered as the heart of the cities, and the sinews of the Republic. And yet so low are they now reduced, by the injustice of magistrates and the venality of collectors, that many of their numbers, renouncing their dignity and their country, have taken refuge in distant and obscure exile." He strongly urges, and even ordains their return to their respective cities; but he removes the grievances which had forced them to desert the exercises of their municipal functions, by directing that they shall be responsible, not for the *whole sum* assessed on the district, but only for the payments they have actually received, and for the defaulters who are still indebted to the public.<sup>[38]</sup> But this humane and wise interposition was as shortlived as it was equitable. Succeeding emperors returned to the convenient system of making the municipal corporations responsible for the sum assessed on their respective districts, and it continued to be the general law of the empire down to its very latest day. Sismondi, in his *Décadence de l'Empire Romaine*, and Michelet, in his *Gaule sous les Romains*, concur in ascribing to this system the rapid decline and depopulation of the empire in its later stages.

But although there can be no question that the conclusions of these learned writers are in great part well founded, yet this system of taxation by no means explains the decline and fall of the Roman empire. It requires no argument, indeed, to show, that such a system of solid obligations, and of levying a certain sum on districts without any regard to the decline in the

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resources or number of those who were to pay them, must, in a *declining* state of society, be attended with the most disastrous, and it may be in the end fatal consequences. But it does not explain how society should be declining. *That* is the matter which it behoves us to know. When the reverse is the case—when industry and population are *advancing*, the imposition of fixed tributes on districts is not only no disadvantage, but the greatest possible advantage to a state—witness the benefit of the perpetual settlement to the ryots of Hindostan—or of a perpetual quit-rent to English landholders. And that, had as this system was when applied to a declining state of society, it was not the cause of the ruin of the Roman empire, and would not have proved injurious if the state had been advancing, is decisively proved by several considerations.

1. In the first place, the taxes and system of municipalities, being responsible for a fixed sum, was not confined to the European provinces of the Roman dominion, viz.—Italy, Greece, Gaul, Macedonia, and Romelia, where the progress of decay was so rapid, but it was the general law of the empire, and obtained equally in Spain, Lybia, Egypt, and Sicily; as in the provinces which lay to the north of the Mediterranean. But these latter provinces, it has been shown, were, when overrun by the barbarians about the year 400, not only nowise in a state of decrepitude, but in *the very highest state of affluence and prosperity*. They had become, and deserved the appellation of, "the common granary of Rome and of the world." They maintained the inhabitants of Italy, Greece, Rome, and Constantinople, by the export of their magnificent crops of grain. Spain was at least twice as populous as it is at this time, Lybia contained twenty millions, Egypt seven millions of inhabitants. Sicily was in affluence and prosperity, while the adjoining plains of Italy were entirely laid out in pasturage, or returned to a state of desolation and insalubrity. It is in vain, therefore, to seek a solution of the decline of the empire in a system, which, *universally* applied, left some parts of it in the last stages of decrepitude and decay, and others in the highest state of prosperity and affluence.

2. In the next place, the taxes of the empire were by no means at first of such weight as to account, if there had been nothing else in the case, for the decay of its industry. The tax on inheritances, it has been shown, was at first five, afterwards ten *per cent*; and the land-tax was ten *per cent* on the produce. The former tax of ten *per cent* on successions, is the present legacy-tax on movable succession to persons not related to the deceased, in England; and ten *per cent* on the produce, is the tithe, and no more than the tithe, which has so long existed in the European monarchies, and even when coexisting with many other and more oppressive burdens, has nowhere proved fatal to industry. Income of every sort paid ten *per cent* in Great Britain during the war—the land paid the tithe and poor's-rate in addition—and the other taxes yielded a sum four times as great; yet industry of every kind flourished to an extraordinary degree during that struggle. Ever since the termination of the Revolution, the land-tax in France has been far heavier than it was in Rome, varying, according to the *Cadastré*, or valuation, from fifteen to twenty-five *per cent*; but yet it is well known public wealth and agricultural produce have increased in an extraordinary degree during that period. It was not, therefore, the weight of the impositions, but the simultaneous circumstances, which rendered the northern provinces of the empire *unable to bear them*, which was the real cause of the ruin of its industry.

3. In the *third* place, whether the magnitude of the naval and military establishments, or the absolute amount of its public revenue, is taken into consideration, it is equally apparent that the Roman empire was at first not only noways burdened with heavy, but was blessed with *singularly light* government impositions. Gibbon states the population of the whole empire, in the time of Augustus, at 120,000,000, or about half of what all Europe, to the westward of the Ural mountains, now contains; and its naval and military establishments amounted to 450,000 armed men—"a force," says the historian, "which, formidable as it may seem, was equalled by a monarch of the last century, (Louis XIV.) *whose kingdom was confined within a single province of the Roman empire*."<sup>[39]</sup> Compared with the military and naval forces of the European powers in time of peace, this must seem a most moderate public establishment. France, in the time of Napoleon, with 42,000,000 inhabitants, had 850,000 regular soldiers in arms, besides 100,000 sailors; and Great Britain, in its European dominions alone, with a population of 18,000,000 souls, had above 500,000 regular soldiers and sailors in the public service. France has now, in peace, with a population of 32,000,000 souls, about 360,000 men, between the army and navy, in the public service; and England, with a population of 28,000,000, upwards of 150,000, besides double that number in India. Russia, with 62,000,000 inhabitants, has 460,000 soldiers in the public service. Austria, with 33,000,000, has 260,000. All these peace establishments are twice as heavy in proportion to the numbers of the people, as that of Rome was in the time of Augustus; and, in subsequent reigns, the number of armed men maintained by the state, was so far from increasing, that it was constantly diminishing, and, in the time of Justinian, had sunk down to 140,000 soldiers, maintained by an empire more extensive than that of Russia at this moment.

4. The same conclusion results from the consideration of the absolute amount of the public revenue levied in the Roman empire, compared with what is extracted from modern states. Gibbon estimates the public revenue of the whole empire in the time of Augustus, at "fifteen or sixteen millions sterling;"<sup>[40]</sup> and in the time of Constantine the revenue derived from Gaul was £4,500,000 a-year.<sup>[41]</sup> The first of these sums is less than a *third* of what is now levied in time of peace on Great Britain, with less than thirty millions of souls, instead of the hundred and twenty millions who swelled the population rolls of the Roman empire: the last

is little more than an *eighth* of what is now extracted from France, having nearly the same limits as ancient Gaul. Supposing that the value of money has declined, from the discovery of the South American mines, a half, (and at *this* time, owing to the decline of those mines, it has not sunk more,) still it is apparent that the public burdens of modern times are at least three times as heavy as they were in the Roman empire in the highest period of its greatness. As its strength and military establishment constantly declined after that period, there is no reason to suppose that the absolute amount of the public taxes was at any subsequent time greater, although unquestionably, from the decline in the resources of those who were to bear them, they were felt as infinitely more oppressive. And that these taxes were not disproportioned to the strength of the empire, when its resources were unimpaired, and its industry flourishing, is decisively proved by the extremely prosperous condition in which it was during the eighty years when Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines filled the imperial throne. "At that period," says Gibbon, "notwithstanding the propensity of mankind to exalt the past and depreciate the present, the tranquil and prosperous condition of the empire was warmly felt and honestly confessed by the provincials as well as the Romans."<sup>[42]</sup> "They affirm," says a contemporary writer, "that, with the increase of the arts, the human species has visibly multiplied. They celebrate the increasing beauty of the cities, the beautiful face of the country, cultivated and adorned like an immense garden, and the long festival of peace which was enjoyed by so many nations, forgetful of their ancient animosities, and delivered from the apprehension of future danger."<sup>[43]</sup>

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Ancient as well as modern historians are full of complaints, in the later periods of the Roman empire, of the prodigious increase of wealth in the hands of the rich, and decline in the remuneration of industry to the poor. Their complaints on this subject are so numerous, and supported by such an array of facts, as to leave no room for doubt that they are well founded. Indeed, it seems to have been generally true of the whole empire north of the Mediterranean, what Mr Finlay shows was the case down to the very latest periods in Greece, that while industry and population in the country were ruined, the towns were in a state of affluence and prosperity. Even so early as the time of Plutarch, the accumulation of *debts* had come to be complained of as an extensive evil.<sup>[44]</sup> "These debts," says Finlay, "were generally contracted to Roman money-lenders. So injurious did their effects become to the provinces, that they afforded to one class the means of *accumulating enormous fortunes by forcing others into abject poverty*. The property of the provincial debtors was at length transferred to a very great extent to Roman creditors. Instead of invigorating the upper classes, by substituting an industrious timocracy for an idle aristocracy, it had a very different effect. It introduced new feelings of rivalry and distrust, by filling the country with foreign landlords. The weight of debts seems to have been the chief cause of revolutions in the ancient world. The Greeks could not long maintain the struggle, and they sunk gradually lower in wealth, until their poverty introduced an altered state of society, in which they learned the prudential habits of small proprietors, and escape not only from the eye of history but even of antiquarian research."<sup>[45]</sup>

This constant tendency of wealth, in the later periods of the Roman empire, to accumulate in the hands of the great capitalists, accompanied by the progressive deterioration of the condition of the middle and working classes, is amply proved and forcibly illustrated by Sismondi, in his admirable work on the Decline of the Roman Empire. "During the long peace," says he, "which followed the victories of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, those colossal fortunes were accumulated, which, according to Pliny, ruined Italy and the empire."<sup>[46]</sup> A single proprietor, by degrees, came to buy up whole provinces, the conquest of which had in former days furnished the occasion of many triumphs to the generals of the Republic. While this huge capitalist was amassing riches, wholly disproportioned to the capacity of man, the *once numerous and respectable, but now beggared, middle class, disappeared from the face of the earth*. In districts where so many brave and industrious citizens were to be seen in former times, alike ready to defend or cultivate their fields, were to be found nothing but slaves, who rapidly declined in number as the fields came to be exclusively devoted to pasturage. The fertile plains of Italy ceased to nourish its inhabitants; Rome depended entirely for its subsistence on the harvests which its fleets brought it from Sicily, Africa, and Egypt. From the capital to the farthest extremity of the provinces, *depopulation and misery in the country coexisted with enormous wealth in the towns*. From this cause the impossibility of recruiting the legions with native Romans was experienced even in the time of Marcus Aurelius. In his war against the Quadi and the Marcomanni, which had been preceded by a long peace, he was obliged to recruit the legions with the slaves and robbers of Rome."<sup>[47]</sup> It is impossible to give a stronger proof of the extent to which this enormous evil of the vast fortunes accumulated in the towns, and the entire ruin of industry in the country, had gone in the last days of the empire, than is to be found in the fact already mentioned, that when Rome was taken by Alaric, in the year 404 after Christ, while Italy could furnish no force to resist the invaders, the capital itself contained seventeen hundred and sixty great families, many of them with incomes of £160,000 a-year, equal to £300,000 of our money, whose expenditure maintained an urban population of 1,200,000 souls.<sup>[48]</sup>

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It may readily be conceived, that when this prodigious concentration of wealth in the hands of the great proprietors of towns, and ruin of industry in the country, came to coexist with the *solid* obligations of the rural municipalities for the sum assessed on their districts, the burden of the public taxes, though light at first, compared with what is little complained of in modern times, came to be altogether overwhelming. This accordingly was the case in all

the Northern provinces of the empire in its later stages. What every where preceded their ruin, was the desertion of the inhabitants in consequence of the crushing weight of the public burdens. From the entire failure of the indirect taxes amidst the ruin of agricultural, and the imposition of taxation on urban industry, it had become necessary to make progressive additions to the direct taxes till they became exterminating. "Three great direct taxes," says Sismondi, "alike ruinous, impended over the citizens. The first was the Indictions or Land-Tax, estimated in general at a tenth of the produce, or a third of the clear revenue, and often doubled or tripled by the *Super indictions* which the necessities of the provinces compelled them to impose. Secondly: the Capitation-Tax, which sometimes rose as high as 300 francs (£12) ahead on the free and taxable citizens; and, third, the Corvées, or forced contributions in labour, which were for the service of the imperial estates, or the maintenance of the public roads. These direct imposts in the declining days of the empire, so entirely ruined the proprietors of rural estates, that they abandoned them in all quarters. Vast provinces in the interior were deserted; the enrolment for the army became daily more difficult from the disappearance of the rural population; the magistrates of municipalities in town or country, rendered responsible for the assessment of their districts and the levy of their quota of soldiers, fled the country, or sought under a thousand pretexts to escape the perilous honour of public office. So far did the desertion of the magistracy go in the time of Valentinian, (364-375, after Christ,) that when that cruel tyrant ordered the heads of three magistrates of towns in a particular province to be brought to him for some alleged offences, 'Will your Imperial Majesty be pleased to direct,' said the prefect Florentius, 'what we are to do in those towns *where three magistrates cannot be found?*' The order was upon this revoked."<sup>[49]</sup>

The disastrous state of the rural districts amidst this accumulation of evils is thus forcibly described by Mr Finlay:—"In many provinces, the higher classes had been completely exterminated. The loss of their slaves and serfs, who had often been carried away by the invaders, had reduced many to the humble condition of labourers. Others had emigrated, and abandoned their land to the cultivators, from being unable to obtain any revenue from it in the miserable state to which the capture of the stock, the loss of a market, and the destruction of the agricultural buildings had reduced the country. In many of the towns, the diminished population was reduced to misery by the ruin of the rural districts in their neighbourhood. The higher classes in the country disappeared under the weight of the municipal duties they were called upon to perform. Houses remained unlet; and even when let, the portion of rent which was not absorbed by the imperial taxes was insufficient to supply the demands of the local expenditure. The labourer and the artisan alone could find bread; the walls of cities were allowed to fall into ruins; the streets were neglected, public buildings had become useless; aqueducts remained unrepaired; internal communications ceased; and with the extinction of the wealthy and educated classes in the provincial towns, the local prejudices of the lower orders became the law of society."<sup>[50]</sup>

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Such, on a nearer survey, was the condition of the Roman empire which preceded its fall. From it may be seen how widely the real causes of its decline differed from the vague generalities of Montesquieu, that the ruin of the empire was the necessary consequence of its extension; or the still vaguer declamations of the scholars, that it was the corruption incident to great and long-continued wealth which enervated the people, and rendered them incapable of defending themselves against the Northern nations. In truth, both these causes did operate, and that too in a most powerful manner, in bringing about the ruin of the empire; but they did so, not in the way supposed by these authors, but in an *indirect way*, by inducing a new set of evils, which destroyed industry in the most important of its provinces, by depriving the industrious of a market for their industry, and rendering the public burdens overwhelming, by changing the value of money. The operation of these causes can now be distinctly traced by us, because we feel them working among ourselves: their existence has not hitherto been suspected, or their effects traced by philosophers, because no state in modern Europe but our own, in recent times, had come within the sphere of their influence. And to see what these causes really were, it is only necessary to recall, in a few propositions, to the reader's mind, the general result of the foregoing deduction:—

I. During the Republic, and till the commencement of the empire, agriculture was in the most flourishing state in Italy; and it was in its sturdy, free cultivators, that the legions were recruited which conquered the world.

II. *From the time of Tiberius*, cultivation declined in the Italian and Grecian plains, and continued to do so to the fall of the empire. Pasturage came to supersede agriculture; population disappeared in the fields; the race of free cultivators, the strength of the legions, were ruined; the flocks and herds were tended only by slaves; the small proprietors became bankrupt, or fled the country; and the whole land in the European provinces of the empire fell into the hands of a limited number of territorial magnates, who resided at Rome or Constantinople, and mainly upheld, by their profuse expenditure, the prosperity of those capitals of the empire.

III. In the midst of the general decline of rural industry in all the provinces to the north of the Mediterranean, the wealth and prosperity of the great cities remained undecayed. The small provincial towns were in great part ruined; but the great cities, especially such as were on the sea-coast, continued flourishing, and received in their ample bounds all the reflux population from the country. Rural industry languished and expired, but commerce

was undecayed; the fortunes of the great capitalists were daily accumulating; and in no period in the history of mankind, were urban incomes so great as in the city of Rome, on the eve of its capture by the Goths.

IV. While this was the state of matters to the north of the Mediterranean, that is, in the heart of the empire, the remoter agricultural provinces of Spain, Sicily, Lybia, and Egypt, were in the very highest state of prosperity; they fed all the great cities of the Roman world by their immense exportations of grain, and yet enough remained, down to their conquest by the Vandals under Genseric, to maintain a vast population at home, greater than has ever since existed in those countries, in a state of affluence and comfort.

V. Taxation, from the time of its first introduction under Augustus, was at first chiefly indirect, and by no means oppressive. Gradually, however, the produce of the indirect taxes failed, or became inadequate to the wants of the empire, and recourse was had to direct taxes, levied chiefly on landed property and successions. But these direct taxes were at first light, and not a third part of those levied on Britain or France during the war; and the public establishments of the Roman government were not a fourth, in proportion to the population, of those now maintained by the great European monarchies during peace.

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VI. In process of time, however, the resources of the people, in the principal provinces of the empire, and especially those to the north of the Mediterranean, declined to such a degree, that though the military and naval establishments of the empire were reduced to a third of their former amount, and became inadequate to defend its frontiers against its enemies, the direct taxes required to be continually increased, till they became so oppressive as to destroy industry, and prove the immediate cause of the depopulation and ruin of the empire.

Such are the *facts*, as established by the unanimous and concurring testimony of all the best informed historians; and now for the causes which produced these facts. They are set forth and supported by an equally clear and undisputable array of authorities.

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Even so early as the latter days of the Republic, the system was introduced of feeding the Roman people with grain derived by tribute from the provinces. In the time of Augustus, the annual quantity distributed to the poorer citizens of Rome was 1,200,000 *modii*, or 35,156 quarters. But *Tiberius went a step further, and actually gave bounties on the importation of foreign grain.* "An enormous quantity," says Finlay, "of grain was distributed in this way, which was received as tribute from the provinces. Cæsar found 320,000 persons receiving this gratuity. It is true he reduced the number to one-half. The greater part of this grain was drawn from Sicily, Africa, and Egypt. In the time of Alexander, generally 75,000 *modii* was distributed daily. This distribution enabled the poor to live in idleness, and was itself extremely injurious to industry; but another arrangement was adopted by the Roman government, which rendered the *cultivation of land around Rome unprofitable to the proprietors.* A large sum was annually employed by the state *in purchasing grain in the provinces,* and in transporting this supply to Rome, where it was *sold at a fixed price to the bakers.* Augustus appointed an officer, styled *Prefectus Annonæ*, whose duty was to provide by government purchases for the subsistence of the people. An allowance was also made *to the private importers of grain,* in order to ensure a constant supply.<sup>[51]</sup> In this way, a very large sum was expended *to keep grain cheap in a city* where a variety of circumstances tended to make it dear. This singular system of annihilating capital, *and ruining agriculture and industry,* was so deeply rooted in the Roman administration, that similar gratuitous distributions of grain were established at Antioch and Alexandria, and introduced into Constantinople when that city became the capital of the empire."<sup>[52]</sup>

The necessary effect of this system was the cessation of agriculture in Italy, the ruin of the small proprietors, and the engrossing of the land in the provinces by a few great landholders, who cultivated their extensive estates by means of slaves. "Riches, far exceeding the wealth of modern sovereigns, flowed into the hands of the great proprietors; villas and parks were formed over all Italy on a scale of the most stupendous grandeur; and land *became more valuable as hunting-ground than as productive farms.* The same habits were introduced into the provinces. In the neighbourhood of Rome, agriculture was ruined by the public distribution of grain received as tribute from the provinces, and by the bounty granted to merchants importing to secure a maximum price of bread. The same system proceeded in the provinces; and similar distributions at Alexandria and Antioch must have been equally injurious."<sup>[53]</sup> When Constantine established his new capital on the shores of the Bosphorus, he was under the necessity of adopting, and even extending, the same ruinous system. "Wealthy individuals from the provinces were compelled to keep up houses at Constantinople, pensions were conferred upon them, and a right to distributions of provisions to a considerable amount was annexed to those dwellings. These rations consisted of bread, oil, wine, meat, and formed an important branch of revenue even to the better class of citizens. These distributions were entirely different from the public ones at Rome, which were established as a gratification by the state to the poor citizens who had no other means of livelihood. The tribute of grain from Egypt was appropriated to supply Constantinople, and that of Africa was left for the consumption of Rome. This was the tie which bound the capital to the emperors, and the cause of the toleration shown to its factions. They both felt they had a common interest in supporting the despotic power by

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which the provinces were drained of money to support the expenditure of the court, and supply provisions for the people."<sup>[54]</sup>

Although, however, these public distributions of grain in the chief towns of the empire had some effect in checking the cultivation of corn in Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor, by depriving its cultivators of their best market, yet *the private importation of grain* from these great corn countries must have been a far more serious and general evil. Gibbon states the number who received rations at Constantinople daily in the time of Constantine at 80,000, and in Rome in the time of Tiberius it was 180,000. Supposing the other great towns were fed in the same proportion, perhaps a million of persons in the Roman world were nourished at the expense of the state on Egyptian or African grain. But a million of persons consume annually a million of quarters of grain; not a sixtieth part of the annual consumption of the British empire at this time, and probably not a two-hundredth part required by the 120,000,000 souls who composed the Roman empire in the days of the Antonines. But though the state paupers were thus but a small fraction of the whole consumers of foreign grain, yet the *general importation was immense*, and became ere long so great as to constitute the entire source from which the population of Italy, as well as Constantinople and the adjacent provinces of Romelia, Macedonia, and Greece, were fed. It was this *general importation*, not the gratuitous distributions, which ruined Italian agriculture; for it alone was on a scale commensurate with the population of the Italian peninsula, and could alone account for its general ruin. Tacitus expressly says, it was the *preference* given to African agriculture, not the gratuitous distributions, which destroyed Italian cultivation. "At, Hercule, olim ex Italia legionibus longinquas in provincias commeatus portabantur: nec nunc infecunditate laboratur; *sed Africam potius et Egyptum excercemus, navibusque et casibus vita populi Romani permissa est.*"<sup>[55]</sup> The supply of grain for the Roman world was entirely obtained from Spain, Sicily, Africa, and Egypt, while Greece was maintained by corn imported from Poland.<sup>[56]</sup> It was not that the Italian and Grecian fields had become sterile: Tacitus expressly says the reverse,—"*nec nunc infecunditate laboratur.*" But the country in which grain produced fifteen fold, as Italy did, could not compete with that which produced sixty or eighty fold, on the banks of the Nile. Nor could the industry of the centre of the empire, where money was plentiful, comparatively speaking, and labour was therefore dear, stand against the competition of the remoter provinces, where it was scarce, and labour was therefore cheap.

The ruin of Italian and Grecian agriculture from this cause is so evident, that it is admitted by the ablest advocates of an unlimited freedom in the corn trade. "The first effect of this system," says a late able and learned writer on the liberal side, "*was the ruin of Italian agriculture.* The natural market for the corn of the Italian farmer was, to a great extent, destroyed by the artificial supplies obtained from the provinces. Hence, as Dureau de la Malle has remarked, (ii. 218,) the history of the seventh and eighth centuries of Rome presents this singular contrast—that the agriculture, the population, and products of Italy, diminish progressively as she extends her conquests and power. The fatal influence which the gratuitous supplies from the provinces would exercise upon the native agriculture, was perceived by Augustus; but he abandoned his intention of altering the system, from a conviction it would be restored by his successor. The result was, that southern and central Italy, instead of being tilled by a race of hardy active farmers, themselves freemen, and working on their own land, was divided into plantations cultivated by slaves."<sup>[57]</sup> This explains how it came to pass that Spanish agriculture took such a start from *the time of Tiberius*; and how, in the general ruin of the empire, Spain, Africa, and Egypt, were the only provinces which retained their prosperity. It will be recollected that it was in the reign of Tiberius that bounties were first given by the Roman government to the private importers of foreign grain.

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Of the main dependence of the Western empire in its declining days on Africa, not merely for the necessary supply of food, but even for the chief resources and strength of the state in the midst of the desolation of its European fields, Sismondi gives a striking account—"The loss of Africa was at this period, (439 after Christ,) perhaps the greatest calamity which the empire of the West could have undergone. It was its only province the defence of which cost no trouble; the only one from which *they drew money, arms, and soldiers, without its ever requiring any back.* It was at the same time the granary of Rome and of Italy. The gratuitous distributions of grain at Rome, Milan, and Ravenna, had, over the whole Italian peninsula, destroyed the cultivation of grain. Experience had proved that the return could not pay its expense; and the reason was, that the more fertile fields of Africa furnished a part of the harvest destined for the nourishment of the people of Italy. The sudden stoppage of that supply by the conquest of Africa by the Vandals, caused a cruel famine in Italy; which still further reduced its wretched inhabitants."<sup>[58]</sup> And so entirely did Constantinople become dependent on foreign importation of sea-borne grain from Egypt and the Ukraine for its support, that "when the Persians, in the year 618, overran Egypt, and stopped the usual supplies of grain from that province, the famine became so alarming, that the government determined upon transferring *the seat of empire to Carthage* in Africa, as the most likely point from whence the dominion of Syria and Egypt might be regained."<sup>[59]</sup> The latter of these had long been regarded as *the most valuable province of the empire.*<sup>[60]</sup>

When this entire dependence of the great cities in the northern parts of the empire, for centuries together, on Spain, Sicily, Africa, and Egypt, is considered, it must with every rational mind cease to be a matter of surprise that its west and northern provinces declined



in industry and population; that these grain provinces to the south of the Mediterranean alone retained their numbers and prosperity; and that under the constant decline, in the European provinces, in the market for agricultural produce, the rural population disappeared, and the recruiting of the army in the country became impossible. It is not surprising that while they were enrolling slaves in Italy, and enlisting barbarians on the Danube and the Rhine, to defend the frontiers, from Africa and Spain alone they drew supplies both of money and soldiers, without requiring to send back any. The latter provinces were the granary and garden of the empire; the only part of it where rural industry met with remunerating prices or adequate encouragement. And the same circumstances explain in a great degree how it happened, that while the *rural* districts of Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, and Romelia, were continually declining in population, rental, and revenue, their *towns*, especially on the sea-coast, were, down to the last days of their existence, in a flourishing condition. These towns were the seat of manufactures and commerce. It was by their capital that the vast corn trade by which all the cities of the empire were fed was carried on. It was their fabrics which mainly furnished the means of purchasing the immense proportion of this grain, which, being imported by private importers, required to be paid for in some species of manufactured produce. And the reason why grain was raised so much cheaper, and therefore profitably, in Egypt, Lybia, and Spain, than in Italy and Greece, was, partly, that the former of these countries were by nature blessed with a more prolific soil and a warmer sun than the latter; and, partly, that as Rome and Constantinople were the two capitals of the empire, the greater part of its wealth was attracted, either by taxes, tribute, or the concourse of the rich, to them, and, consequently, the abundance of riches rendered money cheap, labour dear, and cultivation, when exposed to foreign competition, unprofitable.

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But there was more in the case than this. Simultaneously with the vast and increasing importation of foreign grain, which at length destroyed cultivation in all the northern provinces of the empire, a *continual diminution of its circulating medium* was going forward; and it was to the combined and cotemporaneous operation of these two causes, that the ruin of the empire is beyond all question to be ascribed.

So early as the days of Tiberius, the abstraction of the gold and silver currency of the empire by the incessant drain of foreign commerce, was loudly complained of by the Roman writers; and there is the most decisive proof, that in the course of time the supply of the precious metals on the empire became so inadequate to the wants of its inhabitants, that their value was enhanced to a great and ruinous degree. It was the commerce of the East which first induced this destructive drain upon the metallic treasures of the empire. "The objects," says Gibbon, "of oriental traffic were splendid and trifling; silk—a pound of which was esteemed worth a pound of gold—precious stones, and a variety of aromatics, were the chief articles. The labour and risks of the voyage were rewarded with almost incredible profit; but it was made on Roman subjects, and at the expense of the public. As the nations of Arabia and India were contented with the produce and manufactures of their own country, silver, on the side of the Romans, was the principal, if not the only instrument of commerce. It was a complaint worthy of the gravity of the senate, that in the pursuit of female ornaments, the wealth of the state was irrecoverably given away to foreign and hostile nations. The annual loss is computed by a writer of an inquisitive but censorious temper, (Pliny,) at £800,000 sterling. Such was the style of discontent brooding over the dark prospect of approaching poverty." [61] Eight hundred thousand pounds a-year, equivalent to about two millions of our money, must have been a severe drain upon the supply of the precious metals in the Roman empire; and we, who have seen in 1839 the Bank of England reel, and the United States bank fall, under the effect of an exportation of six or seven millions of sovereigns to buy foreign grain in a single year, can appreciate the effect of such a constant drain upon a state, the metallic resources of which were much less considerable than those of England at this time.

The immense importation also of African and Egyptian grain, which continued from the time of Tiberius down to the very close of the empire, must have occasioned a great additional abstraction of the precious metals from the Roman world. It has already been shown that a very small proportion of the grain imported from these distant provinces was remitted in the shape of tribute. By far the greater part, probably nineteen-twentieths of the whole supply, was imported by private merchants for sale, as it could be got from them cheaper than it could be raised at home. This imported corn, of course, required to be paid for in something. But the inhabitants of the countries from which it came—Spain, Sicily, Africa, and Egypt—for the most part slaves, blessed with a fine climate, requiring little covering, and nearly destitute of artificial wants, did not require, and could not consume, any considerable amount of Italian or Grecian fabrics. Thus, by far the greatest part of the price of the imported grain was paid in gold and silver, for which there is a constant demand in all countries, savage or civilized. A nation which imports foreign grain largely, *must* in all ages export the precious metals as largely; because the corn, of course, is brought from those countries where it is raised the cheapest—and the countries where this is the case, are those where labour is cheap, money scarce, and artificial wants unknown. Money is what these countries want, and money is what their surplus produce is nearly all exchanged for. And this explains how it happened, that in the decline of the empire, Spain, Africa, and Egypt, alone retained their flourishing aspect, and were the only provinces from which money and soldiers could be obtained, while they required none. The whole commerce between them and Italy, or Greece, was one in which grain was exchanged for the precious metals; and

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when they once got these, great part was hoarded, as it now is in the East, and very little ever returned.

In addition to this, the mines which supplied the Roman world failed to a considerable extent under the emperors. "The poverty of Greece, as of the whole empire," says Finlay, "was further increased *by the gradual rise in the value of the precious metals*; an evil which began to be generally felt about the time of Nero, and affected Greece with great severity, from the altered distribution of wealth in the country with which it was attended. Greece had once been rich in mines, which had been a source of wealth and prosperity to Siphnos and Atticus, and had laid the foundation of the power of Philip of Macedon. The fiscal measures of the Romans soon rendered it a *ruinous speculation for individuals to attempt working mines of the precious metals*; and, in the hands of the state, they soon proved unprofitable. Many mines were exhausted; and even *though the value of the precious metals was enhanced*, some mines beyond the sphere of the Roman power were abandoned from those causes which, after the second century of the Christian era, produced a sensible diminution in the commercial transactions of the Old Hemisphere.[62] Greece shared in the general decay: her commerce and manufactures, being confined to supplying the consumption of a diminished and impoverished population, sunk into insignificance. *An accumulation of debts became general throughout the country*, and formed an extensive evil, as already observed, in the time of Plutarch." [63]

As this great diminution on the supply, and drain upon the treasures of the precious metals in the time of the emperors, lowered the value of every species of produce, so it proportionally augmented debts, and swelled the already overgrown fortunes of the capitalists. What Finlay says of Greece was true of the whole European provinces of the empire:—"The property of the Grecian debtors was at last transferred to a very great extent to the Roman creditors." [64] The gradual diminution in the supply of, or abstraction of the precious metals, by contracting the currency, lowered prices, and thus diminished the returns of industry; while it proportionally augmented debts, and added to the fortunes of the great capitalists and landholders. This again produced another effect upon the manners of the inhabitants of the great cities, which had an equally powerful effect in increasing the drain upon that portion of the precious metals which was employed in the public currency. The rich patricians of Rome, Antioch, and Constantinople, possessed of colossal fortunes to which nothing in modern times will bear a comparison, and nursed in habits of luxury and expense beyond any thing we can even conceive, daily augmented the amount of their immense incomes, which was devoted to the purposes of extravagance. "The historians of the second and third centuries," says Finlay, "are filled with lamentations on this subject." [65] It is not surprising that it was so. Men possessed, in private stations, of as much as three or four hundred thousand pounds a-year of modern money, could not get through their incomes without indulging in the habitual purchase of the most costly articles. Society in this way had come to verify the saying of Bacon—"Above all things, good policy is to be used that the treasure and money in a state *be not gathered into few hands*. For otherwise, a state may *have a great stock and yet starve*. And money is like muck, not good unless it be spread."

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Hence the consumption and permanent fixing of gold and silver in the form of plate and costly ornaments, increased in the great families down to the very close of the empire; and while the currency was constantly declining, and prices in consequence falling in the provinces, the colossal capitalists of Rome and Constantinople were daily absorbing more of the precious metals in these beautiful but unproductive objects. The quantity of gold and silver moulded into the form of vases, statues, tripods, and personal ornaments, which was accumulated in Rome at the time it was taken by the Goths, would exceed belief if not attested by the unanimous testimony of all the contemporary writers. Great part of it was thrown into the Tiber, where it still remains covered by the alluvial deposits of fourteen centuries; the most precious of the spoils were buried with Alaric in the bed of a stream in Calabria, where that redoubtable conqueror was overtaken by the common fate of mortality. The place where he was interred was kept a profound secret, and the slaves who dug his grave in the bed of the river, of which the course had been turned aside for the purpose, were put to death, and buried with him and his treasures; and the river itself was immediately let into its old channel, that its ceaseless flow might secure, as it since has done, the grave of the mighty chief from disturbance, and enable him to present himself loaded with his earthly spoils in the land of spirits.[66]

The concurring operation of these causes produced, in the three last centuries of the Roman empire, a very great scarcity in the supply of the precious metals for the purposes of the public currency, and consequently a most distressing fall in prices, and diminution in the remuneration of industry, accompanied by a proportional increase in the weight of debt and taxes. And the progressive effect of these changes appeared in the clearest manner, in the repeated changes which were made by successive emperors in the value of the gold and silver coins which passed current in the empire. Gold became progressively so scarce in proportion to silver, that the proportion between the two, which at first had been 1 to 10 in the time of Augustus, rose in time to 1 to 12½, and was fixed by Constantine the Great at 1 to 14⅔ths.[67] In consequence of this rise in the value of gold—the precise counterpart of what was experienced in Great Britain in the later years of the war, when a *light* guinea sold for 25s.—the quantity of gold in the *aureus*, or chief gold Roman coin, was progressively diminished, till it came to contain little more than *half* its former weight of that precious

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metal. The learned Greaves has shown, after diligent inquiry, that while in the time of the Antonines the *aureus* weighed 118, in the time of Majorian, in the fifth century, it had come to weigh only 68 grains.[68] This is a clear indication, that 68 grains of gold were now equal in value to what 118 grains had been three centuries before; for Majorian, by a special decree, ordered all *aurei* of whatever reign, the Gallic *solidus* alone excepted, to pass, not according to weight but standard.[69] That is the most decisive proof to what a grievous extent the currency had, from the operation of the causes which have been mentioned, come to be contracted; for as gold constitutes, from its superior value, at least nine-tenths of the circulating medium of every civilized state, so great a rise in its value could only have been occasioned by a very great contraction of the whole currency. We know in what state the metallic currency of Great Britain was when the *light guinea* was selling for twenty-five shillings.

In the latter days of the empire, when the invasions of the barbarians began, and its provinces were liable to be pierced through and overrun by columns of their predatory hordes, the universal and well-founded terror produced a general *hoarding* of the precious metals, which entirely withdrew them from circulation, until they were forced from the trembling inhabitants by threats of massacre or conflagration. The effect of this, in contracting the currency, and causing the little that remained to disappear altogether from the circulation, of course was prodigious. It lowered to almost nothing the money-price of every species of industry, and proportionally augmented the weight of public and private debts—the subject of such loud and constant complaints from ancient historians. Nor was this evil confined to the latest periods of the empire of the West—the years which immediately preceded its fall. From the time of Commodus, who succeeded Marcus Antoninus, the incursions of the barbarians into the northern provinces of the empire had been severely felt; and from the time of the separation of the empires of the East and West, they were almost perpetual, and sometimes extended far into its interior provinces. The effect of these alarms and dangers, in producing a universal disposition to hoard, and consequently rendering money every where scarce, prices cheap, and debts and taxes oppressive, was very great, and may be regarded as one of the chief causes of the excessive and crushing weight which the direct burdens of the state acquired in the later periods of the empire.

The resource so well known, and so often had recourse to with the happiest effects, in modern times, to supply the void produced by a temporary or permanent drain of the precious metals, was unknown in antiquity. *They had no paper currency.* Even bills of exchange were unknown. They, as is well known, were a contrivance of the Jews, in the middle ages, to transport their wealth in a commodious form, when threatened with persecution, from one country to another. To what an extent paper of these various kinds has come to supply the place of gold and silver, may be judged of by the fact, that during the war, the paper currency of Great Britain and Ireland rose to £60,000,000 sterling; and that, at the present time, the private bills in circulation in it are estimated at £132,000,000 sterling. But this admirable resource, by which an accidental or temporary dearth of the precious metals is supplied by a paper currency, circulating at par with it, and fully supplying, as long as credit lasts, its place, was unknown in the ancient world. Gold, silver, and copper were their sole circulating mediums; and consequently, when they were progressively withdrawn, by the causes which have been mentioned, from the currency, there was nothing left to supply their place. Instantly, as if by the stroke of a fell necromancer, disasters of every kind accumulated on the wretched inhabitants. Credit was violently shaken; money disappeared; prices fell to a ruinous degree; industry could obtain no remuneration; the influence and ascendancy of realized capital became irresistible; and the only efficient power left in the state was that of the emperor, who wrenched his taxes out of the impoverished hands of his subjects, or of the creditors and landlords, who, by legal process, exacted their debts from their debtors, and drove them to desperation. This was exactly the social state of the empire in its declining days. We can appreciate its horrors, from having had a foretaste of them during the commercial crises with which, during the last twenty-five years, this country has been visited.

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From what has now been said, it is evident that the two circumstances which occasioned the fall of the Roman empire, were *the destruction of its domestic agriculture, by the importation of grain from its distant provinces, and the accumulation of debts and taxes, arising from the contraction of the currency.* If these causes be attentively considered, it will be found that they not only afford a perfect solution of its fall, but explain how it happened at the period it did, and had not occurred at an earlier period. They show what it was which, slowly but steadily, wasting away the vitals of the empire, successively destroyed its rural population and agricultural industry, and at length crushed its property under the increasing load of debts and taxes. They explain how it happened that the indirect taxes, which at first were sufficient, with a moderate imposition of five per cent on inheritances, to support the large military and naval establishments of Augustus, became gradually unproductive, and were at length succeeded by direct taxes on land, of severe, and in the end destructive amount. They show what every page of contemporary history demonstrates, that it was neither the superior military power of the barbarians, nor the diminished skill and courage of the legions, which occasioned the overthrow of the mighty fabric, but *the wasting away of its internal resources*—which was the real cause of its decay. They tell us that it was not the timidity of the legions, but *the inability of government to array them in sufficient strength*, which rendered them unequal to the contest with an enemy whom, during the vigour of the

state, they had so often repelled. They explain how it happened that Italy and Greece had become deserts in their rural districts, before one of the barbarians had crossed either the Alps or the Hæmus and how Africa, Spain, and Egypt, alone of the provinces, retained their prosperity, when rural industry was wellnigh extinct in all the other parts of the empire. Lastly, they explain how it happened, that while the rural districts to the north of the Mediterranean were so generally relapsing into a state of desolation, the great cities of Greece and Italy long retained their prosperity, and the wealth of the capitalists and great proprietors who inhabited them, was continually increasing, while all other classes were ground to the earth under the weight of public or private burdens.

It must appear, at first sight, not a little extraordinary that the very causes which thus evidently led to the destruction of Rome, viz., the unlimited importation of foreign grain and contraction of the currency, are those which have been most the object of the policy of the British government, for the last quarter of a century, by every possible means to promote in this country. They were imposed upon Rome by necessity. The extension of the empire over Spain, Africa, and Egypt, as well as the magnanimous policy of its government towards all its subjects, rendered a free trade in grain with the provinces, and large importations from the great corn countries, unavoidable. Public misfortunes, the increasing luxury of the rich, that very great importation of grain itself, the failure of the Spanish and Grecian mines, and the entire want of any paper currency to supply the place of the metals thus largely abstracted, necessarily and unavoidably forced this calamitous contraction of the currency upon the Roman empire. But the British policy has adopted the same principles, and done the same things, when *no necessity* or external pressure rendered it unavoidable. A free trade in grain is to be introduced, not in favour of distant provinces of the empire, but of its neighbours and its enemies. The currency has been contracted, not by public calamities, or any deficiency in the means of supplying the failure of the ordinary sources of gold and silver, but by the fixed determination of government, carried into execution by repeated acts of Parliament in 1819, 1826, and 1844, to abridge the paper circulation, and deprive the nation of the benefit of the great discovery of modern times, by which the calamitous effects of the diminution in the supply of the precious metals throughout the world have been so materially prevented.

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Such a result must appear under all circumstances strange, and would be inexplicable, if we did not reflect, that the same impulse which was communicated to the measures of government in Rome by the influence of the capitalists and the clamorous inhabitants of great towns, is equally felt in the same stage of society in modern times. The people in our great cities do not call out, as in ancient days, for gratuitous distributions of corn from Lybia or Egypt; but they clamour just as loudly for free trade in grain with Poland and the Ukraine, which has the effect of swamping the home-grower quite as completely. The great capitalists do not make colossal fortunes by the plunder of subject provinces, as in the days of the Roman proconsuls; but they never cease to exert their influence to procure a contraction of the currency by the measures of government, which answers the purpose of augmenting their fortunes at the expense of the industrious classes just as well. Political writers, social philosophers, practical statesmen, fall in with the prevailing disposition of *the most influential classes*; they deceive themselves into the belief that they are original, and promulgating important truths, when they are merely yielding to the pressure of the strongest, or at least the most noisy, class at the moment in society. The Reform Bill gave *three-fifths* of the British representation to the members for boroughs. From that moment the eventual adoption of legislative measures favourable to the interests of capital, and agreeable to the wishes of the inhabitants of towns, how destructive soever to those of the country, was as certain as the daily distribution of Egyptian grain to the inhabitants of Rome, Antioch, and Constantinople was, when the mob of these cities became, from their formidable numbers, an object of dread to the Roman government.

The only answer which the partisans of free trade in grain have ever attempted to these considerations is, that the ruin of the agriculture in the central provinces of the Roman empire was owing, not to the importation of foreign corn as a mercantile commodity, but to its *distribution gratuitously* to the poorer citizens of Rome, Constantinople, and some of the larger cities in the empire. They *admit*, in its fullest extent, the decay of domestic agriculture, and consequent ruin of the state, but allege it was owing to this gratuitous distribution, which was in fact a poor-law, and not to the free trade in grain.<sup>[70]</sup> But a very little consideration must be sufficient to show that this is an elusory distinction; and that it was the unrestricted admission of foreign wheat by purchase, which in reality, coupled with the contraction of the currency, destroyed the dominion of the legions.

1. In the first place, the number who received these gratuitous distributions was, as already shown, *so small*, when compared to the whole body of the grain-consuming population, that they could not materially have affected the market for agricultural produce in Italy. Not more than 150,000 persons received rations in Rome daily, and perhaps as many in the other cities of Italy. What was this in a peninsula containing at that period sixteen or eighteen millions of souls, and with 2,300,000 in its capital alone?<sup>[71]</sup> It is evident that the gratuitous distributions of grain, taking those at their greatest extent, could not have embraced a fiftieth part of the Italian population. What ruined the agriculturists, who used to feed the remaining forty-nine fiftieths? The unlimited importation of cheap grain from Spain, Egypt, Sicily, and Lybia, and nothing else.

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2. In the next place, even if the gratuitous distributions of grain had embraced twenty times the number which they did, nothing can be clearer than that the effect *on agriculture* is the same, whether cheap foreign grain is imported by the private importer, or bought and distributed by the government. If the home-grower *loses his market*, it is the same thing to him whether he does so from the effects of private importation or public distribution; whether his formidable competitor is the merchant, who brings the Lybian grain to the Tiber; or the government, which exacts it as a tribute from Sicily or Egypt. The difference is very great to the *urban* population, whether they receive their foreign grain in return for their own labour, or get it doled out to them from the government store as the price of keeping quiet. But to the *rural* cultivator it is immaterial, whether destruction comes upon him in the one way or the other. It is the *importation of foreign grain* which ruins him; and the effect is the same, whether the price paid for is the gold of the capitalist, or the blood of the legions.

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## ELINOR TRAVIS.

### A TALE IN THREE CHAPTERS.

#### CHAPTER THE FIRST.

It is now forty years since I found myself, for the first time in my life, in the once fashionable city of Bath. I had accompanied thither from London a dear friend from whom I had parted two years before at Oxford; a man as noble as ingenuous, as gentle as he was brave. Few men could boast the advantages enjoyed by Rupert Sinclair. Born of noble blood, of a family whose peerage had been raised upon the foundation of a huge wealth, handsome in person, intellectual, well-informed, enthusiastic and aspiring, he bred a fascination around his existence which it was difficult to resist. I had already graduated when Rupert Sinclair entered Christ Church as a gentleman commoner; I was, moreover, his senior by five years, yet from the moment I saw him until the hour of his decease—with one painful interregnum—we were firm and unflinching friends. He was sent to the university, like others of his rank, to acquire such knowledge of men and books as a temporary residence—and that alone—in an atmosphere of mingled learning and frivolity, is generally supposed to impart. His father looked upon all book knowledge as superfluous, except in a parson or schoolmaster; his lady mother would have been shocked to find him, whether at Oxford or elsewhere, any thing but the gay and fashionable nonentity which her taste and experience had taught her to regard as the perfection of God's fair creation. Lord Railton was a courtier, and affected to be a politician; her ladyship was a woman of fashion. It is surprising to me that, with their views of a nobleman's duties at Oxford, they should have thought it necessary to procure for their son the services of one who had nothing better to offer for his amusement, than the poor learning he had picked up at Eton and elsewhere, to dole out again to the best advantage, for the support of himself and widowed mother. I ought rather to say it was surprising to me *then*. I have grown wiser since. A tutor was necessary to the position of Lord Railton's son, and it was my happiness to be chosen the instructor of Rupert Sinclair. Every possible pains had been taken to ruin the intellect and impair the moral faculties of the youth. His earliest teachers had been strictly enjoined to give him no tasks which should subject him to the slightest inconvenience, and were forbidden, under pain of dismissal, to ruffle the serenity of his temper, or intercept the slightest movement of his mind, however cross or wayward. Rupert in his very cradle had been taught, both by precept and example, that his equals in rank were his fellow creatures, and that all below him were—creatures, it is true, but the fellows of one another, and not of him and such as he; that the men to whose virtue, discretion, and conduct he was confided—his TEACHERS—were—oh, mockery of mockeries!—his dependents and inferiors, and necessary to him as his nurse or footman, but not a whit more so! Lord Railton was a tyrant, self-willed and imperious by nature, and as cold-blooded and selfish as a superadded aristocratic education could render him. He saw little of his children, whom he terrified when he did see them, and busied himself in this world with little more than the intrigues and plots of the political junto to whom he was bound by a community of interests, rather than affectionately attached. It is my firm belief that miracles have not ceased upon the earth. Invisible angels interpose now, as did the living saints of old, to repair the faults and infirmities of nature, and by a suspension of our ordinary laws to proclaim the might and mercy of the Divinity. How but by a miracle could the character of Rupert Sinclair have belied the natural reasoning of all ordinary mortals, exhibiting the utter annihilation of the intimate connexion of cause and effect, and the independence of the infant soul, when God so wills it, of the machinations of the wicked, and the vicious trifling of the foolish? The good sense of the youth had strengthened and increased under the enervating system which would have destroyed a weaker brain and a less honest heart. I was the tutor of Sinclair, but I suffered him to sketch out his own plan of study. His mother had not failed to forward me the usual instructions respecting the

treatment of her darling child; but had she been silent I should not have insisted upon a strict adherence to the college system with one who, neither in the university nor in the world, to which he was about to be summoned, would be tasked to remember or repeat one syllable of his lessons. Great is the temptation to dwell upon these early days of our attachment; for, alas! a pang must wait upon the pen when it traces the last record of a period unclouded by grief. An account of the earliest springtime that promised so fair a summer and harvest, is, it is true, not necessary to the main plot of the drama I have undertaken to write; but one of its chief characters can hardly be thoroughly understood without some reference to his conduct and pursuits previously to the commencement of the action. To say that I was prepossessed in favour of my pupil after my first conversation with him, is to say but little. I was at once surprised, delighted, and charmed. I had expected to receive a spoiled child of fortune; a giddy, self-willed, arrogant, and overbearing boy. I met with one whose demeanour was gentle, modest, and sedate. A childlike simplicity governed his manners; reflection and sound judgment his discourse. Long before the close of my young friend's academical career I had gained his entire confidence—he my heart; and *at* the close of it, I had not occasion to change one opinion or one sentiment entertained for my charge at the commencement of our friendship; so transparent are the minds of the ingenuous, and of those whom nature shelters from the baleful influences of life. It must, however, be stated, that in the all but perfect specimen of humanity presented to the world in the person of Rupert Sinclair, there existed one flaw to convict it of mortality, and to establish its relation with universal error. The simplicity spoken of as characteristic of the man, degenerated into weakness; faith in the goodness of his fellow-creatures into glaring credulity. It is a singular fact, and one that must be accounted for by those who have made the *Mind* an especial study, that whilst no man was quicker in detecting the slightest indication of his own imperfection in another, no one could be less conscious of its existence in himself, or less alive to imposition, the moment it was practised under his own eye, and against his own good-nature. How many times, during his residence in Oxford, Rupert Sinclair became the victim of the unprincipled and the sharper, I will not venture to say, prepared as I am to assert that no discovery of falsehood and imposture ever convinced him of the folly of his benevolence, or of the worthlessness of the objects upon whom his favours had been showered. The world is said to be divided into two classes; into those who suspect all men until they are proved honest, and those who believe all men honest until they are proved to be false. The name of Rupert Sinclair might be written in neither category. He not only believed the world to be good prior to experience, but he denied it to be bad, let experience succeed as it might in convicting it of evil.

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It was exactly two years after Sinclair quitted Oxford, that I received a letter from him, requesting me to meet him in London as soon after the receipt of his letter as my engagements would permit. The long vacation had again commenced. Rupert was no longer a student, or, to speak more correctly, books had now become the solace and recreation of his leisure hours, rather than the business of his life. To please his fond and very foolish mother, he had accepted a commission in the Guards. The small ambition of Lady Railton was consummated the moment her noble boy appeared in her drawing-room "en grande tenue;" as for the peer, he was too absorbed in his own diplomacy to interfere with that of her ladyship, in whose knowledge of the world and sound discretion he placed unbounded faith. I attended to the summons of Sinclair without delay. Upon arriving in London I went to his hotel, and found him recovering from a fit of illness which at one period had threatened his life, but of which he had as yet kept his family in ignorance. He had been recommended by his physicians to try the waters and mild temperature of Bath; and he was willing to obey them, provided I would become his companion. My time was my own, and I loved Sinclair too well to throw an obstacle in his way, had not the offer itself been temptation enough to one who had passed so many months of physical inactivity, without one holiday, in the dusty gloominess of college rooms. In the course of two days our preparations were made, and we quitted London.

A week glided by in happy idleness. The invalid, compelled to keep his room for many hours of the day, was thrown upon his resources, and upon such as I could command for his amusement. The past is always a pleasant subject of discourse where the speakers are young, and the past is a day of sunshine, still lingering and warm. The days we had seen were bright enough, and to speak of them was to bring them back in all their recent freshness. Rupert was twenty-one, and he wondered at the ingratitude of man that called this world a scene of strife and misery. I was twenty-six, and as yet without a calamity. I had never known my father; and I had maintained my mother in comfort for many years. I had yet to part with *her*.

Another week, and the invalid was convalescent. The walks were extended and the prescriptions torn up. Invitations came and were accepted. A distant relative of Lady Railton was in Bath. Sinclair visited her, and was the next day a guest at her table. There was another guest there. Her name was ELINOR TRAVIS.

Twenty times, on the day I speak of, had Sinclair resolved not to keep his engagement, but to send an apology to Mrs Twisleton, and to return to London on the following morning. He had become tired, he said, of idleness, and the frivolities that surrounded us. One word of encouragement from me, and Sinclair would *not* have dined with Mrs Twisleton, would *not* have met with *her* who gave the colouring to his future life, would *not* have blasted every—but I must not anticipate.

General Travis and his family were amongst the most fashionable of the gay multitude then resident at Bath. They lived in first-rate style, and gathered about them all who aspired to a position in that upper world peopled pre-eminently by the "ton." The general was reputed a man of enormous wealth, and his banker's book procured for him the respect that was denied him in Debrett. The general was the father of two children—daughters—Elinor and Adela. His wife was also living. They were all, according to report, essentially dashing people. So much I knew of them at the period of Sinclair's first acquaintance with the ill-fated Elinor.

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After dining with Mrs Twisleton, Sinclair altered his mind. His departure was delayed. Within a day or two he was again invited to Mrs Twisleton's, and again he met the general and his family. Well, there was nothing to excite suspicion in all this! Sinclair said nothing; no observation escaped me. I concluded that a few days would put an end to the new interest that had been raised, and that we should return to London as quietly as we had left it. I was grievously mistaken.

Since our arrival in Bath we had been early risers, and our habits generally somewhat primitive. Suddenly Sinclair took it into his head to walk without me for an hour or so before breakfast. He invariably looked flushed and confused on his return. At least I thought so. I was puzzled, but still said nothing.

I had been favoured by Mrs Twisleton with one or two invitations to dinner, but had never cared to accept them. I resolved, should opportunity again offer, to accompany Sinclair to this lady's house. Whilst waiting, somewhat impatiently and in vain, for another invitation from Mrs Twisleton, a grand ball was announced at General Travis's, and Sinclair was in the number of the favoured guests. He was requested to bring his friend. "His friend" did not refuse.

There were in truth grandeur, profusion, and style sufficient in the entertainments of that evening. No additional outlay could have added to the sumptuous provision that was made for the gratification and delight of every sense. Eye and ear were ravished by the luxuries set before them, and the grosser appetites were not forgotten. What Indian wealth! What princely hospitality! Well might the general be esteemed the most royal of entertainers. Nobility lost none of its prerogative in mixing in such a scene as this, upon which an emperor might have descended with no dishonour to his ermine. I experienced for a time the full power of the enchantment, and acknowledged, against my will, the sovereign dominion of Mammon. I was presented to my hostess and the general. The former was a woman of fifty or thereabouts, delicately formed, pale, and somewhat sickly-looking; there were traces of feminine beauty on her countenance, but, such as they were, retreating rapidly before disease or care, or some ailment hidden from the looker-on. She seemed more like a gentle handmaiden than the mistress of the happy feast. The general was of another race of beings. He stood six feet two, but his extreme height was modified by the admirable proportions of his frame. He was firmly built, and but for a certain unsatisfactory expression in his countenance, might have been considered one of the handsomest men of his day. This expression it is not easy to describe. It proceeded from his eye, and seemed to communicate with all his features, leaving the stamp of low cunning upon every one. The eye was large and grey, and very restless; always in motion; always attempting to convey more than the inner man would answer for, or the observer take for granted. It had a volubility of expression like his tongue, and both bespoke their owner no efficient actor.

"You look magnificent to-night," said Sinclair, addressing the general after my introduction.

"So, so, with slender opportunities!" said the general. "See us in London, my young friend. No place in the world like London for the exercise of a man's genius—a woman's it should be said, to-night, for Elinor is the presiding genius here. Have you ever seen these flowers? Pretty, eh? Her handiwork."

Sinclair trifled for a moment with an exquisite specimen of artificial flowers, adorning an alabaster vase; but he gave no answer.

"Have you seen her to-night?" continued the general.

"Not yet."

"She's with the Indian Yahoo, no doubt. He arrived this afternoon, and she will give him no rest. She has engaged him for the first four quadrilles, that she may hear the natural history of the Chimpanzee without interruption, which her cousin has promised to relate to her at the first convenient opportunity."

"Her cousin has arrived then?" asked Sinclair, turning slightly pale.

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"This very day. Our information is quite correct. His mother, the Begum, is dead, and has left him enough in jewels to purchase an empire. The specie found in chests is immense. A lucky dog, with that brown face of his! If it were as black as soot, he might command a duchess. Elinor and he are first cousins, and are much attached, although they haven't seen each other for years."

As the general spoke, music struck up, and a movement in our immediate neighbourhood announced the approach of dancers. Amongst them was a young and lovely woman. Her arm

was in that of a small man, with a copper-coloured face and disgusting features. His beautiful partner, more beautiful by the contrast, looked proud of her prize, which, if I correctly interpreted the admiring gaze of the assembly, was coveted for one reason or another by every dowager and unmarried woman in the room. I felt an instinctive longing to smother the Yahoo.

Inexpressibly lovely looked Elinor Travis, as she gracefully led off the merry dance. She had reached her twentieth year, and was in the full glory of her womanhood. Tall, yet exquisitely moulded, she left nothing for fancy to desire or imagination to create. Her dark and animated eye sparkled with living joy, and her perfect features were illuminated by its fire. I had never before beheld a creature so richly endowed with natural gifts; one who united in her person so much grace, sculpture, and expression; and yet, strange to say, the feeling all inspired was the very opposite to that which might have been expected. The consciousness of beauty was too definitely written upon that brow. That melting eye had inherited too much of the worldliness that played about the eager vision of her sire. Maidenly modesty and retirement were wanting to elevate and dignify mere voluptuousness. I was repulsed rather than attracted by a form, which, had it been more feminine, might have served for an angel; and as it was, was not sufficiently divine for a mortal woman. Such was my first impression, formed almost upon the instant. It never was removed.

Sinclair and I looked on. The spirits of Elinor were exuberant. She laboured as it seemed, under more than ordinary excitement. She laughed and chatted with her tawny partner with a delight which it was impossible for such a copper monster to create. The gaiety of the lady had but one effect upon her partner. At short intervals he opened his jaws and exhibited his teeth to the company. Having rivalled a hyena in the hideousness of his grin, he closed the jaws and hid his molars. Far different was the effect upon another. It took but a very little time to discover that Rupert Sinclair had not been proof against the charms of this darling of nature. His heart had felt her witchery, and his spirit was enchained—not utterly and irretrievably, I fondly trusted, for I knew his worth, and could not willingly entrust him to such doubtful keeping. Elinor Travis was not the wife for Rupert Sinclair. Thanks to the Yahoo, my fears at first were not alarming; still it was vexatious enough to behold the pain with which Sinclair evidently regarded the good fortune of the Indian, and the complacency with which the monster received the favour of one of the loveliest of her sex. Once during the dance, the change of the figure brought the lady within a few feet of Sinclair. Her back was towards him, but, as if aware of his vicinity, she turned round and cast the lustre of her full eye upon him. She smiled, and archly nodded. Rupert shook like a leaf; the colour mounted to his cheek, and his heart beat almost audibly. I grew alarmed. My faith in the Yahoo was shaken, and I trembled for my friend. The position of the dancers was again reversed. Elinor faced us. Her eye once more was fixed upon Rupert, but this time, as I believed, exulting in triumph. Could it be possible that she was aware of her influence, and that she inhumanly trifled with this man's affection? What meant that ardent gaze and that triumphant smile? As the general had informed us, so it happened. The Yahoo danced four quadrilles with Elinor, and then vouchsafed the loan of his blackness to other ladies for the rest of the evening. Miss Travis being at liberty, I proposed to Rupert an adjournment to our hotel. The gentleman, in answer, started up and secured the hand of Elinor for the next dance. His chair at my side was filled on the instant by the general himself. I listened and replied to the questions of the latter as well as I could, watching every movement, step, and gesture of the young sorcerer and her victim.

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"Your friend, Mr Wilson, is not so gay as usual. What has happened?"

"Nothing."

"You return to London, I believe, in"——

The general paused.

"Mr Sinclair's leave of absence," I answered, "will soon expire."

"A gentle-spirited man, Mr Wilson. He does you credit."

"He owes me little, general," I answered. "Providence has been bountiful to him."

"Strange! And his father, they say, is as great a brute."

"Lord Railton," I said, "is not so amiable as his son."

"Proud and overbearing! But a magnificent rent-roll though! His son does not appear a man of the world. Vastly good-natured, but he wants fire and character."

"Mr Sinclair does not do himself justice," I replied. "There is more in him than meets the eye."

"You are a scholar, Mr Wilson," suddenly exclaimed the general, "and can appreciate a literary curiosity. Do me the favour to accompany me to my study. I have a Greek manuscript which I picked up in Samaria, and which they tell me is invaluable."

Before I could reply, the general was on his legs, and conducting me to his room. The dance was still proceeding.



"I am a simple man, sir," said the general when we reached the apartment, "and very moderate in my desires. We are often called avaricious when we are simply prudent. I despise wealth but for the sake of my children. There," he exclaimed suddenly, showing me a jewel-case—"there's stuff that would buy up Bath."

"Indeed!"

"What do you imagine this to be, Mr Wilson?" next inquired the general, holding up a folded letter.

"I cannot guess!" said I.

"An offer of a peerage. Why should I accept it? I have no son, and am without personal ambition. The world do not give men credit for such self-denial. You are a constant visitor at Sackville Park, I presume?"

"No, in truth. I have been there but once."

"Lady Railton doats upon her son, I believe?"

"A very fond mother," I replied.

The general eyed me suspiciously, and went no further; but he produced forthwith his manuscript from Samaria. It was really a curiosity in its way, being a transcript of one of the gospels in a dialect which I had never before seen, and of which, I think, but few specimens can remain. But I had a fidgety desire to get back to the ball-room, which prevented any thing like a satisfactory inspection of the precious document.

"Shall we return, general?" I asked.

"By all means," said the general, evincing at the same time no disposition to budge. "I trust, Mr Wilson," he continued, "that you will be no stranger at our house. We are humble people, as you see us, but we have friends at court. A man of your talents should command preferment; but these are sad times, and the best fare ill enough without a helping hand. I stand well with the premier."

"No doubt, deservedly," said I. "You have probably seen much service, general?"

"A little, a little;" replied the soldier with mock humility. "But as to yourself, Mr Wilson, they must make a bishop of you."

"Oh, general!" said I with unnecessary modesty.

"Ah, but I say they must! Leave that to me. We want sound and good men like yourself at the head of the church. Methodism must be put down. It is increasing frightfully. Vigorous and learned men are required to cope with it."

"Methodism," said I, with becoming warmth, "is undoubtedly a great curse to the church at the present moment, and every honest churchman is bound, to the extent of his ability, to oppose its further progress."

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"My own words, Mr Wilson; and I beg you not to suspect me of flattery when I tell you that half a dozen men like yourself would do more to bring back a salutary state of things than any legal enactments they could contrive. Sinclair has told me of your energy, high honour, and attainments, and it would be a sin to suffer them to be inactive."

I confess I shall never forgive myself for having patiently, nay somewhat greedily, swallowed such monstrous and glaring trash as that above related, and for having been cajoled by it into spending one long half hour with my wily general in his study. I left the room at length, in a state of heroic excitement, and in time to discover that Rupert Sinclair and his partner had quitted the apartment in which I had previously left them.

There remained upon my mind no longer a doubt of Rupert's attachment to this lovely woman, and I contemplated its issue with no feeling of gratification or delight. Notwithstanding the agreeable communications of the general, I could not thoroughly trust him; and as for the young lady herself, as I have already hinted, she was as adapted to the mild nature of Sinclair as a lioness to a lamb. What would Lord Railton say to the match? What would Lady Railton do, with her sublimated notions of marquises and dukes? I deplored the ill luck that had brought us to Bath, and resolved to carry the youth back whilst he still remained master of his actions. But where was he? I sought him in vain in every public room of the house. Neither he nor the syren could be found. Vexed and hurt, although I scarcely knew why, I determined to quit the place, and to return to the hotel. Attached to the general's house was a spacious pleasure garden, and upon the occasion of this fête it was studded with a number of small lamps, which cast a picturesque and oriental gleam in parts, leaving the remaining portion of the ground in deeper shade. The night was lovely. Passing the door that led into the garden, I turned into the latter, almost without a thought. Visitors were there before me, and to escape them I retired into the gloom. Within a few yards of me passed the pair of whom I had been in search. The arm of Sinclair was twined around the waist of Elinor, and his head was bent on the ground. They advanced, and were soon beyond my ken. I still heard their steps; but suddenly these ceased. The lovers had stopped, and to my great discomfort they spoke.

"You do not know him," said a voice that did no dishonour to the coral lips through which it came. "His heart is fixed upon this hated match."

"You smiled upon him, Elinor," said Rupert, in a voice of emotion; "you gave him hope."

"For your sake, Sinclair, I smiled upon the man I hated; for your dear sake. The least suspicion of the truth, and we are ruined. I cannot have you banished from me."

"What is to be done?" exclaimed Rupert in despair.

I could hear no more. The voices dissolved into whispers, and these soon ceased. The fate of Rupert Sinclair was sealed.

Now, what was my course at this alarming crisis? What steps did it behove me—the friend, tutor, and counsellor of Rupert Sinclair—to take at such a moment as this, when the happiness of his whole life was about to be decided? Was there, in fact, any thing to do? Had not Sinclair already reached that point at which remonstrance is vain, and advice impertinent? And why should I remonstrate at all? What had I to say against a union with a lovely and accomplished woman, whose father had perhaps wealth enough to buy off the prejudices of Lord and Lady Railton, had they been ten times as bigoted as they really were? What could I produce against the young lady herself but a prejudice formed at first sight, and perhaps as unfounded as it had been hastily adopted? Was not Sinclair old enough to select his partner for himself; and when did interference in the delicate affairs of love ever lead to any thing but the confusion of the intruder, and the acceleration of the mischief he absurdly hoped to prevent? I was at the height of my perplexity when Sinclair returned to me. I heard his footsteps at the door, and immediately plunged into my bedroom.

Next morning I was awake betimes, but Rupert was up before me. Indeed, when I beheld him, I doubted whether he had been to rest at all. He looked haggard and distressed. I took my cue from his downcast appearance.

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"Rupert," said I, "it is my intention to quit Bath."

"When?" he inquired.

"Possibly to-day. To-morrow at the furthest."

Rupert sighed.

"We return together, I presume?" said I in continuation.

"Wilson," answered Rupert, in a tone of kindness, "I have never deceived you yet; I will not deceive you now. Nor shall you suffer in any way from acts of mine. I cannot leave this place. It is not expedient that you should stay."

"Your leave of absence soon expires," I said.

"I shall not fail to be at my duty, Wilson," continued Sinclair. "But there is important business to do before I leave this city."

"You have entered, Rupert, into some rash engagement."

"Into an engagement—yes; not rashly, I believe; for I have held consultation with my heart—deep, earnest communings, that have sanctioned my fondest inclination."

"Beware, Sinclair!" I answered. "In some cases, the heart is no safe monitor; and inclination and conviction become convertible terms."

"You know my secret, Wilson."

"I can guess it."

"You saw her last night. I wished you to see her. I desired to hear from your lips a confirmation of the regard she has inspired in one"—

I shook my head.

"You are right—you are right," proceeded Sinclair, hastily. "You shall not speak. You shall not even tell me how divine a being Heaven has placed within my reach. You shall not be involved in the calamity which an irrevocable act may bring upon two whose crime it is to love too well."

"Rupert," I replied, "I am not disposed to desert you at so critical a period of our life. We are both young. You are enthusiastic; your good opinion of mankind has before now led you into error. Have you well pondered on this step? Can you rely on Elinor Travis?"

"What do you mean?"

"Is she as brave as she is gentle—as faithful as she is fair?"

"I would answer for her with my life."

"Yes, or with twenty lives, if you had them, for the venture. Yet you have not known her long."

"Long enough to value and to love her. Does it require an age to discover truthfulness so palpable as hers?"

"I have done, Sinclair," said I. "God grant you may be happy!"

"You return to London, then?"

"Such is my intention."

"You do wisely. I would not have you stay with me. You must be clear from all participation in this business, let it end as it may. I know my father. His anger and his vengeance, however undeserved, would fall on you."

"Would these were my greatest fears!" I answered, with a sigh.

"Fear not for *me*, Wilson. The happiness of your friend is bound up with that of Elinor Travis. I tell you, in all sincerity, I cannot live without her. Fate decrees our movements. No woman but she has made me conscious of that great fountain of love which lies within the bosom of us all—none has had power to direct the stream, and to enchain me, heart and soul, to her will."

"And should that will," I quickly urged, "be found as evil as resistless"—

"Prove it so, and its power ceases on the instant. No; it is resistless, because virtuous and pure. I submit to an enchantment, but it is practised by a fairy as good as she is beautiful."

It was useless to argue so abstruse a point with so interested and impassioned a reasoner. I remained silent.

"One promise I must exact from you," continued Sinclair. "In passing through London, you will not see my father."

"I shall not wait upon his lordship," I replied.

"Nor mention, if you please, one syllable of this affair, should chance bring you together. For the present, I have sufficient reasons for wishing you to keep my secret sacred. In good time all will be known."

"You shall be obeyed, of course."

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"Thanks," said Sinclair, grasping my hand, and holding it affectionately: "all will be well, I trust."

For the rest of the day, the subject was not revived. I begged Sinclair to follow his own pleasure, without reference to me, and to leave me to the few arrangements necessary before departure. He insisted, however, upon spending the last day with me; and during many hours of well-remembered intercourse, he evinced a friendliness and affectionate regard such as I had never before experienced—even from him. We sat together until the early hour of morning chid us to our beds.

"There is still one thing to say," said Sinclair, when we parted for the night, "and it had better be communicated now. Heaven knows, Wilson, when and where shall be our next meeting. It may be soon; it may be never. Death to one of us—a hundred circumstances may interfere between our hopes and their fruition. I have desired to tell you, many times, what I am sure you will not hear unkindly, although the fear of offending you has kept me silent. Yet, you ought to know it. I am sure your peace of mind will be secured when you know that the present enjoyments of your mother can, under no circumstances, ever be decreased. I have taken care, should any thing happen to yourself or me, that her latter days shall remain as peaceful as you, her faithful son, have rendered them."

I would have spoken to my friend and benefactor, but could not. I shook his hand cordially, and an honest tear told him my gratitude. So we parted, as I half feared for ever; for his words and actions were full of evil omen.

Upon reaching my bedroom on this eventful evening, the first thing that caught my eye was a mysterious document lying on the table—a lady's note. "A mistake," thought I, approaching the unusual visitor. Not so; it was addressed to me. I opened it, and read. It ran as follows:—

"Dear sir—Pardon my abruptness. As a friend of Mr Rupert Sinclair, I entreat five minutes' conversation. I shall be at home to-morrow at noon. Pray, come. His happiness depends upon your punctuality. Keep this communication secret.—Yours, &c.,

"CHARLOTTE TWISLETON."

The plot was thickening with a vengeance. What could this mean? And what was I to do? Clearly to wait upon the lady, as directed, to postpone my departure, to forfeit my fare, and to mix myself deeper than ever in a mystery, which, trusting to appearances, was likely to end in the ruin of Mr Rupert Sinclair, and his more luckless tutor. Taking care to avoid Sinclair in the morning, I directed his servant to acquaint him with my change of views; and quitted the hotel some hour or two before the time fixed for the anxious interview. Punctually at noon, I presented myself at Mrs Twisleton's door. My alarm was intense when

I reached that lady's apartment. She had evidently been waiting my arrival with extreme impatience. Before I could speak or bow, she rushed towards me, and exclaimed—

"Is it over, sir? Is he gone?"

"What over, madam?" I answered. "Who gone?"

"Mr Sinclair. Is he married?"

"Married?"

"Yes. Married. They are to be, if they are not already. Take him to town, sir. Drag him away. We shall be ruined."

I had thought so for the last four-and-twenty hours; but I had certainly not included Mrs Twisleton in the calculation.

"Mr Thompson," continued the lady, forgetting my name in her anxiety, "Lord Railton will go raving mad if this should come about. We shall all be punished. I know him well. You, for having brought Mr Sinclair here; I, for having introduced him to the impostors; and himself for having been caught in their snares. And he is a powerful man, and has the means to punish us."

He had certainly the means of punishing Mrs Twisleton; for her son, at college, had been already promised the next presentation to a valuable living in Yorkshire. Her fears on my account were hardly so well founded.

"Look here, Mr Wilson," said Mrs Twisleton, hurrying to her writing-desk, and taking from it a letter, which she placed in my hands. "Read that."

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I ran my eye over the document. It was from a female correspondent in London and it conjured Mrs Twisleton to avoid all connexion whatever with General Travis and his too fascinating family. The general was described as a bold bad man, utterly ruined, involved beyond the possibility of recovery, a mere hanger-on of fashion, an adventurer. His wife was spoken of as a mere simple instrument in his hand; naturally disposed to goodness, but perverted by the cruel necessity of her position. But what said this timely—oh, if but timely!—informer respecting *her* whose name I greedily sought out in these disastrous pages? I grew sick as I proceeded in the narrative. Elinor Travis—so said the letter—was a clever, subtle, accomplished, and designing woman. Numerous had been her flirtations, not few her conquests; but the game she had brought down, it had never been worth the general's while to bag. The general had been a great traveller. He had passed some years in India. During his residence there, the fair fame of Elinor Travis had been—oh, horror!—sullied; falsely so, some said; but still sullied. She had loved an officer with whom, it was reported—I read no more.

"The writer of this letter, madam," I asked—"is she trustworthy?"

"Alas! alas! yes," exclaimed Mrs Twisleton, in despair.

"It must be prevented by all and every means," I continued.

"We are still safe then?"

"Yes, although I cannot answer for an hour. He must be spoken to, remonstrated with"—

"Threatened," added Mrs Twisleton, stamping with her foot. "Any thing to save us."

"I will appeal to his reason."

"Then we are lost," said the lady, emphatically. "That family never listened to reason yet."

"Do you know," I enquired, "this great foreigner whom they call the Yahoo?"

"Oh, no! no!" exclaimed Mrs Twisleton, shaking her head impatiently. "I don't know any of them. I disown them all; they are all impostors. I said so from the beginning. Oh, Mr Wilson, what *can* he have to do with it? How can you talk so idly?"

"Mrs Twisleton," said I, "have I your permission to communicate the contents of this letter to Mr Sinclair?"

"Yes, but never mention my name in the matter. Take the address of the writer, and communicate with her yourself. Save your friend, and make your fortune. Get us all well out of the scrape, and then depend upon me for speaking about you to his lordship. He shall know the part you have played; and no man can be more generous than Lord Railton when the fit is on him."

"Do not trouble yourself, madam, on my account," I replied. "This letter I will borrow, with your leave, for awhile. There is not a moment to lose. The next hour may prove fatal to the interests of our unfortunate friend."

I had not spoken before Mrs Twisleton pulled the bell violently, shook my hand eagerly, and urged me to the door. Within ten minutes, I was face to face with Sinclair.

"Sinclair," said I, "you must return to London with me."

"What has happened, then?" he inquired.

"You stand on a precipice," I continued. "Advance but another step, and you are lost."

"Translate your language, friend," said Rupert, "and suffer me at least to understand you."

"You are mistaken, Sinclair—cruelly deceived."

"What, again?" he asked, with a smile.

"Yes, again and again. No experience teaches you. No conviction reaches your judgment. Will you listen to me, and believe me?"

"I will listen to you."

"The family of General Travis are not what you suppose them. I can prove them unworthy your confidence and affection. Will you link your fate with that of one who"—

I hesitated.

"Go on," said Sinclair, calmly.

"Read, read for yourself!" I exclaimed, placing the letter I had received from Mrs Twisleton, without further ceremony, in his hands.

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He did read—every line, without the smallest surprise or perturbation—and then folded the document, and gave it back to me. I thought him mad.

"This is no news to me, Wilson," he said quietly. "I have been put on my guard respecting these slanderers. Their baseness does not take me by surprise. The trick is a poor one."

"The trick!"

"Yes; if it deserve no harsher name. What know you of the writer of that letter?"

I had but one answer to give to that question—"Nothing." And the name of Mrs Twisleton was sacred.

"I thought so," proceeded Rupert. "Every assertion contained in that precious document has already met with a sufficient refutation. I know *my* informant, and can rely upon *my* information; advantages of which, dear Wilson, you cannot boast."

"Sinclair," I replied, with warmth, "remember what passed between us yesterday. 'Prove,' said you, 'that Elinor Travis is less good than beautiful and her influence ceases from that moment.' Give me time to prove it, or to ask your pardon and hers for as much as I have said already. I must exact this from you. It is all I ask. With this document before me, I can demand no less."

"Do as you will. What do you propose?"

"To go at once to town; to seek out the writer of this letter, and to obtain from her proofs of her allegations which even you must respect and listen to. If I fail to secure them, you shall be pained no more by interference of mine."

"Be it so," said Sinclair; "I await your return here."

Upon the evening of this day I was in London, and on the following morning at the residence of the lady whom I sought. Ill luck attended my steps. She was ill, and could not be seen. For a week I remained in London, unable to gain an interview, or to communicate with her. I obtained the name of her physician, waited upon him, and asked him to convey a letter from me to his patient. It was impossible. It was of the highest consequence to keep the lady tranquil. In every post I wrote to Sinclair, informing him of my disappointment, and conjuring him to take no steps until my mind, as well as his, was satisfied. He returned no answer to my communications, but I relied upon his friendship. Upon the eighth day of my absence, sick to death with impatience and idleness, and no nearer to my object than on the first day of my arrival, I resolved to return to Bath, and to remain with my friend until I should receive intelligence of the lady's convalescence. Something might be done by remonstrance and entreaty. To leave him to himself, was to give up every chance of his salvation.

The coach in which I travelled halted at Marlborough for dinner. When I alighted, I perceived, but took no particular notice of a post-chaise standing at the door of the inn. I had scarcely set foot in the house, however, before I encountered General Travis. The moment he caught sight of me, he seemed to become agitated or alarmed. He approached me—took me by the arm, and led me into the open air.

"Have you seen them?" he eagerly asked.

"Seen whom?" I asked in return.

"Your friend. He is a villain!"

"General Travis," I said indignantly, "I have no friend to whom that term applies, nor must you couple it with any name that's dear to me."

"Forgive me, forgive me!" said the general with evident grief. "I have been deceived, cruelly deceived; my house is deserted—my child is stolen—they have eloped!"

"Eloped!"

"Yes; Mr Sinclair and my daughter. This very morning. Your friend, my Elinor!"

The general stamped; then walked furiously about, whilst I stood thunderstruck.

"He never spoke to me on the matter; as I am a living man, he never hinted to me his attachment. Could I have suspected it—dreamed it? Oh, my child, my child!"

I looked hard at the man, as intently as my agitation would permit, and I believed his passion to be genuine and honest. Tears were in his eyes, and he wrung his hands, and raved like men in deep affliction. Could I be deceived?

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"Whither have they gone?" I asked.

"God knows; I missed my child at breakfast. She had never been absent before. I was alarmed, but looked for her return. At noon, we heard that she had been seen at the distance of half a mile from the city, walking quickly with Mr Sinclair. At Mr Sinclair's hotel, I learned that he had quitted the city, and had ordered a chaise and four to meet him a mile off, at ten o'clock precisely. I followed them at once, and traced them for twenty miles, and then lost sight of them altogether."

"What is your intention now?"

"To take the north road, and, if possible, to overtake and recover her. I am heart-broken and distracted. He has robbed me of a treasure, dearer to me"—

Fresh horses had been put to the general's carriage, and the postilions were already in the saddle; not a moment was to be lost. Before the general could finish his speech, he was seated in the chaise, and driving away at the rate of fifteen miles an hour.

My feelings may be imagined. What to do, I knew not; and there was little time to consider. The dinner had been transacted during our anxious conference, and the horses' heads were looking towards Bath. The coachman mounted the box. I ascended the other side, and took my seat next to him, quite mechanically.

"Knowing gentleman, that 'ere," said Jehu, "as you conversed with."

"Do you know him then?" I asked with curiosity.

Jehu closed one eye; rubbed his chin against his comforter, and said, "hexcessively!"

"What of him?"

"Werry deep and werry singular. I've druv him many a time."

"He's very rich," said I.

"Oh, werry! So they say. So I s'pose he is. For my part, I'm no judge of mutton till it's cut up. Is he a werry pertickler friend of yours?"

"No friend at all. Scarcely an acquaintance. I have met him but once before to-day."

"Then it won't break your heart to hear, that it wouldn't be quite as safe as the bank of England to lend him twenty pounds. A box fare once told me he wasn't worth a sixpence, and that he'd come down one of these days like a crash in a china shop. My fare was an Injyman, as had known the gentleman out in them parts, where he was obliged to cut with all his family."

"Oh, did he say any thing about the family?"

"No; nothing about the family. Them, he said, was all right, especially one beautiful girl as he had, that run the rigs with a hofficer, and broke every body else's heart. My eye! wouldn't I have given my top-boots to have been that 'ere hofficer!"

I changed the subject of discourse, and not once again did I revert to it for the rest of that disastrous journey. Arriving at Bath, I proceeded at once to the hotel in which I had left Sinclair. He was gone—but no one could tell me whither. The account given by General Travis was corroborated by the master of the house. Mr Sinclair had ordered a chaise and four to wait for him at the distance of a mile from the city—his order had been complied with, and nothing since had been heard of him.

"It's very strange," said I.

"Yes, sir, very," replied mine host, "and strange things have happened since. You knew General Travis, sir, I believe?"

"I have seen him in Bath; what of him?"

"Dreadful affair that of his. The whole family have vanished."

"Vanished!"

"Yes, sir. Three or four days ago the general's lady vanished with the youngest daughter; this morning the eldest daughter vanished by herself; and an hour or two afterwards, the general vanished with his own man, having previously discharged every other servant in the establishment."

"Is any reason assigned?"

"Debt, they tell me. The family have gone abroad to recover themselves; and, whilst they are recovering themselves, scores here will be ruined. The house has been beset with creditors this afternoon, and one poor fellow in the next street, a working upholsterer, with a family of ten children, has been raving at the doors like a madman."

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"You are mistaken," I said; "the general has not vanished after the manner you describe. Tomorrow every thing will be explained. I do not feel myself at liberty to say more now. Let me entreat you, however, to remove the absurd impression that has been made; and, above all, to dispel the unfounded apprehensions of the unfortunate man you speak of."

"Glad to hear you say so," rejoined mine host; "but I doubt it."

He left me and I sallied forth; first to Mrs Twisleton's, who at first was not at home, but, receiving my card, sent her servant running half a mile, to assure me that she was. Poor Mrs Twisleton! sad and lugubrious was she on that melancholy evening. Faithful visions of the unappeasable wrath of the proud Lord Railton flickered before her eyes, and pierced her very soul.

The next advowson was no advowson at all, as far as she was concerned, and her hope and offspring were alike cut off by the terrible and irrevocable act of the morning. I found the lady in tears.

"This is a shocking business, madam!" I began.

It was the signal for a flood.

"When did you arrive?" she sobbed.

"An hour since."

"And you have heard of it?"

"Of the elope"—

"Oh, don't, don't, don't speak of it!" shrieked the lady. "It turns me sick. He has married a beggar—the daughter of an impostor and a swindler."

"Can it be true?"

"Oh, you have been very dilatory and foolish, Mr Wilson," suddenly exclaimed Mrs Twisleton in a clear sharp tone, which had nothing of the softness of tears about it. "Had I been a man, I would have saved my friend from certain infamy. Mr Wilson, I gave you full warning—ample time. You cannot deny it."

I sighed.

"And now you have come to Bath again, what do you mean to do?"

I thought for a second or two, and then sighed again.

"Take my advice, sir; it's a woman's, but not the worse for that. If you stay here till doomsday, you can't alter what is unalterable. The fool's married by this time. The general has broken up his establishment and has decamped!"

"Impossible!"

"That may be, but what I tell you is the truth, nevertheless. The mail leaves Bath at eleven o'clock. Return by it to London. See Lord Railton as soon as you arrive. Make the best you can of this wretched business, and prepare him to meet his son without a curse. You need not tell him all you know about the general. He will find that out quickly enough; nor need you mention my insignificant name at all. The old man has feeling left in him; and the mother doats upon her namby-pamby boy. Obtain their pardon for your friend, and you will do that friend a service which he will never forget, and can never sufficiently repay."

I reflected for a moment; the advice seemed sound. I determined to adopt it. Bewildered and vexed, I quitted the lady's house, and walked mechanically about the town, from street to street. An hour or two were yet at my disposal—heavy, irritating hours, converted into ages by my impatience and anxiety. Chance or fate conducted me to the abode of General Travis. I stopped before the door, as purposeless as I had just approached it. To curse the hour that had connected poor Sinclair with the proprietor of that late magnificent and extravagant establishment, was a natural movement. I cursed, and proceeded on my walk. I had not, however, advanced a few steps, before, looking back, I became aware of a light gleaming from one of the windows of the house. I returned. Some information might be gained from the servant left in charge of the place; possibly a clue to the mystery in which, without any valid reason, I had myself become entangled. I found the door of the mansion ajar. I knocked, but no one answered; I repeated the summons with as little success, and then I

walked boldly in—and up-stairs, in order to place myself at once in communication with the apartment in which I had perceived the faint illumination. Opening the drawing-room door, I perceived, as much to my disgust as astonishment—the Yahoo!

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That dark gentleman was drunk; there was no doubt of it. He was sitting at a table that was literally covered with food, of which he had taken to repletion. His coat was off, so was his cravat, and the collar of his shirt unbuttoned. Perspiration hung about his cheeks, and his face looked very oily. Decanters of wine were before him; a pewter jug of ale; and bottles containing more or less of ardent spirits. There was a wild expression in his eye, but the general glow of his visage was one of fuddled sottishness. He saluted me with a grin.

"Who the debil are you?" he politely asked.

"I was looking," I answered, "for a servant."

"D—n him serbant," exclaimed the Yahoo, speaking in his drunkenness like a very nigger. "I gib him a holyday. What are you got to say to dat? What do you want?" he proceeded. "Sit down. Enjoy yerself. What do you take? Deblish good rum, and no mistake."

*Hold a candle to the Devil* is a worldly maxim, which I had never an opportunity of practising to the letter until now. Much might be learned by humoring the monster—nothing by opposing him. I sat down and drank his health.

"Thankee, old boy," said he. "I'm deblish glad to see you, upon my soul. Gib us your hand. How many are you got?"

"Two," said I.

"That's a lie," replied the nigger hastily. "I see four. But neber mind, I'm not partickler. Gib us two of 'em. I say, old boy," he continued, "don't you eat nothing? D—d sweet. Sure to make you sick. Him drink much as him like."

"You wait the general's return, I presume?" said I, in the vain hope of eliciting something from this black moving barrel.

The gentleman tried to look me full in the face; but his eyes rolled involuntarily, and prevented him. He contrived, however, to effect what he intended for a knowing wink, whilst he thrust out his cheek with the end of his tongue.

"Oh yes, in course," he answered. "I wait till him come back. Him wait d—d long while. He! he! he!"

"His departure was very sudden," I continued.

"Oh, bery! All them departure's bery sudden. Missy General go bery sudden—Missy Elinor go bery sudden—rum go bery sudden," he concluded, drinking off a glassful.

"I saw the general to-day. We met on the road. He told me every thing."

"Stupid old codger! Him can't keep his own counsel. Dat him business, not mine. Deblish cleber old codger!"

"He was much affected," said I. "The elopement of his child is a serious blow to him."

The nigger performed the same pantomime as before; winking his eye, and enlarging his cheek.

"Blow not so bad as a punch on the head, old boy. Deblish cleber old codger," repeated the Yahoo, laughing immoderately. "Deblish cleber 'Gustus too!'"

"Who is he?" I inquired.

The nigger attempted to rise in his chair, and to make a profound bow, but failed in both attempts.

"I'm 'Gustus!" said he, "at your sarvice—take a glass of wine with you!"

I pledged the gentleman, and he continued.

"You know Massa Sinclair?"

"A little."

"Big jackass, Massa Sinclair. Awful big. He no run away with Missy Elinor, Missy run away with him. Massa General run away with both. 'Gustus do it all.'"

I groaned.

"You ain't well? Take glass rum? Bery good rum!"

"And so you did it all, Augustus? You must be a clever fellow!"

"I think so. If you could but have seen us this morning. I and Massa General looking over the banisters whilst Missy Elinor was running away; and Massa Sinclair in de hall, trembling all over like a ninny, for fear Massa General should see him—Massa General and me splitting



sides all the time. D——d good! like a play. He! he! he!"

I groaned again.

"Sure you are not well, old boy? Try the bitters."

"I have had enough," said I. "I must begone."

"Don't hurry, old fellow. Can't ask you again. Go to town to-morrow. Meet General Travis to-morrow night. Him sewed up. 'Gustus neber desert him.'" [Pg 732]

"The general will not return then?"

"Him too good judge!"

"And Mr Sinclair and the lady?"

"They married by this time. I say, old boy, let's drink their health."

"No, no, no. Tell me whither do they go!"

"No, no, no!—I say yes, yes, yes," roared the intoxicated monster. "Drink it, you rascal," he added, "or I'll kick you down stairs."

My blood was boiling in a moment. The nigger staggered to me, and touched the collar of my coat. His hand was scarcely there, before I took him by the neck, and flung him like a loathsome reptile from me. He fell at the foot of the table, but in his passage to the ground he grasped a decanter of wine, which he hurled at my head. It passed me, met the door, and flew in a thousand pieces about the room. Sick at heart, I took the opportunity to retire.

Never shall I forget the morning upon which I stood in Grosvenor Square, knocker in hand, about to present myself before the father of Rupert Sinclair, and to acquaint him with the disgrace that had come to his family, by the alliance of the previous day. The feelings of the hour return with all their painful vividness as I recall the time. A lazy porter, richly attired, opened the door, and rang a bell in the hall, which brought to me his lordship's valet. The latter received my card, and after a quarter of an hour's absence, returned with the information, that his lordship was particularly busy with the Director of the Opera, and could not be seen by any one that morning. Every little circumstance is indelibly imprinted on my memory, stamped there by the peculiar anxiety under which I laboured. I respectfully submitted that my business was even more important than that of the Director, and requested the valet to return with my urgent request to his lordship for one short interview.

"His lordship doesn't know you," said the valet.

"Not know me!" I exclaimed, forgetting at the moment how little it was to his lordship's interest to remember me. "There," I exclaimed "take this card to him." I had written upon it—*Late tutor to the Hon. Rupert Sinclair.*

Another quarter of an hour, and I was admitted. His lordship was evidently angry at the interruption. My heart was fluttering. He extended to me one finger, by way of compromise, which I reverently touched, offered me no seat, but asked me my business.

I began—continued—and ended without the least hinderance on his lordship's part. I spoke without reserve of my own share in the unfortunate business, taking particular care, however, not to say one word to the disparagement of Elinor, or that might unnecessarily excite Lord Railton against his erring son. I told him of Rupert's illness, of our having proceeded to Bath in company—of his recovery—his meeting with Elinor—her beauty—his devotion. I pleaded his youth, his ardent nature—referred to the past as irretrievable, to the future as full of happiness for Mr Sinclair, provided his lordship would look with forgiving kindness upon his act; and used all the eloquence I could command to move what I conceived to be at least a heart of flesh to pity and sympathy for its own blood and offspring.

Lord Railton heard me to the end, with a knitted brow and closed lips. When I had finished, he asked me sternly if I had any thing more to say.

"Nothing," I replied.

Whereupon his lordship rang the bell.

The valet again appeared.

Lord Railton again held out his finger, as at our meeting. I was about to take it, when his lordship moved it quickly—pointed to the door—and said—"Show that person out!"

For a second I stood astounded and confused. In another second I found myself breathing on the sunny side of Grosvenor Square. How I reached it, I no longer remember.

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Mr Cobden, in the House of Commons, has given us a definition of the term which heads this article:—THE PEOPLE *are the inhabitants of towns*. "I beg to tell the honourable member for Limerick," said the arch-leaguer, a few evenings since, "and the noble lord, the member for Lynn, and the two hundred and forty members who sit behind him, that there are other parties to be consulted with regard to their proposition—that there are THE PEOPLE; I don't mean the country party, but the people living in the towns, and who will govern this country."

"What is the city," says Shakspeare, "but the People?"—"True, the people are the city."

Against Mr Cobden we pit Mr D'Israeli, who defines the people to be the country gentlemen. Against Shakspeare, we bring M. Michelet, who, in an affectionate dedication of his latest work to his fellow-labourer and friend, M. Edgar Quinet, modestly acquaints the said M. Edgar, that THE PEOPLE are neither more nor less than the author of the book and the gentlemen to whom it is inscribed:—

"Recevez-le donc, ce livre du Peuple, parce qu'il est vous, parce qu'il est moi. Par vos origines militaires, par la mienne, industrielle, nous représentons nous-mêmes, autant que d'autres peut-être, les deux faces modernes du Peuple, et son récent avènement."

There is, in truth an extensive amount of cant afloat just now, both here and elsewhere, on this subject of THE PEOPLE. It is the staple commodity of your newspaper-mongers, and the catchpenny song of the streets. Agitators feed upon it, politicians play upon it, our needy brethren of the quill pay outstanding debts with it. It is one of the few things that pay at all in an age of fearful competition, and one that always will pay whilst poor human nature holds the purse-strings. The wretched beggarman of Ireland famishes for a crust, yet he has his farthings to spare for the greedy hypocrite who flatters his vanity, and heaps laudations on his social importance. JOHN HOWARD made four pilgrimages to Germany, five to Holland, three to France, two to Italy, with the simple object of mitigating the physical sufferings of his fellow creatures; he visited Spain, Portugal, the United States, and Turkey, with the same practical and praiseworthy purpose. He passed days in pest-houses and lazarettos, and finally laid down his life in the blessed work of charity at Cherson in the Crimea. *Nous avons changé tout cela*. Philanthropy is a luxurious creature now-a-days. She is passive rather than active; she does not work—she *talks*. Her disciples take no journeys, unless it be to Italy for their own pleasure; they sit at home in satin dressing-gowns, supported on velvet, feeding on turtle. They tell the labouring classes—whom they style the bone and sinew of the land—that though they talk prose, and lead prosaic lives, they are nevertheless first-rate poets, that though rough at the surface, they are the gentlest of creation "at the core;" that though dull, they are quick; though ugly, handsome; though stupid, vastly clever; though commoners in the last degree, yet nobles of God, and nature's grandees of the very first class. It is gratifying to believe all this, and the charge is only threepence a-week, or a shilling a-month. Open as we all are to flattery, who would not pay so trifling a sum for the pleasure of so sweet a dream? If you cannot relieve our sufferings, it is something to create an inordinate self-esteem. If you cannot afford us a shilling from your pockets, it is much that your goose-quill can convert us into birds of Paradise. The successful writers of the day are those who have nauseously fawned upon the million for the sale of their "sweet voices" and their halfpence.

There is not one of these popular authors who has had the manliness to suggest, supposing that he has the head to discover, a remedy for the evils which every honest mind perceives in the social condition of the humbler classes. The most they have done is to drag further into the light miseries which every one saw without their aid—to point out exultingly distinctions of rank, which have always been, and can never cease to be—to remove bonds of sympathy, that united for mutual benefit one class with another—and to widen as far as possible the breach that has arisen between the governed and the governing of this great empire. We do them injustice—they have accomplished more. In seasons of difficulty and trial, in those periods of convulsion and danger, to which all great societies are liable, and a large mercantile community like our own is especially subject, they have assuaged alarm and appeased hunger by writing books with a *moral*; such a moral as that upon which THE CHIMES was founded, and which the snarling author of Mrs Caudle's Lectures loves to inculcate: we mean the moral that teaches the loveliness of all that lies in the hovel, the hatefulness of all that dwells in the palace; the sublimity of vulgarity, and the ridiculousness of high birth; the innate virtues of ignorance and poverty, and the equally essential wickedness of wealth and rank. Such are the exertions of modern philanthropy! Such are the self-denying, humble, and glorious achievements of the successors of John Howard!

There are two classes of philanthropists very busy just now on this side the English Channel: viz., that composed of men who are particularly anxious that no laws whatever should be passed for the effectual punishment of the midnight assassin in Ireland; and that which stands up for the murderer in England, denying the right of the legislator to punish any man with death, and the expediency of the punishment, provided the right be conceded. Should society be restored to tranquillity, and crime be expurgated by the success of these gentlemen's endeavours, it is very clear that France will take the wrong track, by following the counsel of the belligerent M. Michelet, according to whose views, peace and order are to

be obtained only by the proclamation of war, and the shedding of blood for the glory of his native country. "My only hope," says the valiant historian, "is in the flag." Every time, he tells us, that he sees the bayonets of the French army, his heart bounds within him. "Glorious army! pure swords! holy bayonets!" upon which the eyes of the world are fixed, and which will eventually save that world by—cutting the throats of all the enemies of France.

M. MICHELET has obtained some celebrity in Europe: amongst the learned and the reading public by his histories; amongst the masses by that remarkable work styled *Priests, Women, and Families*, which met with many readers and elaborate notices in this country, and was reviewed in the pages of this Magazine as recently as August last. We paid our tribute of respect to an effort which, whatever might be its faults—and serious faults it had—was distinguished by a commanding eloquence, a manly energy, and an uncompromising zeal worthy of the cause which the historian had undertaken; viz., the restoration of *woman* to her spiritual and social rights—rights invaded by the stranger, trampled upon by priestcraft. We did not stay to inquire into the motives by which the indignant professor of the College of France had been actuated. It may have been, that, to avenge a slight inflicted upon him by the Jesuits, the learned teacher aimed a blow at the entire Roman Catholic Church; that having repudiated the sentiments of his early life—sentiments which attached him affectionately to the religion, poetry, and traditions of the middle ages—he burned with the new fire of a convert or an apostate, and sought to establish the sincerity of his conversion by deadly home-thrusts at the party he had forsaken. It was sufficient for us that a scholar and a Frenchman had manfully advanced to the rescue of his fellow-countrywomen; that he had detected the errors that lay at the heart of their social condition; that he had noted the hindrances that affected domestic purity and peace; and bravely undertook, if possible, to remove, at all events to expose and brand them.

There is great peril attending the career of any man who acquires the reputation of a reformer of abuses. It is easier to acquire that reputation than to sustain it. It is well when the necessity gives birth to the reformer; but it is ill when the reformer, in order to live, is forced to create the necessity. There was ease and grace, simplicity and truthfulness, honesty and ardour, in that defence of woman, to which the champion was urged by the conviction that he entertained of her wrongs. Few of these qualities remain in the work now before us—a work suggested by any thing rather than the crying evils of the community to which the author belongs; a work that may have been written for money—with the mere object of book-making—to bamboozle the million, to inspire it with cock-like crowing; certainly, with no hope of regenerating France, of removing one feather's weight from the load of calamity to which her people, in common with the people of all the nations of the earth, are mysteriously doomed.

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We do not pretend to understand the motives which have carried M. Michelet to his task; neither can we distinctly discern the object which it is his purpose to reach. His book is divided into three parts, which are again subdivided into chapters. There is a great appearance of connexion, and indeed an affectation of logical cohesion in the structure, but there is really and essentially no union whatever of the several divisions. Part I. is styled, "*Bondage and Hatred*;" Part II., "*Enfranchisement by Love—Nature*;" and Part III., "*Friendship*." Each part is an essay, complete, so to speak, in itself, more or less distinct; intelligible at times, but as often vague, dark, and paradoxical; most satisfactory where it treats of simple, well-known facts—least successful where it deals in the crudest theories, which are not tedious only because they are ridiculous and amusing.

The spirit that pervades the entire book is that of intolerable conceit—individual and national. We can pardon the author of *The History of France* much, but we will never forgive in him a vice that has ceased to be supportable in the most ignorant of his countrymen. It is impossible to conceive a philosopher and scholar so irritated and perverted by thin-skinned vanity as M. Michelet appears throughout this volume; and indeed we cannot do his intellect the injustice of supposing him to believe the jargon that has fallen from his pen. The heart, we fear, rather than the intellect, is at fault, when he who has the ear of the people approaches it with accents that inflame its lowest passions, rather than correct and guide, and bring to usefulness and good, its best and noblest instincts.

Every thing is perfect in France; nothing is perfect elsewhere. This is the theme of the song which M. Michelet circulates throughout the empire. The people are nevertheless wretched, in poverty, and in bondage; they are doomed to evil government; their social state is one of tyranny and cruel persecution. An historian, sprung from the people, has deemed it his duty to proclaim these facts, and to write a book which shall go far to remove the evils he complains of; yet, at the outset of the work, he announces, to our astonishment, that France is beyond all other lands the favoured land of heaven, the mistress of the world, the paragon of countries. We turn back a page, and ask—Was it for this that the student stepped from his retirement, or was it to prove facts the very opposite to these? If France be indeed so pre-eminently good and great, why write so many pages to prove that she lies in bondage? If the literature of France be perfect, her army pure, her people great, her religion the only true revelation of God's purposes and will, wherefore complain and cry aloud, and seek to remedy a condition already so enviable, to elevate a character already so super-eminent? Is it that France is too self-loving to hear of her faults even from her own offspring, or that she will not take her wholesome medicine without the gilding that removes its flavour, and hides

its ugliness? Is she a child, and must the teacher flatter her as a child; coax, pacify, and bribe her as a child, in order to work her reformation and secure her happiness?

Let us for awhile follow the author of *The People*, as he traces bondage and hatred throughout the social scheme of France, and gather from him, as well as we may, the remedies he has for their destruction; so shall we do him greater justice, and obtain, if they be within grasp, the intention and the object of his undertaking.

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"If we would know," says M. Michelet, "the inmost thought, the passion of the French *Peasant*, it is very easy. Walk any Sunday into the country, and follow him. Look! he is yonder before us! It is two o'clock; his wife is at vespers, and he is in his Sunday's clothes. I warrant you he is going to see his mistress!" His mistress! Yes; but tropically. The peasant's mistress is his *Land*; he loves it with intensest delight, with procreative love. Happy for France that it is so; for let it once cease, and the land is barren from that instant. She brings forth because she is loved. "*La terre le veut ainsi, pour produire; autrement, elle ne donnerait rien, cette pauvre terre de France, sans bestiaux presque et sans engrais.*" By *Love*, the reader will understand needful care and culture, but he will err in the interpretation. It is something far more poetical and French. The peasant having arrived face to face with his mistress, "folds his arms, stops, looks serious and thoughtful; he looks a long, long time, and seems to forget himself; at last, if he fancies himself overlooked, if he perceives any body passing, he moves slowly away; after a few steps, he stops, turns round, and casts upon his land one last profound and melancholy look: but to the keen-sighted, that look is full of passion, full of heart, full of devotion. If that be not love, (!) by what token shall we know it in this world? It is love—do not laugh." It were indeed very easy to laugh, but, thus intreated, we forbear, and proceed. To love is to covet possession. To have a bit of land, means "you shall not be a mercenary, to be hired to-day and turned off to-morrow. You shall not be a serf for your daily bread. You shall be free!" To acquire that land, the peasant will consent to any thing, even to lose sight of it. To obtain it he will sell his life, and go to meet death in Africa. The peasant is very aspiring; he has been a soldier; he believes in impossibilities. The acquisition of land is for him a combat; "he goes to it as he would to the charge, and will not retreat. It is his battle of Austerlitz; he will win it; it will be a desperate struggle, he knows, but he has seen plenty of these under his old commander;" and accordingly this brave and warlike peasant borrows money of a usurer at seven, eight, or ten per cent, to purchase a piece of earth that shall bring him in two. "Heroic man—are you surprised, if, meeting him on that land which devours him, you find him so gloomy?" Certainly not. "If you meet him," says M. Michelet—heroic and sublime as he is—"do not ask him your road; if he answers, he may perhaps induce you to turn your back on the place you are going to." It is the way with atrabilious heroes. What is to be done? "We must take serious measures for defending the nobility;" that is to say—the peasantry who are in the hands of the usurers. Alter the laws. This "vast and profound," but very much involved "legion of peasant-soldier proprietors," are the People: the people are France. France is a principle, "a great political principle. It must be defended at any cost. As a principle, she must live. *Live for the salvation of the world (!)*" In the midst of his difficulties, the peasant learns to envy the town workman. He sees him on Sunday walking about like a gentleman, and thinks he is as free as a bird; he believes that a man who carries his trade with him, not caring a straw for the seasons, is a lord of the creation: he remembers his own liabilities to the usurer—and, lo! we have arrived at bondage and hatred, No. 1.

But the *Workman*, after all, is not so well off as he looks in his Sunday's best. Work fluctuates, and at times there is a want of work altogether: moreover, there are wicked *cabarets* and *cafés*, that play havoc with his four or five francs *per diem*. And, above all, there is that tremendous rival, with lungs of iron that know no rest, and never cease, whom men call MACHINERY, and who laughs the skill and strength of man to scorn. "It is humiliating," says the historian, "to behold, in presence of machinery, man fallen so low. The head is giddy, and the heart oppressed, when, for the first time, we visit those fairy halls, where iron and copper of a dazzling polish seem moving of themselves, and to have both thought and will, whilst pale and feeble man is the humble servant of those giants of steel." No reverie, no musing is allowed in the temples of MACHINERY. The *Lollards*, those mystic weavers of the middle ages, received their name, because, whilst working, they *lulled*, or hummed in an under tone some nursery rhyme that cheered then in their labour: for it is wisely said by our author, who can speak like a prophet and a sage when he will—shame to him when he speaks otherwise!—that "in the manual labours subject to our impulse, our inmost thought becomes identified with the work, puts it in its proper place; and the inert instrument, to which we impart the movement, far from being an obstacle to the spiritual movement, becomes its aid and companion. The rhythm of the shuttle, pushed forth and pulled back at equal periods, associated itself (in the case of the Lollards) with the rhythm of the heart; in the evening, it often happened, that, together with the cloth, a hymn, a lamentation, was woven to the self-same numbers." No human heart beats harmoniously with the thunder of machinery, whose abode is the real hell of *ennui*. "It seems, during those long hours, as if another heart, common to all, had taken its place—a metallic, indifferent, pitiless heart." Pitiless, indeed, if it degrade the human creature to the level of the brute. "The manufactory is a world of iron, a kingdom of necessity and fatality. The only living thing there is the severity of the foreman; there they often punish, but never reward. There man feels himself so little man, that as soon as ever he comes out, he must greedily seek the most intense excitement of the human faculties, that which concentrates the sentiment of boundless liberty in the short moment of a delicious dream. This excitement is intoxication,

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especially the intoxication of love." The workman becomes vicious; but extreme physical dependency, the claims of instinctive life, which once more revert to dependency, moral impotency, and the void of mind, are the causes of his vices. Talk of the bondage of the peasant! What is his slavery to that of the workman! *He* was at least a happy *child*. He lived in the air and played. He was at liberty, whilst his body and his strength were forming: the chains did not gall him till his wrist was hard: he was not called upon to suffer, before his spirit was sufficient to cope with life. Yes, there is positive bondage here.

And the *Artisan*? Is he at liberty? As an apprentice-boy, he is already in bondage. "Whatever annoys or irritates his master or his master's wife, falls very often upon his shoulders. A bankruptcy happens, the apprentice is beaten: the master comes home drunk, the apprentice is beaten: the work is slack or pressing, he is beaten all the same." Apprenticeship over, the artisan marries—has a wife, family; expense, misery! His children grow up, and the mother (we are in France, and M. Michelet speaks) is ambitious. Drawing will be serviceable, says the mother, to her boy in his business. She pinches herself for a few sous for *crayons* and paper, and a miserable artist is made of one who would have proved a good workman. Or an inspired artist, the child of labour, is left an orphan and a beggar in the midst of his aspirations and struggles towards distinction: to subsist, he must desert art, and become a workman like his father. "All his life he will curse his fate; he will work here, but his soul will be elsewhere." If he weds, and has a family—that family will become less and less loved. "A man embittered in such a struggle, and wholly intent on personal progress, considers every thing else of little value. He weans himself even from his native land imputing to it the injustice of fate." And so there is imprisonment and hatred also here.

Look at the *Manufacturer*. The manufacturers of France have, generally speaking, all been workmen. Six hundred thousand have become manufacturers or tradesmen since the peace. "Those brave men, who, returning from war, wheeled suddenly to the right-about towards Industry, charged as for an onset, and without difficulty carried every position." But they brought to commerce more of the violence of military life than the sentiment of honour, and treated unmercifully two classes of individuals, viz. the workman and the consumer. Towards the latter they behaved as the female shopkeepers ransomed the Cossacks in 1815. They sold at false weight, false die, false measure. With respect to the former, they applied to industry the great imperial principle—sacrifice men to abridge warfare. Men were *pressed* in town and country, and the conscripts of labour were placed at the pace of the machine, and required to be, like it—*indefatigable*. The successors of these men, the present manufacturers, pay the penalty of their fathers' misdeeds. Their reputation is gone in the market—they cannot get on. "Most of them would be heartily glad to retire if they could; but they are engaged, they must go on—*march! march!*" Such men are not likely to be tender-hearted. They are unfeeling to their workmen, for the money-lender is unfeeling to them. To live, the manufacturer must borrow. To get back his interest he has recourse to the workmen, for the consumer is on his guard. The former present themselves in crowds, and are obtained at any price. But a glut in the market compels the manufacturer to sell at a loss; the lowness of wages, which is death to the workman, is no longer profitable to the master, and the consumer alone gains by it. May not bondage and hatred be discerned in the present condition of the French manufacturer?

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We come to the *Tradesman*. "The tradesman is the tyrant of the manufacturer. He pays him back all the annoyance and vexations of the purchaser." The purchaser of to-day wishes to buy for nothing; he requires two things, a showy article and the lowest price. The tradesman must deceive or perish. His life is made up of two warfares—one of cheating and cunning against the purchaser; the other of vexations and unreasonableness against the manufacturer. We have said that no one can talk more wisely than the author of *The People* when he is so disposed. The picture of the tradesman is drawn with a masterly hand. The original may be found here as well as in France, and is, in truth, the creation of the unwholesome time in which we live rather than of any particular city or state.

"The repugnance for industry exhibited by the noble republics of antiquity, and the haughty barons in the middle ages, is doubtless unreasonable, if by industry we understand those complicated fabrics which require science and art, or a grand wholesale trade, which requires such a variety of knowledge, information, and combination. But this repugnance is truly reasonable when it relates to the ordinary usages of commerce, the miserable necessity in which the tradesman finds himself of lying, cheating, and adulterating.

"I do not hesitate to affirm, that, for a man of honour, the position of the most dependent working man is free in comparison with this. A serf in body, he is free in soul. To enslave his soul on the contrary and his tongue, to be obliged, from morning till night, to disguise his thoughts, this is the lowest state of slavery.

"It is singular that it is precisely for honour that he lies every day, viz. to *honour* his affairs. Dishonour for him is not falsehood, but bankruptcy. Rather than *fail*, commercial honour will urge him on to the point at which fraud is equivalent to robbery, adulteration to poisoning; a gentle poisoning, I know, with small doses, which kill only in the long run.

"The manufacturer, and even the artisan, have two things which, in spite of work, render their lot better than that of the tradesman—

"First.—*The tradesman does not create*; he has not the important happiness—worthy of a man—to produce something—to see his work growing under his hand, assuming a form,

becoming harmonious, responding to its framer by its progress, and thus consoling his *ennui* and his trouble.

"Secondly.—Another awful disadvantage, in my opinion, is, *the tradesman is obliged to please*. The workman gives his time, the manufacturer his merchandise, for so much money: that is a simple contract which is not humiliating, neither has occasion to flatter. They are not obliged, often with a lacerated heart and tearful eyes, to be amiable and gay on a sudden, like the lady behind the counter. The tradesman, though uneasy, and tormented to death about a bill that falls due to-morrow, must smile, and give himself up by a cruel effort to the prating of some young fashionable lady, who makes him unfold a hundred pieces, chats for two hours, and, after all, departs without a purchase. He must please, and so must his wife. He has staked in trade, not only his wealth, his person, and his life, but often his family."

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We need not ask, is bondage here? or stay to inquire whether the condition of the tradesman thus described is likelier to engender love or hatred towards mankind.

The *Official*, too, is enslaved. A vast proportion of men on the Continent are officials. Great efforts and great sacrifices are undergone to make the hope of the humble house a government servant. And in France what does this mean? It means to serve a hard master, and to receive ill wages for the service, to be subject to instant dismissal at the will of an arbitrary overseer, to pass a life of changes, journeys, and sudden transportations. A baker's boy at Paris earns more than two custom-house officers, more than a lieutenant of infantry, more than many a magistrate, more than the majority of professions; *he earns as much as six parish schoolmasters*.

"Shame! infamy! The nation that pays the least to those that instruct the people (let us blush to confess it) is France. I speak of the France of these days. On the contrary, the true France, that of the Revolution, declared that teaching was a holy office, that the schoolmaster was equal to the priest. I do not conceal it; of all the miseries of the present day, there is not one that grieves me more. The most deserving, the most miserable, the most neglected man in France is the schoolmaster. The state, which does not even know what are its true instruments and its strength, that does not suspect that its most powerful moral lever is this class of men—the state, I say, abandons him to the enemy of the state—bondage; heavy bondage! I find it among the high and the low in every degree, crushing the most worthy, the most humble, the most deserving!"

The *Rich Man* and the *Bourgeois* do not escape the curse that attaches to every other class: they too are in bondage. The ancient *bourgeoisie* was characterized by security, the present has no such characteristic. It lives in timidity and fear. It has risen from the Revolution, aspires to nobility, feels none, and is jealous of the advancing masses. The ancient *bourgeois* was consistent. "He admired himself in his privileges, wanted to extend them, and looked upwards. Our man looks downwards: he sees the crowd ascending behind him, even as he ascended; he does not like it to mount; he retreats, and holds fast to the side of power. Does he avow to himself his retrograde tendency? Seldom, for his part is adverse to it; he remains almost always in this contradictory position—a liberal in principle, an egotist in practice, wanting, yet not willing. If there remain any thing French within him, he quiets it by the reading of some innocently growling, or pacifically warlike newspaper."

The rich man of to-day was poor yesterday. He was the very artisan, the soldier, the peasant, whom he now avoids. He has the false notion, that people gain only by taking from others. He will not let his companions of yesterday ascend the ladder by which he has mounted, lest in the ascent he should lose something. He does not know that "every flood of rising people brings with it a flood of new wealth." He shuts himself up in his class, in his little circle of habits, closes the door, and carefully guards—a nonentity. To maintain his position, the rich man withdraws from the people—is insulated—and, therefore, in bondage.

Here let us stop. What is it that we have seen? The peasant in fetters, the workman oppressed, the artisan crippled, the manufacturers embarrassed, the tradesman corrupted, the official in misery, the rich man exiled—all in bondage, all hating one another, and all constituting the life and marrow of the great and civilized country, to whose deplorable condition M. Michelet especially invites our attention. Deplorable, said we? Oh, far from it! The calamity that would crush any other nation, has a far different effect upon France. Bondage and hatred may exist, misery may eat like a canker-worm at the heart of the empire; but France, great, glorious, military, and beautiful, is consumed only to rise phoenix-like, fairer and younger, from her ashes. The French peasant may be in fetters, but he is also the nobleman of the world—the only nobleman remaining, "whilst Europe has continued plebeian." (!) "It is said the Revolution has suppressed the nobility, but it is just the reverse; it has made thirty-four millions of nobles. When an emigrant was boasting of the glory or his ancestors, a peasant, who had been successful in the field, replied, '*I am an ancestor*.'" "The strongest foundation that any nation has had since the Roman empire, is found in the peasantry of France." "It is by that that France is formidable to the world, and at the same time ready to aid it; it is this that the world looks upon with fear and hope. What, in fact, is it? The army of the future on the day the barbarians appear." If such is the picture of a peasantry in bondage, what must we expect from a peasantry at liberty? The workmen, as we have seen, are vicious enough, yet they are the most sociable and gentlest creatures in the universe. Nothing moves them to violence; if you starve them, they will wait; if you kill

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them, they are resigned; they are the least fortunate, but the most charitable; they know not what hatred is; the more you persecute, the more they love you. If in our haste we called these men degraded, we recall our words, for M. Michelet says that they stand amongst the highest "in the estimation of God." We told you just now, always upon the authority of our author, what rascals the French manufacturers were; and how the unfeeling masters of today are paying the penalty of their fathers' frauds and evil practices. We hinted, too, at the symptoms of decay already visible in their condition. But we did not tell you that France manufactures, in a spirit of self-denial that cannot be too strongly commended, for the whole world, who come to her, "buy her patterns, which they go and copy, ill or well, at home. Many an Englishman has declared, in an inquiry, that he has a house in Paris *to have patterns*. A few pieces purchased at Paris, Lyons, or in Alsatia, and afterwards copied abroad, are sufficient for the English and German counterfeiter to inundate the world. It is like the book-trade. France writes and Belgium sells." It was stated that the official is cruelly paid for his labour, and M. Michelet further hints, that speculation is but too often the grievous consequence. In England this would be fatal to a man's self-respect, and subject him to *bondage* in more ways than one. But, across the Channel, Providence miraculously interposes, and even rescues the official in the hour of difficulty, for the honour and glory of *la belle France*. "Yes, at the moment of fainting, the culprit stops short without knowing why—because he feels upon his face the invisible spirit of the heroes of our wars, *the breath of the old flag!*"

It is really very difficult to go on satisfactorily with such a writer as this. If there be truth in the picture which he draws of his country's misery, there must be falsehood in the language with which he paints her pre-eminence, and battles for her unapproachable perfection. If she be perfect, the vital sores that have been presented to us exist not in her, but only in the imagination of the enthusiastic and deluded writer. Upon one page it is written that the situation of France is so serious, that there is no longer room for hesitation. France is "hourly declining, engulfed like an Atalantis." Five minutes afterwards, "the idea of our ruin is absurd, ridiculous. For who has a literature? Who still sways the mind of Europe? We, weak as we are. Who has an army? We alone." What is the conclusion which any unprejudiced reader would draw from the painful details which M. Michelet has deemed it his paramount duty to bring before the notice of mankind, and especially to the consciences of the French nation itself? Simply this—that France, disabled and diseased, is weak, and feebler than many other nations of the world. The conclusion of M. Michelet is the very opposite one. "Let France be united for an instant, she is strong as the world. England and Russia, two feeble bloated giants, impose an illusion on Europe. Great empires, weak people!" So it is throughout. M. Michelet leaves far behind him the butcher, who would not suffer any man to call his dog an ugly name but himself. You must not only utter no syllable of condemnation against his glorious country, but you must be prepared to regard the abuse of the author as so much panegyric.

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The means of enfranchisement suggested by the poetic historian are as fanciful as the bondage itself appears to be. Freedom for every class is to be gained by LOVE. Love for the native country: in other words, Frenchmen of every class are to believe that there never existed, that there never will exist, a country so great as their own; and then, as if by a charm, all their troubles will cease, their sorrow will be turned into joy—their imprisonment to liberty, such as mankind have never yet witnessed, such as no children of the great human family are capable of enjoying, but the darlings and favourites of God—beloved France. In the nursery, we do not correct the young by flattery and cajolery. The surgeon does not hesitate to cut to the marrow, if the safety of the patient depend upon the bold employment of the knife; but neither monitor nor doctor in France may approach the faults and corruptions of her people without doing homage to the one, and viciously tampering with the other. What but insult is the following balderdash offered to a great people as a remedy for physical suffering—cruelty—oppression—want?

"Say not, I beseech you, that it is nothing at all to be born in the country surrounded by the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Rhine, and the ocean. Take the poorest man, starving in rags, him whom you suppose to be occupied solely with material wants. He will tell you it is an inheritance of itself to participate in this immense glory, this unique legend, which constitutes the talk of the world. He well knows that if he were to go to the most remote desert of the globe, under the equator or the poles, he would find Napoleon, our armies, our grand history, to shelter and protect him; that the children would come to him, that the old men would hold their peace, and entreat him to speak, and that to hear him only mention those names, they would kiss the hem of his garment."

Yes—the thing has come to pass in Africa, at Tahiti, on the coast of Madagascar, whence the savages repulsed, with vindictive hatred, their French invaders, and refused even to correspond with them save through the medium of another nation. The feelings with which the natives of the Marquesas regard at the present moment the embroidered gentry, who, "protected by their grand history," and headed by that valiant fighting man, Rear-Admiral Du Petit Thouars, took unwarrantable possession of their shores, are of course faithfully described in the above nonsensical outburst; and are not, as every body knows, those of fear and utter detestation for a crew of wicked mountebanks and gold-laced ruffians. Of course the children come to Du Petit Thouars, and the old men hold their peace, and kiss the hem of his regimentals; and that's the very reason why the said Du Petit points the fatal tubes of his heavy, double-banked frigates and corvettes at the fragile bamboo sheds that lie timidly and

harmlessly in a grove of cocoa-nuts.

"For our part, whatever happens to us, poor or rich, happy or unhappy, while on this side of the grave, we will ever thank God for having given us this great France for our native land; and that not only on account of the many glorious deeds she has performed, but because in her we find especially at once the representative of the liberties of the world, and the country that links all others together by sympathetic ties—the initiation to universal love. This last feature is so strong in France, *that she has often forgotten herself(!)* We must at present remind her of herself, and beseech her to love all the nations less than herself.

"Doubtless, every great nation represents an idea important to the human race. But, gracious heaven! how much more true is this of France! Suppose for a moment that she were eclipsed, at an end, the sympathetic bond of the world would be loosened, dissolved, and probably destroyed. Love, that constitutes the life of the world, would be wounded in its most vital part. *The earth would enter into the frozen age, where other worlds close at hand have already landed.*"

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We have never wittingly done injustice either to France or her people; but we confess we had no notion of the claims of both upon our regard and applause, until they were prominently put before us by her somewhat Quixotic historian.

In the first place, if you would heap up all the blood, the gold, the efforts of every kind, that each nation has expended for disinterested matters that were to be profitable only to the world, France would have a pyramid that would reach to heaven; "and yours, oh nations! all of you put together—oh yours! the pile of your sacrifices would reach up to the knee of an infant!"

And then God enlightens it more than any other nation, for she sees in the darkest night, when others can no longer distinguish. "During that dreadful darkness which often prevailed in the middle ages, and since, nobody perceived the sky. France alone saw it."

Rome is nowhere but in France. Rome held the pontificate of the dark ages—the royalty of the obscure; and France has been the pontiff of the ages of light.

Every other history is mutilated. France's is alone complete. Take the history of Italy, the last centuries are wanting; take the history of Germany or of England, the first are missing; take that of France, *with it you know the world*. Christianity has promised, France has performed. "The Christian had the faith that a God-made man would make a people of brothers, and would, sooner or later, unite the world in one and the same heart. This has not yet been verified, but it will be verified in us." The great and universal legend of France is the only complete one; other nations have only special legends which the world has not accepted. The natural legend of France, on the contrary, "is an immense, uninterrupted stream of light, a true milky way, upon which the world has ever its eyes fixed." An American once said, that for every man the first country is his native land, and the second is France. This surely was praise sufficient. But M. Michelet is very greedy of praise. "How many," says he, "*like better* to live here than in their own country! As soon as ever they can break for a moment the thread that binds them, they come, poor birds of passage, to settle, take refuge, and enjoy here at least a moment's vital heat. They tacitly avow that this is the universal country." Beau Brummel certainly avowed it; but then he, "poor bird of passage," flew in a night from his own nest, to settle, take refuge, and enjoy a moment's vital peace in France, away from duns and creditors. Many, in similar circumstances, would unquestionably prefer Paris to London, provided they could break the thread which attaches them to their domestic responsibilities. France is the infant Solomon sitting in judgment. Who, but she, has preserved the tradition of the law? She has given her soul to the world, and the world is living on it now; but, strange condition! "what she has left is what she has given away. Come, listen to me well, and learn, oh nations! what without us you would never have learned:—*the more one gives, the more one keeps*. Her spirit may slumber within her, but it is always entire, and ever on the point of waking in its might."

Now all this must be taught to the infant as soon as it can lisp, and he will, no doubt, perfectly understand and appreciate it. The regeneration of France (which is already so perfect, and is, besides, the great exemplar of mankind) depends upon the child's proper appreciation of his birthplace. If he will believe all that has been said, he is far on the road, but by no means at the end of his journey. As soon as he is breeched, his mother must become his instructor, and increase the dose by some such foolish proceeding as the following:—

"Let her take him on St John's Day, when the earth performs her annual miracle, when every herb is in flower, when the plant seems to grow while you behold it; let her take him into the garden, embrace him, and say to him tenderly, 'You love me, you know only me. Well, listen! I am not all. You have another mother. All of us, men, women, children, animals, plants, and whatever has life, we have all a tender mother, who is ever feeding us, invisible, but present. Love her, my dear child; let us embrace her with all our hearts.'

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"Let there be nothing more. No metaphysics that destroy the impression. Let him brood over that sublime and tender mystery, which his whole life will not suffice to clear up. That is a day he will never forget. Throughout all the trials of life and the intricacies of science, amid all his passions and stormy nights, the gentle sun of St John's Day will ever illumine the



deepest recesses of his heart with the immortal blossom of the purest, best love."

The little gentleman, however, is not done with yet. The dose is not yet strong enough, although quite as strong as his mother, gentle creature, could mix it. The early jacket is discarded in favour of the swallow-tailed coat, and the youth passes into the hands of his father:—

"His father takes him—'tis a great public festival—immense crowds in Paris—he leads him from Notre Dame to the Louvre, the Tuileries, the triumphal arch. From some roof or terrace, he shows him the people, *the army passing, the bayonets clashing and glittering, and the tricolored flag*. In the moments of expectation especially, before the *fête*, by the fantastic reflections of the illumination, in that awful silence which suddenly takes place in that dark ocean of people, he stoops towards him and says, 'There, my son, look, there is France—there is your native country! All this is like one man, one soul, one heart. They would all die for one; and each man ought also to live and die for all. Those men passing yonder, who are armed, and now departing, are going away to fight for us. They leave here their father, their aged mother, who will want them. You will do the same; you will never forget that your mother is France.'"

The education is very nearly completed. The father suffers the swallow-tail to wear out, the incipient mustache to take root, and then he leads his second and better self to the mountain-side. This time he does not stoop over him, for the youth is erect, and is as big a man as his father. "Climb that mountain, my son," says the venerable gentleman, "provided it be high enough; look to the four winds, you will see nothing but *enemies*."

And so, by a very roundabout process, we reach the heart of the mystery. M. Michelet loves fighting—remembers Waterloo—is game—is eager for another round, and in his heart believes one Frenchman to be equal to at least half a dozen Englishmen. He burns for one more trial of strength—a last decisive tussle; and he writes a philosophical work to prove the physical bout essential to the dignity, the grandeur, and the redemption of his country. Every time, we repeat the words, that he looks upon a bayonet, his heart bounds within him, and his only hope, teacher and professor of the College of France though he be, rests in trumpets, drums, swords, the epaulette, the sabredash, and the tricolor.

We have surely wasted ink enough upon this theme. In common with ourselves, the reader will regard with due commiseration, a manifestation of wicked folly, which will do no harm only because it comes in an age not ripe for bloodshed, or happily too humanized for unprovoked, gratuitous warfare; and because the French people themselves, under a politic king and a peace-seeking ministry, have learned a little to regard the blessings of undisturbed domestic quietness. We quit the main subject of M. Michelet's book, to draw attention to a few insulated passages worthy of the better days of the author, and certainly out of place in the present volume. It were not possible for M. Michelet to write four hundred pages that should not, here and there, give evidence of his great genius—his general common sense, and his touching sympathy for the suffering and the oppressed. There are passages in the work under consideration that have universal interest, and claim universal attention; his appeals on behalf of children and women, the most neglected and oppressed of the community, let them be found where they may, in England or in France, in Europe or in Asia, are instinct with truthfulness and honest vigour; his vindication of the *mission* of the child, philosophical and just, is beaming with the light that burns so steadily and clearly in the poems of our own Wordsworth, which have especial reference to the holy character of the "Father of the Man."

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It is in one of the insulated passages of which we speak, that M. Michelet bitterly and very sensibly complains of the exclusive regard which modern romance writers have shown for the prisons and kennels, the monsters and thieves of civilized societies; of the disposition every where exhibited to descend rather than ascend for the choice of a subject, or the selection of a hero. We have felt the inconvenience of the same sickly taste in this country, and can understand the complainings over productions similar to that of *The Mysteries of Paris*, whilst we remember our own inferior and not less baneful *Dick Turpins* and *Jack Sheppards*. Hurtful to the morals of a nation, these productions are equally unjust to the national character. We have drawn our estimate of the present literature of France from what we have seen and heard of her least healthy writers. As well might the novels of Mr Ainsworth, or the miserable burlesques of Mr Albert Smith, be accepted as the representatives of the Romance and Drama of the modern English school. It is not one of the least crimes of which these unwholesome writers are guilty, that they present to their own countrymen, and to the world at large, only foul exceptions, hideously exaggerated, which they would have us believe are faithful pictures of the mass; and in their eager endeavours to interest and excite the unthinking many, rouse the disgust and alarm of all well-constituted and thoughtful minds. The perilous consequences of popular literature in France are finely pointed out by M. Michelet. The timid take fright, when the people are represented as monsters in the books which are greedily devoured, and intensely applauded by the majority of their readers. "What!" cry the citizens, "are the people so constituted? Then, let us increase our police, arm ourselves, shut our doors, and bolt them." And all the alarm has been occasioned by a conceited, and it may be clever, coxcomb, who, descending from his drawing-room, has asked the first passenger in the street whereabouts the People lived. He met with a fool, who directed him to the galleys, the prisons, and the stews.

"One day," writes M. Michelet, "there came a man to the famous Themistocles, and proposed to him an art of memory. He answered bitterly, 'Give me rather the art of forgetfulness.' May God give me this art, to forget from this moment all your monsters, your fantastic creations, those shocking exceptions with which you perplex my subject! You go about, spyglass in hand; you hunt in the gutters, and find there some dirty filthy object, and bring it to us, exclaiming—"Triumph! we have found the people!"

"To interest us in them, they show them to us forcing doors and picking locks. To these picturesque descriptions they add those profound theories, by which the People, if we listen to them, justify themselves in their own eyes for this crusade against property. Truly, it is a great misery, in addition to so many others, for them to have these imprudent friends. These theories and these acts are by no means of the people. The mass is, doubtless, neither pure nor irreproachable; but still, if you want to characterise it by the idea which prevails in the immense majority, you will find it occupied in founding by toil, economy, and the most respectable means, the immense work which constitutes the strength of this country, the participation of all classes in property."

We believe it sincerely and heartily. The great writers of all ages have believed it. Your low-minded scribblers have never doubted it; but it is far easier to depict the limited class, with its violence and felony, its startling incidents and painful murders—far less difficult to give picturesque effect to its nauseous jargon and offensive situations, than it is to work the simple portraiture of a whole community, who have nothing to offer to the artist but the delicate and unobtrusive material, such as Goldsmith could weave into a fabric whose colour and texture shall endure and enchant for all time.

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"I feel," continues M. Michelet, with great tenderness—"I feel I am alone, and I should be sad indeed if I had not with me my faith and hope. I see myself weak, both by nature and my previous works, in presence of this mighty subject, as at the foot of a gigantic monument, that I must move all alone. Alas! how disfigured it is to-day; how loaded with foreign accumulations, moss, and mouldiness; spoilt by the rain and mud, and by the injuries it has received from passengers! The painter, the man of *art for art*, comes and looks at it; what pleases him is precisely that moss. But I would pluck it off. Painter, now passing by! This is not a plaything of art—this is our altar!"

"To know the life of the people, their toils and sufferings," he continues, "I have but to interrogate my own memory." He has himself sprung from the labouring population. Before he wrote books, he *composed* them in the literal sense of that term. He arranged letters before he grouped ideas; the sadness of the workshop, and the wearisomeness of long hours, are things known to his experience. The short narrative of his early struggles forms another beautiful passage in this singular and very unequal production. The great lesson which he brought with him from his season of difficulty and affliction, is one that authorizes him to approach the people as a teacher and a friend, and ought to have inspired him with nobler aims than he puts forth to-day. He has seen the disorders of destitution, the vices of misery; but he has seldom found them extinguishing original goodness of heart, or interfering with the noble sentiments that adorn the lowest as well as the highest of mankind. There is nothing new, he tells us, in this observation. At the time of the cholera in France, every body beheld one class eager to adopt the orphan children. What class was that? *The Poor*.

Whilst in poverty himself, his soul was kept free from envy by noting the unremitting devotedness, the indefatigable sacrifices of hard-working families—a devotedness, he assures us, not even exhausted in the immolation of one life, but often continued from one to another for several generations.

The two families from which he descended were originally peasants. These families being very large, many of his father's and mother's brothers and sisters would not marry, in order that they might the better contribute to the education of some of the boys, whom they sent to college. This was a sacrifice of which he was early made aware, and which he never forgot. His grandfather, a music-master of Laon, came to Paris with his little savings after the Reign of Terror, where his son, the author's father, was employed at the *Imprimerie des Assignats*. His little wealth was made over to the same son, and all was invested in a printing-office. To facilitate the arrangement, a brother and a sister of the eldest son would not marry, but the latter espoused a sober damsel of Ardennes. M. Michelet, the child of this industrious pair, was born in the year 1798 in the choir of a church of nuns, then occupied by the printing-office. "Occupied, I say, but not profaned; for what is the Press in modern times but the holy ark?"

The printing-office, prosperous at first, fed by the debates of the assemblies and the news of the armies, was overthrown in 1800 by the general suppression of the newspapers. The printer was allowed to publish only an ecclesiastical journal; and even this sanction was withdrawn in favour of a priest whom Napoleon thought safe, but was mistaken. The family of M. Michelet was ruined. They had but one resource; it was to print for their creditors a few works belonging to the printer. They had no longer any journeymen; they did the work themselves. The father, who was occupied with his employment abroad, could render no assistance, but the mother, though sick, turned binder, cut and folded. The child—the future historian—was the compositor; the grandfather, very old and feeble, betook himself to the hard work of the press, and printed with his palsied hands.

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The young compositor, at twelve years of age, knew four words of Latin which he had picked

up from an old bookseller, who had been a village teacher, and doted on grammar. The scene of the lad's labors—his workshop—was a cellar. For company he had occasionally his grandfather who came to see them, and always, without interruption, an industrious spider, that worked at the compositor's side, and even more assiduously than he. There were severe privations to undergo, but there was also much compensation.

"I had the kindness of my parents, and their faith in my future prospects, a faith which is truly inexplicable, when I reflect how backward I was. Save the binding duties of my work, I enjoyed extreme independence, which I never abused. I was apprenticed, but without being in contact with coarse-minded people, whose brutality, perhaps, would have crushed the precious blossom of liberty within me. In the morning, before work, I went to my old grammarian, who gave me a task of five or six lines. I have retained thus much; that the quantity of work has much less to do with it than is supposed; children can imbibe but a very little every day; like a vase with a narrow neck, pour little or pour much, you will never get a great deal in at a time."

We have said that in his struggles the aspiring boy knew nothing of envy. It is to-day his solemn belief that man would never know envy of himself, he must be taught it. The year 1813 arrived, and the home of the historian, as well as France herself—it was the time of Moscow—looked very cheerless. The penury of the family was extreme. It was proposed to get the compositor a situation in the Imperial printing-office. The parents, more fond than reasonable, refused the offer, and strong in the belief that the child would yet save the household, obtained an entrance for him in the college of Charlemagne. The tale is told. From that hour he rose. His studies ended soon and well. In the year 1821 he procured, by competition, a professorship in a college. In 1827, two works, which appeared at the same time—*Vico* and *Précis d'Histoire Moderne*—gained him a professorship in the *Ecole Normale*.

"I grew up like grass between two paving-stones; but this grass has retained its sap as much as that of the Alps. My very solitude in Paris, my free study, and my free teaching, (ever free and every where the same,) have raised without altering me. They who rise almost always lose by it; because they become changed, they become mongrels, bastards; they lose the originality of their own class without gaining that of another. The difficulty is not to rise, but in rising to remain one's self."

There is also another difficulty; one which, judging from the volume before us, M. Michelet has yet to overcome: we mean the difficulty—after education, and after achieving the heights to which honourable ambition aspires—of forgetting the terrible and bitter punishment of early penury and trouble; of cherishing no longer the anger and hatred that were borne against the world, whilst the struggler looked upon it as a world in arms against him. The author of *THE PEOPLE* tells us, that in his saddest hours he knew no *envy* towards mankind; but he acknowledges also, that in his sufferings, he deemed all rich men, all men, *bad*; that he pined into a misanthropic humour, and, in the most deserted quarters of Paris, sought the most deserted streets. "I conceived an excessive antipathy against the human species." The writer, to use his own expression, "is raised, but not altered." The antipathy, somewhat chastened by prosperity, is not removed. It takes a bodily form in the volume that teaches France to regard the earth as her enemy, and calls upon her to vindicate her pre-eminence and glory in the field of battle and of blood.

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## THE ROSE OF WARNING

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A LEGEND FROM THE GERMAN. BY A. LODGE.

Where towering o'er the vale on high,  
Those ice-bound summits pierce the sky;  
And on the mountain flood amain,  
The giant oak, and dusky plane,  
Uptorn, with ever-deepening sound,  
Rush roughly 'mid the gorge profound:  
Behold—where horrors mark the scene,  
And loveliest Nature smiles between,  
Yon ivied arch and turrets gray,  
Mouldering in serene decay;  
Half choked, the scanty columns rise,  
Where the prone roof in fragments lies;—  
Of yore, so legends tell, the fane  
Was call'd, of sainted Bernard's train;  
Pious Brethren, self denying,  
Fill'd with thoughts of holy dying,

Here, 'mid penance, prayer, and praise,  
Content they wore their tranquil days;  
Now the heavenly truths expounding,  
In the Lord's good work abounding;  
For deeds of love the dome was bless'd;  
The hungry fed, the faint had rest;—  
Thus they gave their light to shine,  
And the Bread of Life divine!

These walls confess'd, long ages flown,  
Strange tidings of the world unknown;  
And dark the boding wonder fell,  
With signal of the midnight bell:  
For ever, as in solemn row,  
The Brotherhood, devout and slow,  
Paced the dim-lighted aisles along,  
Loud echoing to the choral song;  
To each—when the dread hour was nigh,  
Of man's appointed lot—to die,  
A sure forewarner told of doom,  
With silent summons to the tomb:  
As in the choir he knelt to pray,  
On the desk a white Rose lay!  
Prompt at the sign of awful power,  
The destined brother took the flower,  
"Thy will be done!" he cried, and press'd  
Death's pale memento to his breast;  
And straight retired, the Office o'er,  
He left his cloister'd cell no more;  
There, with due shrift and penance made,  
The last absolving rites were paid,  
And dead to thoughts of earth and time,  
The doom'd one soar'd on hope sublime!  
But first, with reverend hand, he placed  
The monitory emblem chaste  
On that dear pledge of pardon free,  
Christ on his redeeming tree!  
Then gazed, as the long hours crept by,  
With solemn thought, and musing eye,  
From early dawn to eve's repose,  
Steadfast on the warning Rose!

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And quick the shadow'd message came;  
To dust return'd the mortal frame;  
And with sad strains and funeral moan,  
They hymn'd the soul to Mercy's throne!  
Thus by mysterious high behest,  
Each holy brother sank to rest,  
Forewarn'd with supernatural power,  
By the Rose at midnight hour!

It chanced, as once, for nightly prayer,  
They reach'd the choir—the Rose was there!  
Oh grief! before a youth it lay,  
Warning that his life's young day  
Must wither in its blooming May!  
With sudden mortal pang, dismay'd  
At thought, like the brief Rose to fade;  
While death and awful judgment near  
Made life's half-tasted charms more dear;  
The youth, with anxious, trembling haste,  
Unseen, the boding flower displaced;  
Thus might the signal'd doom betide,  
He deem'd, the brother at his side,  
Who, calm in age, his last repose  
Long waiting, hailed the welcome Rose!  
For him, by faith assured, to die—  
His birth of immortality!

But on the morrow—hark! the sound  
Of sorrow's wailings echoes round:  
What means the tear—the plaint—the sigh?  
Why sits despair in every eye?  
Oh, dire presage! two souls had fled—  
The old man and the youth were dead!

And with dumb wondering awe they view  
The White Rose tinged with purple hue!  
For this the ceaseless knell is rung,  
For this the choral Requiem sung:—  
And when, few summers past, once more  
They wept a brother gone before;  
No longer the White Rose was seen;  
It shunn'd the spot where crime had been!

A pilgrim in the Alpine vale,  
I heard the legendary tale;  
And as at eve, by Fancy woo'd,  
Amid the dark'ning aisles I stood;  
O'er crumbling stone and grassy mound,  
I saw the White Rose blooming round!  
Death's flower, methought, fit emblem made  
To dwell in Ruin's silent shade!  
And may the youth—I breathed a prayer—  
Have owned the Saviour's pardoning care,  
Who, deaf to warnings from the sky,  
Tinged the White Rose with murder's dye!

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## GREEK FIRE AND GUNPOWDER.<sup>[73]</sup>

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The traditional account of inventions and discoveries whose origin is involved in the darkness of antiquity is generally short and summary. To some fortunate individual, whose name, either from his having actually taken the most prominent part in the progress of the discovery, or, as is more generally the case, having with the greatest and most persevering energy impressed it upon the public, the whole merit is ascribed and the whole glory attached.

The world, active though its individual members be, as to their own specialties, is inert as a mass, and glad to save itself the trouble of entering into details by adopting the hypothesis which has been most urgently forced upon its notice, or which has caught its attention at one of its most wakeful periods. We thus find nearly every discovery which has added to the permanent stock of human knowledge attributed to a single individual, and to a single guess of that individual.

The traditional account of so recent a discovery as that of Galvani, is the preparation of frog soup for his wife, and the accidental touching one of them with the knife; while, in fact, he had been for years employed in examining the convulsive action of frogs, and had presented several memoirs to the Institute of Bologna on the subject, before its general publicity; indeed, in the main fact he had been anticipated by Swammerdam, and he possibly by others.

Schwartz, the monk of Cologne, probably had a real existence, probably had something to do with the progress of pyrotechnic art; it is even more probable that he invented gunpowder than that the public invented him. The very accident which is reported to have happened, it is not altogether improbable did happen; but if a mixture of saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal accidentally exploded, it was not accident which brought together those particular three ingredients out of the whole laboratory of nature and art.

It is indeed possible that the frequency of accidental explosions when gunpowder was known, were reflected back as a plausible hypothesis to account for its invention; but as the explosive power and utility of gunpowder were not facts which could have been arrived at by *a priori* reasoning, there is every likelihood of such an accident having originally suggested the application of an explosive mixture as a means of propulsion. The history of the invention then resolves itself into the question, Were any admixtures of these three ingredients previously known, what led to them, and what were the objects proposed by them? This question is attempted to be answered by the book before us, containing a very erudite inquiry into the progress of the invention of Greek fire and gunpowder, which are, according to the author's view, modifications of the same thing, *i.e.* pyrotechnic compositions, differing only or mainly in the proportions or purity of their ingredients. A mass of very curious information is given to the reader, which, in addition to the general stock of knowledge or obscure tradition on this subject, shows a gradual and generally diffused use of sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal in different proportions, and occasionally mixed with other combustible substances. Among the Arabs of the thirteenth century a vast number of receipts for such mixtures existed; this is proved by some ancient Arabic MSS. preserved in the Bibliothèque Royale. How the Arabs got possession of these arts is left somewhat in

obscurity, though our authors consider there are strong grounds for conjecturing that they obtained then originally from the Chinese about the ninth century; that they then proceeded slowly in improving this knowledge for the three centuries during which they had no intercourse with the Chinese; and that they again acquired further information on these points after the Mongul irruption in the thirteenth century.

The defect of the book before us is its inconclusiveness: from the preface we are led to expect the solution of a theorem; after reading the book through, we find ourselves not indeed as far at sea as ever, but aided mainly by negations. The actual origin of gunpowder or Greek fire is not traced; many of the connecting links in the chain of pyrotechnic discovery are still deficient; and the conjectures, which stand in the place of conclusions, are frequently founded upon what appear to us insufficient data. On the other hand it must be admitted, that on a subject so involved in obscurity, inasmuch as proof is impossible, speculation is to a certain extent admissible as a link to render isolated facts intelligible.

It may be well here if, before passing to the more immediate object of this paper—viz. a sketch of the probable progress of pyrotechny—we explain to those of our readers who are unacquainted with chemistry, the philosophy of explosive combustibles.

Combustion is nothing else than rapid chemical union, taking place between two dissimilar substances, which have what is called an affinity for each other, *i.e.* a tendency to unite and form a new compound. When a candle or lamp is burned, it is carbon and hydrogen, the principal constituents of oil or fat, which combine with oxygen, one main ingredient of the atmosphere. As it requires a certain temperature for this union to take place, to prevent the cooling effect of mass, a wick is used which can be readily heated, and where, as soon as chemical action has once taken place, other portions of the oil or melted tallow are absorbed, which ascend just as water through the pores of a sponge, and supply the place of those burned. In this example, only a small ignited surface is exposed to the influence of the oxygen: if, however, this latter element could be obtained in a solid state, and mixed up with the combustible, each particle throughout the whole mass would have in contact with it a particle of oxygen; so that, if the whole were raised to the necessary temperature for combustion, combustion would be instantaneous—or if the temperature of a part were sufficiently elevated, the combustion of this portion would communicate an intense heat to the contiguous portions, and the whole would rapidly kindle as a fuse does. In this case also, the access of the air being immaterial, combustion might take place in a closed vessel, or even under water.

Nitre, or saltpetre, is one of a class of substances which contains a large portion of oxygen in a combined and solid state; and, being mixed with combustible matter such as charcoal, it causes rapid deflagration when the temperature is raised. The whole class of pyrotechnic compositions are reducible to this simple principle—they all consist of combustible substances intimately mixed with substances containing oxygen; or, to reduce the proposition to more general and simple terms, they consist of two or more substances, having for each other a powerful chemical affinity, and capable of rapidly uniting when the temperature is elevated. When a projectile force is necessary, a further condition is essential, viz., that they liberate by their chemical action gaseous matter, whereby a sudden increase in volume is produced, the expansion of which, augmented by the high temperature, produces the required effect of propulsion.

This slight sketch will show that the purity and proportions of the saltpetre, and the inflammable substances mixed with it, are the main elements to be attended to in the improvement of self-burning compositions: it is indeed far from improbable, that the substances used in purifying saltpetre have first suggested such compounds. Wood ashes were used at a very early period for purifying nitre; and at the end of an Arabic receipt of the thirteenth century, for the preparation of saltpetre, in which charcoal is used, is the expression, "guard against sparks of fire."

The probabilities strongly favour the view, that incendiary compositions of the nature we have been describing originated with the Chinese. China snow, and China salt, are the names given by writers of the greatest antiquity to saltpetre. In the Arabic MSS. to which we shall presently allude, the words Chinese wheel, Chinese flower, Chinese dart, occur as appellatives of different fireworks. It is very possible that the influx of Chinese literature, which the result of the recent war with that people promises us, will lead to the discovery of Chinese treatises upon pyrotechny.

Other authors speak of fire-arms among the Chinese at a very early period of our era, and even before Christ; but the interpretation which they have put upon obscure passages—interpretations evidently derived from their existing knowledge—makes these expressions and translations of extremely doubtful import.

At a later period, however, we have the authority of Raschideddin, (minister of the Tartar Khan of Persia,) and of Marco Polo, that the machines of war employed at the siege of Siang Yang were constructed by Arabian or European workmen, and that the Tartars were not at this period themselves able to manufacture such machines. This would tend to negative the belief which has been entertained by some, that the Chinese then used gunpowder as a means of projection, but does not lessen the possibility that the fuses and compositions projected by these machines were of Chinese origin.

In the history of the dynasty of Sang, A.D. 1259, there is a distinct account of a projectile by means of fire as follows:—"In the first year of the period *Khaiking*, a kind of arms was manufactured called *Tho-ho-tsiary*, that is to say, 'impetuous fire-lance.' A nest of grains was introduced into a long tube of bamboo, to which fire was set. A violent flame darted forth, and instantly the nest of grains was projected with a noise similar to that of a peacock, which was heard at a distance of about 150 paces."

Upon the whole, it would appear that the Chinese, although the character of their claims to the knowledge of gunpowder has been exaggerated, were in all probability the people among whom mixtures of combustibles with oxygenated substances originated; and this will form one of the many interesting fields of inquiry to be pursued by those skilled in the literature of the Chinese, now that the field is so largely opened to them.

There are obscure passages in writers of a very early period, which speak of thunderbolts being shot from the walls of besieged towns upon the enemy. Philostratus speaks of such; but the indefinite character of these expressions makes their connexion with either Greek fire or gunpowder extremely doubtful.

In the year 883, Nicetas, admiral of the Eastern empire, was sent by the Saracens of Crete to assault Constantinople, and is stated to have burned twenty of their ships with Greek fire.

One of the earliest accounts of its composition is that given by Anna Comnena, who states it was composed of sulphur, bitumen, and naphtha; but the most distinct early receipt for a composition analogous to gunpowder, is that contained in the celebrated book of Marcus Græcus. In the book called *Liber Ignium*, we have the following receipts:—

"Note. That the fire capable of flying in the air is of twofold composition, of which the first is: One part of colophon and an equal part of sulphur, two parts of saltpetre, and well pulverized, to be dissolved in linseed or laurel oil. A case, or hollowed wood, is then to be charged with it, and ignited. It will fly suddenly to whatever place you wish, and burn up every thing by its fire."

The second sort of flying fire is prepared in this manner:—

"One pound of sulphur vivum, two pounds of charcoal of linden wood or of willow, six pounds of saltpetre, which three things are minutely pounded in a marble mortar. After that you will charge with it a sheath suitable for flying, or for making thunder.

"Note. The sheath for flying ought to be slender and long, and filled with the aforesaid powder well rammed.

"The sheath for making thunder ought to be short and large, and half filled with the aforesaid powder, and well bound in every direction with an iron band.

"Note. That in every sheath a small aperture is to be made, in order that it may be ignited by the match when applied, which match is made slender at the extremities, but in the middle large and filled with the aforesaid powder."

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Another receipt of Marcus for Greek fire is as follows:—

"Greek fire is made in the following manner. Take pure sulphur, tartar, sarcocole, (a kind of resin,) pitch, fused saltpetre, and oil of petroleum. Boil them well together. Dip tow in the mixture, and set fire to it. This fire cannot be extinguished but with vinegar or sand."

The close analogy, or rather the identity, of these compositions with gunpowder as at present made, requires no comment. The more important question is the date at which this work was written. This is a matter of great doubt. Messrs Reinaud and Favé, from the fact that the receipt for the preparation of saltpetre to be found in this same book of Marcus is much more imperfect than that in the Arabian MSS., place the date of his book earlier than the thirteenth century. Again, Geber, an oriental writer, the date of whose life is doubtful, but whom our authors fix at the eighth century, has described the preparation of a salt which has been translated *nitre*, but which our authors consider to have been a sesquicarbonate of soda, *natron*, not *nitrum*. They thence conclude that nitre was unknown to Geber, and thus, because it was known to Marcus, that he lived subsequently; and for this reason they place Marcus between the ninth and twelfth century.

We have seldom seen an instance of more loose deduction than this. It is required to find the date of Marcus. Geber, whose date is unknown, is set down, upon rather weak data, as of the eighth century. Geber's translator is corrected to prove that Geber did not know saltpetre. Hassan Alrammah, an Arabian, is considered as more recent than Marcus, a Greek, because his process for saltpetre is somewhat more perfect; and from the cumulative effect of these data, each of which is very insufficiently established, and which, if established, only go to prove differences in the degrees of perfection of their respective receipts, the date of Marcus is fixed: this certainly is pushing *incertum per incertius* very far. We fear that if no more accurate information be brought to bear on it, the epoch of Marcus Græcus will be a subject of as much controversy as ever.

The paragraph in the treatises *De Mirabilibus* of Albert the Great is so identical with that of Marcus Græcus, that there can be no doubt of its being copied from it, or derived from the same source, and is a strong additional instance of the general progress of inventions. A

received publication calls attention to a fact already disclosed but forgotten, the knowledge acquired by the world since is brought to bear on the old fact; and a consequent improvement results.

Roger Bacon, to whom the invention or knowledge of gunpowder has been attributed by some, would stand a very poor chance among the men of science of the present day: it is not now the man who conjectures a possibility, but he who demonstrates a fact, that is hailed as the discoverer.

The following series of possibilities are curiously interesting, both from their partial subsequent realization, and from the simple credulity with which Bacon gives us that which he had known "a wise man explicitly excogitate."

"Instruments of navigation can be made, men being the propelling agents, that the largest river and sea barks can be borne along (one man only managing them) with greater speed than if they were full of navigators. Carriages can also be constructed which may be moved without animals, with an inestimable impetus; so that one would think that they were the armed chariots with which they fought in ancient times. Instruments for flying can also be made, so that a man sitting in the centre of the machine, and turning an engine, by which artificial wings may strike the air in the manner of a bird flying. An instrument also can be made, small in magnitude, for elevating and lowering almost infinite weights, than which nothing is more useful in mischances, for by an instrument of the length of three fingers, and of the same breadth or less, a man may extract himself and companions from all danger of prison, and elevate and lower them. An instrument can also be made by which one man may draw to himself a thousand men, by force and against their will. Instruments for walking on the sea can also be made, and in rivers to the bottom without corporal peril. For Alexander the Great used them that he might see the secrets of the sea, according to the relation of Ethicus the astronomer.

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"These things, indeed, are of antiquity and of our times, and are certain, except the instrument for flying, which I have not seen, nor have I known a man who has, but I know a wise man who has explicitly excogitated it; and an infinity of other things can be made, as bridges over rivers, can be made without columns or any support, and machines or unheard of engines."

The ultra admirer of the ancients will see in this, if not an accurate relation of facts, which with the exception of the flying it purports to be, at least a wonderful perception of practicabilities; and railroads, diving-bells, suspension-bridges, &c., will be so many circumstantial corroborations of the correctness of his view. We, however, are rather disposed to regard them as ingenious extravagances. Predictions of the success of science are always on the safe side. If in the present day one were to say, that we shall be able to see the inhabitants of Jupiter, or even converse with them, it would be a prophecy which could never be negatived, which might be the case if we said such things were impossible.

Bacon's obscure intimations of gunpowder are not so clearly derived from the same source as the receipts of Marcus Græcus and Albertus Magnus are; but they are apparently derivatives from what was then known to a few, of nitre compositions, and are very analogous, though not quite so extravagant as some of his other deductions.

Bacon also speaks of a child's toy (*ludicrum puerile*) which was made with saltpetre, the explosion of which produced a report, "quod fortis tonitruum sentiatur excedere rugitum."

As with this, so with the greater number of Bacon's observations; they bear reference to facts, or relations received as facts, which were at that time either generally or partially known, and do not profess to give to the world his own inventions, though the theories deduced from those asserted facts are frequently the produce of his own imaginative brain. Upon the whole, we are fully disposed to agree with Messrs Reinaud and Favé, that the invention of gunpowder is by no means due to Bacon.

We now pass to the Arabian manuscripts of the 13th century, to which we have before alluded, and which constitute the principal discovery of our authors. The same word (*baraud*) which is now used by the Arabs as signifying gunpowder, was originally used to signify saltpetre; and even in this application had a secondary meaning, its more primitive meaning being "hail." The whiteness and crystalline form of saltpetre presented a sufficient analogy to attach to it a similar name, neology being in those days not quite so common or so easy as at present.

Various salts were also included under the same name, their specific differences not being then known. This fact had probably much influence in retarding the pyrotechnic art, as accurate means of testing the purity and chemical character of the salt were not distinctly understood. A receipt successful in one case, because a proper salt was used, failed in another, because the salt was totally unfit for supporting combustion, though passing under the same name.

In these MSS. occur a vast number of receipts for pyrotechnic compositions, of which we may here give one or two as specimens, and as instances of the close approach made at that time to the composition of gunpowder as manufactured at the present day:—



1st Composition.  
Saltpetre, 10—Sulphur,  $1\frac{1}{8}$ —Charcoal,  $2\frac{1}{4}$ .

2nd Composition.  
Saltpetre, 10—Sulphur,  $1\frac{7}{8}$ —Charcoal, 2.

*Proportions of the Garland of Golden Flowers.*

Saltpetre, 10—Sulphur, 1—Steel filings,  $\frac{1}{2}$ —Bronze filings,  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

*Flashing Rocket.*

Saltpetre, 10—Sulphur,  $1\frac{3}{8}$ —Charcoal,  $2\frac{1}{8}$ .

Each substance to be separately pounded; the charcoal and saltpetre are then mixed, and gently pounded; moisten with spittle, and then add the sulphur.

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*White Rocket without sparks.*

Saltpetre, 10—Sulphur,  $1\frac{1}{4}$ —Charcoal,  $2\frac{1}{4}$ .  
To be mixed as before directed.

*Egyptian Moonshine.*

Saltpetre, 10—Sulphur,  $2\frac{1}{4}$ —Charcoal,  $\frac{1}{4}$ .  
Add 4 parts of Lead or Black Ointment.

These instances will be sufficient to show the general character of the Arabic receipts. Saltpetre is used in all of them—in most of them sulphur or charcoal; while arsenic, incense, camphor, iron and bronze filings, are occasionally used to vary the colour and character of the light produced. The Arabs were also in possession at this period of a vast number of instruments of war in which similar combustible matters were employed, such as lances and clubs, with fires at the extremity, girdles for the waist with fires attached. We translate the description of one of them:—

*War Club.*

"Get the glass-maker to make a club, which shall be pierced at its extremity like an iron club. Get the turner to turn a stick, which you will fasten strongly to it. You may give it whatever form you please. Arrange on the sides three 'tubulures,' and at the bottom also three for the 'roses,' (one class of the compositions,) then make the usual compositions. When you wish to set fire to them, arrange them in the form of a segment, set fire to the club, and break it, for the love of God."

The termination of this receipt is a very usual one, and applied to several other receipts—instruments of destruction being then, as now, considered a most appropriate method of serving God.

Another ingenious weapon was called "the egg which moves itself and burns;" and this consisted of two long fuses, which seemed to give force and direction to the firework, and a shorter one, which was directed forwards, the object of which was to burn the enemy. This projectile was cast by the hand, and then, to use the quaint language of the receipt, "it walks, it starts, and it burns extremely well."

Many other compositions were known to the Arabs, as appears from the two curious MSS. above mentioned; such as compositions for covering the body to protect from fire, others to emit a suffocating smoke.

The performances of these instruments were, doubtless, what we should now consider very insignificant; but they must have produced upon the excited imagination of the warrior of those days an effect which it is very difficult to conceive in the present day.

Nothing, probably, has occasioned more frequent historical errors, than forming deductions as to real effects from the exaggerated descriptions of ancient writers.

When Musschenbroek (not a superstitious soldier, but an inductive philosopher) first discovered the Leyden Phial, he declared he would not take a second shock for the kingdom of France; and yet we well know that a schoolboy would not now be frightened at a much more powerful shock than he then experienced. Want of familiarity with a phenomenon, and ignorance of its proximate cause, will ever make it terrible. We cannot see any thing terrible in a sky-rocket, because we have been early influenced by those on whom we rely to regard it as an amusement; but had they brought us up in fear of it—had they magnified these accounts, having some foundation in fact, as to its destructive power, we may well understand what effects of terror it would produce.

Thus regarded, the *ignotum pro magnifico* appears quite sufficient to explain the narrated effects of the Greek fire. But there was also another reason—viz. that all results, not of continual occurrence, and within the range of ordinary experience, were attributed to magic, and consequently spread a terror far disproportioned to the real effects; for this reason, the means of producing them were prohibited by the hierarchy, and, as they gradually acquired a more extensive use, were then only permitted against the enemies of the religion of the people who used them; hence the expression so frequent in the Arabian receipts, "You shall burn your adversary for the service of God;" and similar language is used by the Christian writers, when similar compositions became used by Christian warriors.

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A narration, taken from the Sieur Joinville's History of St Louis, will place before our readers the contemporaneous description of the effects of the pyrotechny of the Arabs.

The following is the account of Joinville of one of the skirmishes of St Louis on the borders of the Nile. We should premise that Turk is the term generally applied by Joinville to all Mussulman soldiers; and though the army was generally recruited from Turkish slaves, yet the country was possessed by Arabs, and the language and arts were theirs.

"One evening it happened that the Turks brought an engine called '*la perriere*,' a terrible engine for doing mischief, and placed it opposite the '*chaz chateils*,' (wooden towers to shelter the advanced guard,) which Messire Gaultier de Carel and I were watching at night, by which engine they cast at us Greek fire, which was the most horrible thing that ever I saw. When the good Chevalier Messire Gaultier, my companion, saw this fire, he exclaimed and said to us, Sirs, we are lost for ever without any remedy; for if they burn our '*chaz chateils*' we are broiled and burned, and if we leave our watch we are disgraced. From which I conclude that there is no one can defend us from this peril, except God our blessed Creator. So I counsel you all, that whenever they cast at us the '*feu Grégeois*,' that each of us throw himself upon his elbows and knees, and cry mercy to our Lord, in whom is all power; and as soon as the Turks threw the first charge of fire, we threw ourselves upon elbows and knees, as we had been instructed. And the fire of this first discharge fell between our two '*chaz chateils*,' in a space in front which our people had made for damming the river; and immediately the fire was extinguished, by a man whom we had for this purpose. The manner of the Greek fire was such, that it came forth as large as a tun, and the tail extended as long as '*une demye canne de quatre pans*.' It made such a noise in approaching, that it seemed like thunder which had fallen from heaven, and seemed to me a great dragon flying through the air; and threw out such a blaze that it appeared as clear as the day, so great a flame of fire was there. Three times during the night they threw this Greek fire at us from the above-mentioned '*perriere*,' and four times with the '*arbalesté*.' And every time that our good king Saint Loys heard that they thus threw the fire, he cast himself upon the ground, and stretched his hands to heaven, and cried with a loud voice to our Lord, and said, shedding copious tears—'Good Lord Jesus Christ, preserve me and all my people;' and, believe me, his good prayers and orisons did us good service (*nous eurent bon mestier*)."

It is impossible to render, in literal translation, the quaint simplicity of the old French; but the fact that this terrible fire was extinguished by a single man, would tend very much to lessen our belief in the marvels attributed to it by the narrator.

Be that as it may, we have, in the extract quoted, the expression Greek fire, (*feu Grégeois*), which will connect the effect then produced with that known as pertaining to the Greek fire. There is every probability that the compositions here used were the same or similar to those generally known under that title, while the MSS. above quoted detail the compositions used by the Arabs at that period: the evidence is, therefore, very strong that the Greek fire was a composition closely resembling, if not identical with, those indicated in the Arabian receipts.

If we trace back the effects of the combustible compositions to the period of the Crusades, anterior to the time when Joinville wrote, we shall find a strong analogy with those described by him; but the use of saltpetre appears to have been more rare, and that of bituminous substances more frequent.

From an Arabian author of the middle of the 13th century, Casiri translates a passage into Latin, which Reinaud somewhat alters. We render it as nearly as we can in English. "It creeps along with scorpions of nitre powder (*baraud*) placed in cases. These scorpions take fire, and wherever they fall they burn; they spread abroad like a cloud; they yell like thunder; they burn like a brazier; they reduce all to cinders."

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This passage is important, as showing the connexion of nitre or *baraud*—a word, as we have before stated, applied to nitre and nitre compositions—with a class of effects analogous to those attributed to the Greek fire.

The passage of incendiary compositions into gunpowder is still involved in much obscurity. Messrs Reinaud and Favé consider that a treatise, printed at Paris A.D. 1561, entitled *Livre de Cannonerie*, throws much light on the subject—"vient de l'éclairer d'une lumière nouvelle;" but we cannot at all agree with them in this view, and for the simple reason, that neither the names of the authors of the receipts contained in it, nor the dates, nor the countries, are given. Without either of these data, our readers, we think, will find it difficult to conceive that much new light can be thrown on the subject. The treatise contains a

number of receipts for mixtures of oils, bitumens, sulphur, and nitre; and, as appears to us, all the aid given by this work towards elucidating the subject is, that these receipts are analogous to those of Marcus and of the Arabs, and have some internal evidence of having been written or copied from writings of an early date, though probably subsequent to Marcus; and, secondly the term Greek fire (*feu Grégeois*) being employed, and receipts for it given, would lead to the inference that the compositions here used under the same title were analogous to those which originally constituted the Greek fire. It is, however, certainly open to the remark, that Greek fire having become, in a great measure, a generic name for violent incendiary compositions, the term may have been applied to compositions analogous in their effects, though of more recent discovery. When, however, we find, in various distinct quarters, similar receipts; when we find these appearing at different epochs, and having different degrees of approximation to the explosive compounds which a more matured experience has rendered certain in their composition, the discovery of such a book as this becomes certainly a corroborative circumstance in favour of that view which regards the Greek fire as never having become extinct, and as having, by progressive but unequal gradations, changed into gunpowder.

In discussing the treatise above mentioned, there is a naïve expression of our authors, who, in remarking the necessary slow combustion of these compounds from the imperfections of the processes of manufacturing saltpetre, also given in the same book, say:—"One sees how much there is that is providential in the progress of human invention. If man had, in the first instance, a powder as strong as at present, he would probably have been unable to master this force, or to use it with suitable instruments, and the discovery would have remained without application. We see that, thanks to the primitive impurity of the saltpetre, man employed mixtures of it with sulphur and charcoal, which produced a force suitable for throwing to short distances feeble parcels of incendiary matter. This force increased little by little, as men became better able to refine saltpetre, and ends by enabling them to employ it for throwing projectiles."

We have frequently heard the word providential applied in a strange manner; but this is one of the most novel views of providential intervention we happen to have met with. The quiet gravity with which Providence is assumed to have interfered in favour of the progress of destructive implements, is about as instructive an instance of the unconscious devotion of an author to his speciality as could easily be selected.

In the treatise of 1561 are some receipts, assumed to be taken from works of an earlier date, in which saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal, are submitted to a considerable degree of heat. The following is one:—"Take of saltpetre 100 lbs., sulphur, 25 lbs., charcoal, 25 lbs., put them altogether, and make them boil well, until the whole be well united, and then you will thus have a strong powder." Mixed in these proportions, and submitted to such a temperature, the chance of explosion is very great; and, as our authors observe, "the essential fact of the tradition respecting the invention of gunpowder is confirmed;" or rather, strictly speaking, the probability of its truth is strengthened. We therefore do not see very clearly why they should be anxious to divest Schwartz of the merit of its discovery, while they produce arguments to show the probability of the discovery being so made. The results of these arguments would only tend to show that the tradition is not sufficiently explicit, in not stating why the three ingredients were mixed together; and Schwartz would, according to this view, be regarded as the first who remarked and applied, or suggested the application of gunpowder, as supplying an explosive projective force.

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Though the probabilities of the use of gunpowder, as an explosive compound, being suggested by accidents occurring in the manufacture of combustible compounds, are thus shown to be very great, the actual step, if step it were, still remains in obscurity. Most probably, like many other inventions, the fact was observed again and again with different degrees of accuracy and different resulting suggestions; until, at length, growing intelligence seized on it, and increasing facility of publication rendered its development more rapid and general. The actual date of its general introduction or use in war is still uncertain. Schwartz's discovery is stated by Kircher at 1354; but gunpowder is stated to have been used at the siege of Stirling in 1339; in Denmark in 1340; in Spain in 1343; at Cressy in 1346; at the siege of Calais in 1347.

Without entering into the critical discussions which the vagueness of the historical records of these periods might tempt, we can scarcely be far wrong in setting down the general introduction of gunpowder during the first half of the fourteenth century, although any attempt to specify, from existing data, the exact date of its invention, would be vain. With regard to its connexion with Greek fire, we may sum up by stating, that during different periods, extending from the eighth to the fourteenth century, combustible matters, in which saltpetre was one ingredient, have been used; and that the term Greek fire has been, at various times within this period, applied to them. Although it does not necessarily follow that the Greek fire alluded to in the more recent works was identical with the Greek fire of an earlier period, yet the probability is strong that there was at least a striking analogy in effect, or the name would not have been used. There is, moreover, some internal evidence of community of origin in these various receipts, when we find that in different parts of the world, in China, in Arabia, and Greece, one general characteristic ingredient is present, viz., nitre; when also the history and progress of chemistry have taught us that no substance, other than nitre or a salt of nitric acid, has ever been, or is now known, which would

produce similar effects, (for the comparatively recent discovery of the chlorates would produce effects of detonation by friction or percussion, of which we find no records,) there can, we think, be little doubt that Greek fire was of the same chemical character as gunpowder; that it passed by a transition, which may have been in particular cases more or less sudden, but which upon the whole was gradual, into gunpowder; and that the history of the progress of one of these manufactures is, in fact, the history of the progress of the other. In this history there are still many gaps to be filled up, many errors to be rectified.

The book of Messrs Reinaud and Favé, though somewhat inartificially arranged, has given to the public much valuable information; but there is still room for an elaborate and well-digested treatise on the subject, in which the whole progress of pyrotechnic invention may be arranged in chronological order, and more lucidly expounded than are antiquarian matters in general. This is a task, however, which few, if any, are capable of undertaking, as it requires for its successful execution a combination of extensive antiquarian, chemical, and philological acquirements. In the mean time, our authors may say, and we say with them,

"Si quid novisti rectius istis,  
Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum."

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## HOW TO BUILD A HOUSE AND LIVE IN IT.

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We're a true Bœotian people after all: that's a fact. We may talk about Attic art and Doric strength; but in our habits, no less than in our climate, we certainly belong to the wrong side of the hills. We're a stuffing and guzzling race, if ever there was one; we doat on great hunks of meat and flagons of strong drink; and as truly as every Paddy has got a hot potato somewhere in his head, making him the queer, mad chap he is, so have we got a national brain compounded of pudding, and beef, and sausages, turning us into that stubborn and stolid people which we know ourselves to be. Sidney Smith expressed the fundamental idea of the English nation to a T, when he said that the ultimate end of all good government was a hot chop and plenty of claret; but, in saying so, he did no more than re-echo the burden of the old song, translated into more modern and fashionable language—

"Back and side go bare, go bare;  
Both foot and hand go cold;  
But belly, God send thee good ale enough,  
Whether it be new or old!"

Ah! he was a splendid fellow that indited this song, and so was that other clerical wight who broached the idea—

"When I go to bed, then of heaven I dream;  
But that is fat pullets and clotted cream;"—

A real Devonian or Somersettian parson; but they spoke from the heart,—or rather from the stomach, jolly, good comfortable souls as they were, and their words go right home to the stomachs and hearts of all, wherever the British lion has the privilege of lashing his tail or shaking his mane.

As to eating, *quoad comedendum constipandumque*, we keep up the Bœotic charter to the very letter and spirit of all its provisions; and in the moistening of our national clay, we certainly show a praiseworthy diligence; we wet it like bricks—and that's a fact, too; but as for doing these important matters in proper places and at proper times, there, *selon nous*, we are lamentably behind-hand with the rest of the unfledged, articulate-speaking, bipedal genus to which we have the honour to belong. And as it has been lately shown in our pages, as clear as the sun at noonday, (the truth of which beautiful and rare simile, gentle reader, varies considerably with the place where you may happen to use it—from Shoe Lane, London, to the Strada di Toledo at Naples,) or as clear as—clear can be, that John Bull does not know how to put a decent coat on his back when he goes out to dinner; so now it is to be essayed to show, that for all he may think otherwise, John has not got a comfortable, sensible house to go and eat his dinner in; that he does not know what a regular, good, snug, and snoozy chimney-corner is; and that, when he stumbles up-stairs to bed, he generally puts himself into a hole, but not what can be called a room—a real comfortable, respectable bed-room. We do not say that he might not have done so once—we know, on the contrary, that he did; all we contend for is, that he does not do so now, and we don't think he is in the right way to mend; and, as John is a special friend of ours, and so is Mrs Bull, and all the little Bulls, who will be big, full-grown Bulls some day or other, and as we like to make ourselves useful to the present generation, and hope to be agreeably remembered by posterity, therefore do we intend to take the Bull by the horns, and see if we cannot wheedle, coax, pull, push, or bully him into our way of thinking about rooms and houses.

It is set down as a national axiom at the present day, that we are at the very head of the

world in arts, arms, manufactures, laws, constitution, Church and State, literature, science—(any thing else?—there must be something more; to be sure there is)—money and railroads! and he's no true Englishman, Sir, he's not one of the British public, if he does not think so. We see it in print every day—it must be true; we've read as much in the *Times*, *Herald*, *Chronicle*, *Post*, &c.—for the last twenty years, and what all the world says must be so. Be it so, honest John, we honour your Bœotic patriotism; it's a glorious principle, old boy, and 'twill carry you bravely through all the thicks and thins of life—"sed audi alteram partem"—do put your nose outside your own door a bit, now that railroads are so plenty and cheap—do go abroad a little—just go and look at some of those foreigners in their own outlandish countries, and then think quietly over these matters again. Besides, who's afraid of change now-a-days? Are we not making all these splendid inroads into the country, ay, and into the constitution?—are we not going to have corn and cattle, and silk and cotton, and butter and cheese, and brandy to boot, all brought to our own doors for nothing? We'll leave these other things alone—we will not argue about them now; let us talk about bricks and mortar, and suchlike, and see if we cannot open your eyes to the light of reason and common sense.

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Now, what is the end, object, and use of all habitations, houses, tenements, and premises whatsoever in this same united kingdom of our's, and in this glorious nineteenth century, except to shelter a man from the cold, or the heat, or the damp, or the frost, or the wind, whichever may come upon him, or any part or parcel of the same; and further, to give him room to hoard up, stow away, display, use, and enjoy all his goods, chattels, and other appurtenances; and further, wherein to sit down with a friend or friends, as the case may be, to any description of meal that his purse can or cannot pay for, and then to give him room and opportunity either to spiate for the good of digestion, or to put his India-silk handkerchief over his bald pate, and snore away till tea-time? This being the very acme of comfort, the very object of all labour, the only thing that makes life worth living for, in the opinion of three-fourths of Queen Victoria's loving subjects, it follows, that if they would spend that money they love so much in a rational and truly economical way, they should bear such objects as these constantly in sight. This brings us, therefore, to the enunciating, for the second time, that great fundamental law of human operations—usefulness first, ornament afterwards, or both together if you please; but not, as we see the law interpreted now-a-days—ornament and show in the first place, and usefulness and comfort put in the background. It is this backward reading of the great rule of common sense, that makes men so uncommonly senseless as we often find them to be; and when it comes in the way of building, it turns us into the least architectural and worst built nation of any in this part of Christendom. Taking into account the cost of erecting buildings, and the relative value of money in different countries, there are no towns in Europe where so little good building and so small a degree of architectural effect are produced as in those of "old England." Poets and home tourists have affected to fall into rhapsodies of admiration at the beautiful neatness of our small country towns, at the unparalleled magnificence of London, at the ostentatious splendour of our commercial cities, Liverpool, Bristol, &c. This is all very well for home readers, and for home reputation; for there is nothing like a lot of people congregating themselves into a nation, and then be-lauding themselves and their doings up to the skies—there is nobody to say nay, and they can easily write themselves down the first people on earth. The fault is not peculiar to England; that vapouring coxcomb Crapaud is full of such nonsense; and that long-haired, sallow-cheeked, quid-chewing Jonathan, is still more ridiculously fond of indulging in it: but because it is one of the most offensive weaknesses of human nature, it is not therefore the less worthy of reprehension, and the sooner we try to throw off such false and morbid patriotism the better. The three towns in Great Britain, which, taking them in the general average of their common buildings, their citizens' houses, can be called the best-looking ones, are these:—first and fairest is dear Auld Reekie, next is Cheltenham, and last is Bath. The great metropolis we put out of the comparison, for metropolitical cities should be compared together; but Edinburgh is *facile princeps* in the list of all habitable places in this island; Cheltenham is at the head of all watering-places, and pleasure-places—(Brighton, Leamington, Clifton, &c., are certainly not equal to it in point of good architecture and general effect;) and Bath, now that its fashionable name has somewhat declined, may be looked on as the leader of our second-rate quiet kind of towns. Were we to make a fourth class of comparisons we would take our cathedral cities, and place Oxford at the head, before Worcester, Exeter, and so forth. But we revert to our first proposition; and were we about to show a foreigner those places wherewith we could desire him to compare his own distant cities, we should take him to the three above mentioned. It is in these three places that the great essentials of use and ornament seem to us to be the most happily combined; attempts are made at them in other quarters with various degrees of success, but here their union has been the most decided. Bear our opinion in mind, gentle reader; and, when next you go upon your travels, see if what we assert be not correct.

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The style of house we most object to is Johnson's—you don't know Johnson? Why, don't you recollect the little bustling man that used to live at the yellow house in the City-Road, and that you were sure to meet every day, about eleven o'clock, in Threadneedle Street, or by the Bank Buildings? Well, he has been so successful in the drug line that he has left the City-Road, and has moved into the far west, Paragon Place, Bryanstone Square; and, not content with this, has taken a house at Brighton, on the Marine-Parade, for his "Sunday out," as he terms it. He is a worthy fellow at bottom, but he has no more taste than the pump; and while he thinks he inhabits the *ne plus ultra* of all good houses, lives in reality in ramshackle, rickety, ugly, and inconvenient dens. The house in Paragon Place is built of brick, like all

others; but the parlour story is stuccoed to look like stone, the original brick tint being resumed at the levels of the kitchen below and the drawing-room above. There are two windows to the said drawing-room—one to the dining-room; and so on in proportion for the four stories of which the edifice consists: but the back is a curious medley of ins and outs, and ups and downs; single windows to dark rooms, and a dirty little bit of a back-yard, with a square plot of mud at the end of it, called "the garden;" the cook says the "airey" is in front; and Johnson knows that his wine-cellar is between the dust-bin and the coal-hole under the street. If you knock at the door you are let in to a passage too wide for one, but not wide enough for two, and you find at once the whole penetralia of the habitation lying open to your vision; dining-room door on right hand, parlour door behind it; kitchen door under the stairs, and garden door at the end of the passage. You know the man's whole household arrangements in a minute; and if he is not in the drawing-room, (but Johnson never does sit there, his wife keeps it for company,) it is of no use his pretending not to be at home, when you have your hand within a few feet of the locks of each door on the ground-story. And then, though the passage is dark, for there is only the fan-light over the entrance, and the long round-headed window at the first landing, all full of blue and orange glass, you know that dinner is preparing; for you see the little mahogany slab turned up to serve as a table near the parlour door, and such a smell comes up the kitchen stairs, that were you at the cook's elbow you could not be more in the thick of it. Well, they tell you he's in, and you walk up-stairs to the drawing-room; one room in front and the best bed-room behind; and Mr and Mrs Johnson's up-stairs again over the drawing-room; and the children's room behind that—you can hear them plain enough; and above all, no doubt, is the maid's room, and the servant-boy's who let you in; not so, the boy sleeps in the kitchen, and the front attic is kept for one of Johnson's clerks, for you might have seen him going up the second pair; and if he wasn't going to his bed-room what business had he up-stairs at all? So that, though you have been in the house only five minutes, you know all about it as well as if Mortice the builder had lain the plans on the table before you. Well, Johnson won a picture in the *Art-Union* some time since, and determined to stick it up in the drawing-room, against the wall fronting the windows; so up came the carpenter; and, as the picture was large, away went a ten-penny nail into the wall; and so it did go in, and not only in, but through the wall, for it was only half a brick thick; and, what with repeated hammerings, the bricks became so loose that the picture could not be safely hung there. So it was ordered to be placed against the wall opposite the fireplace—the wall of the next house in fact—and the same operation was going on, when old Mrs Wheedle, the next door neighbour, sent in her compliments to beg that Mr Johnson would have some regard for her hanging bookshelves, the nails of which had been all loosened by his battering-ram, and the books were threatening to fall on her tableful of china—she called it "cheyney"—below. Again, on the other side lives, or rather lodges, Signor Bramante, the celebrated violoncello, and he practises in what he has made the back drawing-room, equivalent to Johnson's best bed; but, the other day, when Smith came up from Birmingham to see Johnson, he could get no sleep for the first half of the night, Bramante having occasion to practise till nearly one o'clock, for the *Stabat Mater* of next morning's concert. So much for the substantiality of Johnson's town-house. His rooms, too, to our mind, are of bad proportions, and most inconveniently situated; they are so low that it is impossible to ventilate them properly; he has always a flight or two of stairs to go up when he retires to bed, and his servants might as well live in a treadmill, for the quantity of step-treading that they have to perform. There is no possibility of sitting in any one room out of a draft from either door or window, and there is not a single good cupboard in the whole house. As for ornament, there is none outside save the brass-knocker on the street door, for the windows are plain oblong holes in the walls; and, as for the inside, the only attempts at it are the cheap and meagre stucco patterns of the cornices, and the somewhat tawdry designs of the paper-hangings. He pays seventy pounds a-year rent for it, however, and sets himself down as a lucky man, because with his rates, &c., he comes within the hundred.

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After all, when he goes to Brighton he is not much better off; though, as he likes fresh air, he gets plenty of it there, through every window, door, and chimney of the house—for there the bow-windowed projection in front is made of wood, coated over with tiles, to look like bricks. There he never attempted any picture-hanging fancies, the partition-walls would stand no such liberties being taken with them; there he cannot complain of not knowing what is going on in the town, for he can hear all that is said in the next house, by merely putting his ear to the wall. The most serious drawback, however, to his comfort in his marine residence, is, that while there he can never have a good-sized dinner-party, inasmuch as his landlord made it a stipulation of the lease, that not more than twelve people should be allowed to meet in the drawing-room at the same time, and that no dancing whatever should be attempted within the dwelling. The Brighton man only built the house for fifteen years; whereas the London one was more provident, he guaranteed his for thirty.

Johnson's bed-rooms are, even the best of them, of moderate size, while the small ones are very small indeed; and into these small rooms he has stuck large four-post beds, that make them darker and more inconvenient than they naturally are, and leave room for hardly any of the usual evolutions of the toilette. What, indeed, with the big chests of drawers, like the big sideboard in the dining-room, it is as much as you can do to get about conveniently between the bed and the side walls; though one good thing the builder and furnisher have certainly effected—you can open the bed-room door, and you can stir the fire, and you can almost pull up the window-blind, without quitting the protection of the counterpane; and this

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on a cold morning is something.

Mrs Johnson says that the arrangement of the area gate in Paragon Place is perfection itself; for she can see the butcher's boy as he comes for his orders of a morning, while sitting at the breakfast-table, through the green blinds, and that the policeman dares not stop there, during daylight at least—she should be much too sharp upon him; so that the cook is twice as punctual as when they lived in the city. True; these are points of household management that have their weight; but then Mrs J. forgets that the dustman rings his bell there at most inconvenient hours, that the dirty coalheaver spoils the pavement once a month, and that it is a perpetual running up and down those stone steps, to shut the gate and keep dogs and beggars out, all day. However, the railings and the gate are not part of the house; and, if people like to have their back-doors under their eyes, why, there is no accounting for their taste.

We could not help thinking, the last time we went over to Paris, that our friend Dubois, the wine-merchant—him from whom we get our Chambertin, and who has about the same relative income as Johnson—was much better housed. His cellars are down at the Halle aux Vins, like every body else's; and he is shut up there in his little box of a counting-house nine hours every day of his life; but he lives, now that he has moved from the Marais, in the Rue Neuve des Mathurins, which leads out of the Chaussée d'Antin. Here he has a *premier*, as they call it in Paris—or a first-floor, as we should term it in London; and he pays 2000 francs, or £80 a-year for it, with about 100 francs of rates and taxes. For this he has two drawing-rooms, a dining-room, a study, six bed-rooms, kitchens, and cellars; some of the rooms look into the street, the rest run round the ample court-yard of the house. To get at him you go up a flight of stone stairs that four people can easily mount abreast; when you enter his door, from the little hall paved with stone and marble, you pass from the sitting-rooms one into the other—for they all form a suite; while the bed-rooms lie mostly along a corridor, into which they open. Once up the two flights of stairs that lead to the doorway, and the mounting, whether for masters or servants, is done with. The kitchen is at the furthest end, away from the other rooms, and is approached by a back staircase from the court-yard. There are no beggars nor dogs, nor butcher's boys, nor other bores, except what the concierge at the gateway allows to come in; and though the street is rather noisy, being in a fashionable quarter, yet the court-yard is perfectly quiet, and free from all plagues of organs, singers, &c. The rooms are, one and all, *twelve* feet high; their Windows down to the ground; the floors of solid oak, polished till you can slide on them; the doors are in carved oak, painted white and richly gilt; the chimney-pieces are all marble—none of the flimsy thin slabs of Paragon Place, but good solid blocks, cut out from the red quarries of the Pyrenees; with polished brass dogs in the fireplaces, and large logs of flaming wood across them. The drawing-rooms are hung in silk on the walls; the other rooms are tastefully papered. There is abundance of good furniture, which, from the ample size of the apartments—the principal room being thirty feet by twenty—sets off the proportions of the dwelling without blocking it up. Dubois has not a four-post bed in his house; no more has any man in France. They are all those elegant and comfortable things which we know a French bed to be; and the long sweeping folds of the red and white curtains that come down to the floor from the ceiling, form a graceful contrast to the curves of the other furniture. The walls are all of good solid stone, two feet thick on the outside; the house has been built these fifty years, and is of a better colour than when first put up; the windows are richly ornamented in their frames without, and form commodious recesses for settees within. You may dine twenty, and dance forty people here! or you may throw your rooms open, give a *soirée*, (no boiled mutton affair, remember; but music, dancing, and cards; coffee, ice, and champagne,) and cram each room full of people, and the landlord will never fear for the safety of his building.

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Now, there are three other sets of apartments in the same house, and above Dubois, not so lofty as his, but nearly as commodious, and all with their proportionate degree of elegance and solid comfort. Dubois has not got a house at Dieppe, it is true; but then, like all Frenchmen, he is so absorbed in his dear Paris, that he hardly cares to stir out from it. If ever he does, he runs off to Vichy or Mont Dor for a fortnight in the *saison des eaux*, and he is contented.

But then, you will say, Dubois lives, after all, in another man's house—he is only a lodger; whereas Johnson dwells in what the law calls his "castle." Be it so; for the same money we would rather have the positive advantages of the one, *en société*, than the tasteless and inconvenient isolation of the other.

And, after all, is Johnson more decidedly at home in his own house, than Dubois is in his "*appartement*?" What does it matter whether you have people living on each side of you, with their street doors so close to yours that their wives or their daughters pop up their noses above the green blinds every time a cab or a jarvey drives up; or whether you have people who come in at the same gateway with yourself, and go up the same stairs, it is true, and who live either above or below you, and who can, if they like, run out on their landings to see who is thumping at your door panels? Upon our conscience as honest folks, who have lived in half the capitals of Europe, to say nothing of those of our own islands, we never found the slightest intrusion on privacy arising from the collecting of several families in the same house, in Paris, Rome, Florence, or Vienna. All we know is, and we often think of it agreeably, that these continental houses seemed to us like so many social colleges, and that the having a set of rooms with a common staircase, used to put us in mind of our old Christ

Church, and of Garden Court in the Temple. 'Tis true, that in the one set of rooms we had no fellow-inmates except our dog, and every now and then a joyous set of fellows that would have made any place tolerable; that in the other there was our old laundress and bed-maker, and our "boy," and for a short time our "man," and actually, upon our honour it is true, we did once see a client in them! whereas, in our continental suites of chambers, we are *en famille* with wife, bairns, and "bounes" to boot, and that we did *parfois* try the elasticity or the stretching powers of our *camere* pretty considerably, and did cram therein no end of guests. But on the whole, we have fairly made the experiment *in propriâ personâ*; we have weighed well friend Johnson's castellated independence, and *l'ami* Dubois's social contiguation;—and, rent for rent, we prefer the latter. If we must live with two neighbours within a few feet of us, we would rather have one under us on the ground floor, and one above us on the second, and ourselves in the midst on the first, and all three clubbing together to live in a little palazzo:—we would rather have this, than be crammed in between Mr A and Mr B, each of us in a third or fourth rate kind of house, with poor thin walls, small low rooms, dirty areas, melancholy gardens, shabby-genteel fronts, ugly backs, and little comfort.

It may be said, and justly, that the idea of a man living in his own castle is applicable only to that state of society when large towns do not exist, inasmuch as the idea can be nothing more than an idea, and can hardly ever approach to a reality, the moment men begin to congregate themselves together in cities. Doubtless, it is indispensable to all our notions of comfort, and of the due independence of social life—it is, indeed, one of the main elements of the constitution of a family, that a certain degree of isolation should be maintained and respected; but we submit to the candid observer, that the only difference between English cities and continental ones in this respect is, that Englishmen aim at "horizontal" independence, foreigners at "vertical." Englishmen form their line of location every man shoulder to shoulder, or rather, elbows in ribs; foreigners mostly get upon one another's backs and heads, and form a living pyramid like the clown and boys at Astley's. By this arrangement, however, it comes to pass, that for the same number of inhabitants much more ground is occupied by an English than by a continental town; and also, that each single dwelling is of mean, or, at the most, moderate architectural appearance, the great condition of elevation being wanting, and the power of ornamentation being generally kept closely under by the limitation of each individual's pecuniary resources. Practically, we contend, there is quite as much comfort (we think, indeed, in many cases more) in the continental manner of arranging houses as in the English one: while the former allows of and encourages architectural display, and indeed requires a much more solid system of construction; but the latter leads to the running up of cheap, slight, shabby-genteel houses, and represses all attempts at external ornament as superfluous from its expense. Upon this subject, we appeal to the experience of all who have dwelt for any length of time on the Continent, not to those who merely run across the water for six weeks or so, and come back as blind as they went; but rather to those who have given themselves time and opportunity enough for the film of national prejudice to wear away from before their eyes, and have been at length able to use that natural good sense with which most Englishmen are blessed by Providence. To them we would say, that the plan of several families tenanting one large dwelling, clubbing together, as it were, for the erection of a handsome and commodious edifice, and just so far sacrificing their independence as to consent occasionally to run up against their neighbour in the common court-yard, or perchance to see his coat-tails whisking by their door up or down stairs, is the more sensible of the two. There is practically a great saving of walls, of spaces of support, as the architects term it, in this plan: great saving in roofing; and, from the mere dimensions of the building, a certain degree of grandeur is necessarily given to it. This plan requires the edifice to be built court-fashion, and sometimes will admit of a good garden being appended: it also requires that a most useful servant, a porter, in a suitable lodge, should be kept by the little social community; and every body knows what an useful body the porter, or *concierger*, as the French call him, may be made. Just as bachelors join together in clubs to the great promotion of their individual comfort, and certainly to the outward advantage of a city, so should families join together for their civic residences; they would all derive benefit from their mutual support, and the appearance of a town would be immediately improved.

We do not say that any joining together of houses should take place in country, nor even in suburban residences. No; there let every man have a house to himself; the foundation of the whole system is quite different: and there is also a certain class of persons who should always have separate dwellings in a town; but to these subjects we will revert on another occasion. We will only allude to one objection which the fastidious Englishman will be sure to raise: if you live under the same roof with one or more families he will say, you must necessarily be acquainted with all the members of the same: you must, in fact, know what they are going to have for dinner, and thus must be acquainted with all the secrets of their household economy. Well, so one would undoubtedly expect to be the case: unfortunately, however, for the theory, the practical working of the thing is just the contrary: we do not know of any town where so much isolation is kept up as in Paris, though there men crowd together under the same roof like bees into the common hive. We have lived ourselves, between the epochs of our bachelor or embryo state, and that of our full-blown paternal maturity, on every floor of a Parisian house, from the *entresol* just over the stable, where we could lean out of our window of a morning, smoke our hookah, and talk to the "Jockey Anglais" who used to rub down our bit of blood, up to the *Septième*, where in those celestial



regions we could walk about upon our little terrace, look over the gardens of the Tuileries, ('twas in the Rue de Rivoli, gentle reader!) all the way to St Cloud and Meudon, one of the sweetest and gayest prospects in the world, by the by, and hold soft communings either with the stars or our next neighbours—(but thereon hangs a tale!) and yet never did we know the name even of any other soul in the house, nor they ours. Oh! we have had many an adventure up and down that interminable staircase, when we used to skip up two hundred and twenty steps to get to our eyry; many a blow-up with our old porter: she was a good soul, too, was old Madame Nicaise; many a time have we seen flounces and redingotes coming in and out of doors as we went up or down; but actually we cannot call to mind the reality, the living vision of a single individual in that vasty mansion. On the contrary, we used to think them all a set of unsociable toads, and, in our days of raw Anglicism, we used to think that we might be just as well called in to "assist" at some of the charming soirées which we used to hear of from the porter: we did not then know that a Parisian likes to be "chez lui" as he calls it, quite as much as an Englishman. We should have lived on in that house, gentle reader, *ad infinitum*; but one day on going up-stairs, we saw in ominous letters, on a new brass plate, "au troisième, de la cour," LEGRAND, TAILLEUR. Horror of horrors! 'twas our own man! we had not paid him for two years: we gave *congé* that evening, and were off to the Antipodes.

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## "ROGUES IN OUTLINE."

### BIRBONE I.

SIGNOR RUSCA.

"Rusca the lawyer, an exceeding knave."—POPE.

"Currunt verba licet, manus est velocior illis  
Nondum linguâ suâ, dextra peregit opus."—MARTIAL.

A more knowing man in his way than Signor Avocato Rusca R—— it would not be easy to find; so first-rate is he in his style, though his style may not be quite first-rate! His father intended him for a lawyer, whilst nature qualified him for a cheat; and, as there seemed to be nothing absolutely incompatible in the prosecution of these two professions,

"He sought, without offence to either,  
How he might deal in both together;"

in doing which for a season, he accumulated much useful knowledge, besides laying the foundation of his future fortune. Whether in his earlier career he followed the practice of his learned predecessor, Paulus, and sought, like him, to augment his fees by pleading in a hired Sardonyx,<sup>[74]</sup> we have not heard; but his passion for jewels, none who have seen him without his gloves (and we never saw him otherwise) can for a moment doubt.

"Tight girt with gems, in massive mountings set,  
Beneath their weight his tumid fingers sweat."

When he had come to find that his dealings as *dealer* better repaid the cost of his earlier education than the teasing uncertainties of the law, a sense of filial duty perhaps, and of inclination certainly, led him ultimately to give up all his time and talents, together with whatever little money he had accumulated, *legally* or *otherwise*, to the acquisition of practical archæology. He had seen enough of antiquarian transactions already, to convince him of the unlimited credulity of a certain class of connoisseurs—this knowledge was important, and he began to apply it presently. Having made himself a competent scholar, (he could quote Horace, and had Seneca's<sup>[75]</sup> moral precepts at his *finger-ends*;) being plausible in speech, and knowing the market-price of every ancient relic by rote, he could not but succeed; he succeeded accordingly—and is now considered throughout Italy as a *mezzo galant'uomo* of first-rate abilities and tact!

By putting himself early under efficient tutelage at *Rome*, and doing as they did *there*, he soon outstripped most of his masters in his art; the art, that is, of buying "uncertain merchandise," as low as duplicity can buy of ignorance and want; and of re-selling at as high a price as credulity will pay to cunning.<sup>[76]</sup> His unusual astuteness made it really diverting, when you knew your man, to have dealings with him, otherwise it was likely to turn out an expensive amusement. Our acquaintance with him began in the full maturity of his powers, when his mode of cross-questioning false witnesses who brought him *soi-disant* antiques to sell, and his lawyer-like mode of eliciting the truth, were capital. How he would lie! and what lungs he had to lie with! *immensa cavi spirant mendacia folles!* What action! what volubility of tongue! what anecdotes! and then only to see how he would look a *false* Augustus in the

face, and discern that wily sovereign from a thousand counterfeits; or when a sly forger brought him a modern gold coin, carefully coated in mould—how he knew by *instinct* that it was an imposture, and would not condescend to exhume and expose the fraud. Like all knaves, he would take incredible pains to prove that there was not a more honest man than himself breathing—and when he considered himself to have quite established *this* on his own showing, he would sometimes speak with "honest indignation" of men who were palpable rogues: assuring you all the while, that it gave him pain thus to bear testimony against his neighbour, but then every honest man owed it to his Pope and to the people to expose Birbonism. On one occasion, when he had a large batch of *silver Emperors* for sale, we said we must see about their *prices* in Mionnet.<sup>[77]</sup> Upon which, with a look of frightened honesty, he asked us if "we really knew what we were talking of?" "Perfectly," we replied. "Well, sir," continued he, "Mionnet was a Frenchman; did *you* ever know an honest Frenchman?" "Not as many as we could have wished to know; but we had known *some*." "We had in that case," he confessed, "the advantage over him—*he never had!* As to Mionnet's book, it was written, at least so thought Rusca, with a frightfully corrupt view, being published during the French occupancy of Italy, for the joint benefit of Mr M. and the *Bibliothèque du Roi*. I admit," quoth our lawyer, "that the French only entertained a natural wish (nay, sir, as far as the *mood* was *optative* merely I commend it as a highly laudable one) in desiring to have the best monetary collection in Europe; but was it honourable, or just, to pledge this Mionnet to affix such prices for rare and better specimens, (such as I have the honour to show you here!) when both they and he knew them to be preposterous, and then to launch forth this misguiding book as a guide? This precious book, sir, was in the hands of all M—'s myrmidons, and the only book of appeal then extant; *this*—(thumping his fist, by way of emphasis, upon our copy of it)—*this*, which has been the ruin of Italy, and is the degradation of France! I only wish you could hear my friend *Sestini* (quel *numen* degli numismatici) inveigh against this man and his prices, with less reluctance, I assure you, than I feel in doing it, and much more powerfully too, because he knows so much more; but come now, if you *won't* think me vain, I will show you the difference between honesty and dishonesty. I wish it was of some one else I was about to speak, but truth compels me here to introduce my own name. Last week that pleasant countryman of yours, Lord X—,—do you know him? (we did for a goose!)—comes to buy some gold coins of me; one of the lot he fixed upon was a Becker, and so of course only worth what it weighed. He had purchased it for fifty Napoleons of me, and we went to his bankers together for the payment. There, having duly received the money, I requested him to let me see once more the coins he had just purchased of me—there might have been a dozen—and instantly picking out the Becker, I pushed him over his fifty Napoleons again, and said, "Milord, I cannot let you have that coin." "Why?" says he, alarmed and in anger. "Because *it is false, Milord!*—and I was quite grieved," added our ingenuous informant, "to see how much Lord X— was disconcerted at this disclosure." "You did not let so pretty a coin go a-begging, I dare say?" said we with laudable curiosity and interest. "No, two days ago in comes Coco—you know Coco?" we smiled. Know Coco! did we know St Peter's? did we know the Pope? for whom did Rusca take us, we wonder? "He came," prosecuted Signor R—, "to see if I had by me any first-rate imitations from the antique, for he knew a gentleman who might fancy something of the sort; and, as soon as he had set eyes upon this Becker, he must have *it*; *it* was just the thing to tempt Lord X—; and so I let him have it for *five times* its supposititious value, but not for a *tenth* of what Lord X— would, I knew, buy it for a second time as an undoubted antique; and lest that rogue should at any time take liberties with my name, (for he is capable of anything,) and say he had been duped by Avvocato Rusca into the purchase of a false thing for a true, here is a document with his name to it, which I then and there caused him to sign, which *proves* the contrary. I met him to-day, and he seems much pleased with Lord X—'s liberality, who has bought the coin!" The above is a sample of Avvocato Rusca's *confessions*, and of his somewhat original notions of honesty! Once, however, our honest friend forgot himself in a purchase we made of him. And no wonder, for we had also forgotten ourselves; for the time when we transacted business was the gloaming, and the room being dark had lent its aid to the deception. We had also an engagement to dine out, and it was getting late, and we were in a hurry. But that same night, on returning from our party, we had looked again at what we had bought, and then, first perceiving our mistake, determined, if possible, to repair it by repairing early next morning to the Minerva Hotel, there to surprise him in his dressing-gown, by which bold *coup-de-main* (having pre-arranged in our own minds what we should take away with us in lieu of what we brought back) we carried our point at last!—and hardly carried it; for while the *new* batch and the *old* confronted each other on his table, the one being fair, the other like himself, ill-favoured in appearance, we saw his restless glance move wistfully from the one to the other. Three times in one minute his countenance fell; he coughed, he hesitated, he *cospetto'd* once, he wished we had made known our mind over night; he *cospetto'd* again, and finally was about to reconsider the affair, when, not to be foiled by a rogue, we threw it upon *his honour*, (of which he had not a particle,) and, by the extravagance of such a compliment, prevailed. "He had never cheated us before," (which was strictly true; but the reason, which the reader will have no difficulty to guess, we did not think it necessary or prudent to assign;) would he, after so long an acquaintance with us, change his tactics now?—we need not ask him—we were "persuasissimi" that he would not, neither did he! We removed the temptation out of his way as soon as we could, and felt, as we went home, that we had achieved that morning as *great* a piece of diplomacy, and as difficult, as ever did Lord Palmerston when he was minister for our foreign affairs; and grateful were we to Apollo, the god of medicine, who had for once assisted us to overreach Mercury, the god of rogues.

## BIRBONE II.

Coco.

—"Adspice quantâ  
Voce negat quæ sit ficti constantia vultûs!"—Juv. *Sat.* vii.

We cut our pen afresh to say a few words concerning that arch-impostor, that "Fourbum emperor," Coco the coiner. Had it not been for the *prosperity* of the St Angelo ministry at Naples, that three-headed Cerberus of iniquity, of whom the people,

"Tre Angeli a noi più recan danno  
Che trenta orrendi Demoni non fanno,"

had it not been that *their* success seemed to militate against such an inference, we might have supposed that Coco, poor, starving, and in utter disesteem, had been thus let to live, to prove by a sad contrast the truth of the old adage—that "honesty is the best policy." Coco is the very impersonation of wiliness and subtlety—a fox amongst foxes—the Metternich of his craft;—he has cheated every dealer in turn, and by turns has learnt to know the internal arrangements of every prison throughout the kingdom. By sheer force of talent he has been able, like Napoleon, to maintain his cause single-handed against a host of rivals who would crush him, and cannot; and, whenever he is not *closeted elsewhere*, he is either holding a privy council with St Angelo, or transacting business with his Serene Highness of Salerno, against whom (*par parenthese*) we have not a word to say. Cicero's oration for Milo is not better than Coco's oration for Coco; and to hear him plead it personally for the first time, is certainly entertaining. He seems to have taken *that* oration for his model, setting out, as Tully for that client did, with a staunch negation of the charges alleged against him; but embarrassed, as he proceeds in his harangue, to maintain himself strictly honest, he gradually throws off reserve, converts your room into a court of justice, and, confronting imaginary accusers, endeavours to shake their testimony by making out that they are just as great rogues as himself! "Coco! say over again just half a dozen of *those sentences*—you know where to begin—that you have so often been the habit of indulging me with; not the *whole* speech, Coco, if you please." "Eccellenza, no! I was saying, then, that I was in advance of my age, and that, if I had been born in France or England in place of Naples, I should not now have been called Coco the cheat, the thief, the *birbone*, but *Sir* Coco—or Monsieur le Marquis de Cocon. Look at the things I have done, sir, and see what they have done for me. No sooner have I devised some new *galanteria*—elegant, classical, and sure to take—when it is enough to whisper '*Coco's*,' to bring it into discredit: a great outcry is raised against me as its author, and, like a second Galileo, I am cast into prison! Knowledge is not power at Naples; for my countrymen know that I have knowledge enough when I mulct their ignorance, as I sometimes do. It is *too much* knowledge that has brought me into all my scrapes and difficulties! Do you doubt it, signor? Why, then, was I *first* sent to prison?—why, but because my mint was frequently preferred to that of his majesty here, and he feared lest *my* Ferdinands should drive *his* Ferdinands out of the market! Had I done the same in England, I suppose they would, on discovering my talent, have made me master of their mint, in place of sending me to expiate my offence in a dungeon—*basta* about that affair!—but when I had given up making Ferdinands, and took to minting *Domitians*, what business was that to the King of Naples, I wonder, unless indeed I had put *his* name to that tyrant's *head*? Yet he sent me a second time to prison for it, notwithstanding for which in return I have taken the liberty of sending him to a warmer place. See, here's a pretty baioccho—Ferdinand's head on one side, and a '*concordia-Augustorum*' on the other, where the devil and he are holding hands over a lighted altar, he wanting to withdraw his hand,—but the devil's clutch is too tight for that!—whilst a little imp is putting a bit of live coal into his palm, and another is doing the same under his right foot! For four elegant horses in bronze, of which *I forgot the age*, and sold them to St Angelo as *antiques*, I was sent to prison again, and a third time. Though, when it suited *him* last year to sell off certain old horseflesh that had been many years on his hands as *young*, *his* purchaser of course got no redress. Out upon that old Birbone! with his galleries, his harems, and his horses;—but he eats too much, and is never well,—a great consolation to me, who might else have repined at his successes; but when I compare my *health* with his, I bless the good St Januariò who keeps me poor! Again, I ought to be grateful to our good Saint that, though men may pretend that I lie and cheat, (which perhaps I do a little,) you never heard any body say of *me*, what all the world says of *HIM*, that I am *cruel*,—*mai*, you never heard that; and if I make money occasionally in some way that it don't *sound* well to speak of, what then? I never hoard it up, the lottery office is my banker, and it circulates again presently. And as to cheating, if we look it boldly in the face, and see in what company we cheat, why should I be ashamed of what all the world does here from King Ferdinand, to Beppo Tuzzi of the Mergellina? Didn't Ferdinand try hard to cheat you last year in the sulphur question? and would he not have succeeded, too, unless you had thought of mixing up the sulphur with some nitre and charcoal, and of converting it into a *question of gunpowder*!" "That's true, Coco! and now tell us of your last device for raising the wind." "Here it is," and Coco has presented us with a small opaque lachrymatory, glistening all over in the exquisite iridescence of old glass. "Was it not

beautiful?" he enquired. "Yes; and ancient as well," replied we; "the decomposition of the glass showed that, and the elegant and classical form of the vessel showed it too." "Well! he would manufacture just such another before us, if we would like to see it done!" "Comè? we should be delighted!" "*Dunque e fatto subito*, now that I have *shown how* it is to be effected—just as when that great sea-captain, *quel famoso Cristoforo Colombo*"—"Yes, yes! Coco, never mind about *him* just now." "Ah, your excellency, I perceive, knows the story! Well, here you see is a small clay vessel moulded from the antique; here a small packet which I untie; and here a little gum-water in a phial." We require no other materials—a child might do the rest. In the packet now open, we remark a quantity of a beautiful, many-coloured glass-dust, in the midst of which appear thousands of filmy flakes that have been scraped off from the sides of old lachrymatories, and present every hue of colour. In a twinkling Coco has *gummed* the vessel all over, and in less than a minute he has rolled round its sides a rainbow robe of the most rich and glowing colours, while not a speck of clay remains visible by which to make out the fraud! "*Eccolo!*" says he, placing the beautiful fabrication in our hand; "*Eccolo!* do you think that for such a work as *that* I ought to have been sent for the twentieth time to prison?" Fearful of having our moral sense dazzled *by the glass* into making some indiscreet admission, we now change the theme. We had heard that morning a good story; it was "the case of Coco *versus* Casanuova," in which the cleverness of the former rogue had prevailed against his equally astute rival, who had himself been so obliging as to favour us with the full particulars thereof, in words like the following:—"Coco—(you know Coco?)—(Coco and I smiled, for we knew each other perfectly,)—"Well, he presents himself one day before me in a shop in the Piazza degli Orefici, bringing in a coin in his hand, which he throws down carelessly on the counter, asking me what price he should put upon it? On taking it up, I see 'Υελιων,' which, with the common type of the Velian Lion, as we all know, *vale poco*; but, in place of a lion, this had the Athenian *diota* (or two-eared *amphora*) upon the field of the reverse. Knowing that the rogue was eyeing me to see how I liked it, in order that he might charge for it accordingly, I asked him doubtfully whether *he* was quite sure it was genuine, (*entertaining no doubt on that subject myself*.) 'Rather an ingenious question for a profound connoisseur like Casanuova, to put to a poor devil who has the good fortune for once in his life to buy something good. *You* have no doubt about it; but if you say you have, I will take it to Tuzzi, and get his opinion first.' Fearing to lose it if he did, I confessed that I believed it genuine, and then asked him his price. 'He had *refused* fifty; we might have it at seventy dollars.' Of course I 'was astonished,' and offered 'forty—Would that do?' No! *honest* men had but one price; seventy he had said—seventy, he repeated, was the price.' I bought it, and paid for it and took it home, and consulted my books, and *there* there was no such type to be seen—learned friends who called upon me had never seen its fellow—it was pronounced an *inedited* coin, as indeed it turned out afterwards to be! The annual meeting of our archæological society was at hand. I determined to *memorialize* my coin, and to read my memoir at the meeting. In three weeks I had finished my labours. There were some striking conjectures in the paper, which I went early to deliver. We had waited half an hour for the Prince St Georgio. At last he came. 'Look!' said I, putting the coin into his hands, (and I said not a word beyond this.) Mightily pleased he seemed with it *at once*, looking from me to it and from it to me. I thought he was going to propose for it. At last he spoke—it was but a word; but his emphasis and accent made my ears tingle. '*Excellent!*' said he; but I was reassured on hearing him add, 'Casanuova has the luck of St Angelo, and nobody ever took him in.' Relieved by this announcement, I could now afford to be modest, and said it was but by accident that I had *first* seen the coin. '*Not first, Casanuova,*' said the prince—but second, I *believe*. I saw it *first*.' '*You!*' said I, aghast; 'you saw this coin, and did not buy it?' '*Costava!* it cost too much; besides, to tell you the truth, *Coco, who had just made it*, told me it was expressly intended for the cabinet of *quel dottissimo suo amico J. Battista Casanuova*.'" "'Tis all true," said Coco, rubbing his hands; "and I believe I can do almost any thing I *like* with any of them." "Except not to tell lies, and not to impose upon antiquaries?" "*Caro lei!* these are the very things I like to *do most*, and do accordingly."

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"What has become of Coco?" asked we of an *orefice, three years later*, on finding ourselves a second time in Naples, and nothing doubting, as he had not been to visit us, that he was doing Baron Trenck, and exercising his ingenuity in prison. We were surprised, therefore, to learn that he now kept a smart shop, and was a sort of joint householder with a respectable man, and that nothing particular had occurred to tarnish his reputation for now nearly a year! The shop we had already noticed as one of promise on the outside; for, as yet, we had not found time to visit its interior. It stood half-way up the Toledo, on the left hand side as you go to the Studii. Etruscan jars were painted on all the shutters, and bits of statues and bas-reliefs *bossaged* and projected from the house front. In face of each window was an enormous shelving tray, full of all sorts of odds and ends, from the Flood downwards, the whole under protection of a strong iron *grillage*. In one corner of the shop (we had *now* gone forth to visit it) sat a pretty young woman, in spectacles, reading Manzoni, or sleeping over him (the aforesaid spectacles prevented our noticing which) as he lay open in her lap; while on another chair, in the opposite corner, an old man, almost in his dotage, looked wistfully round his shop, not suppressing an anxious sigh when the scrutiny was done. In an inner room of *his* palace—for such, in derision of its owner, was the house called—busy in preparing and cleaning the specimens that were about to be transferred into the shop, lurked, like some keen-eyed tarantula, the industrious *Coco* himself, with such an eye to business, and such an ear, that we were no sooner turned in from the street than he, too, had turned in, and was beside us.—"Well, Coco, *bon giorrio*, &c. &c. &c., 'tis said you have

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become an *honest* man at last; how does this *new* trade answer?" "Not at all," sighed the old man behind us. "Nonsense!" rejoined Coco; "whoever heard of a man's making money all at once? Nothing stake, nothing make—there's no mending where there's no spending. '*Necesse est facere sumptum qui quærit lucrum, dice bene il Plauto.*'" "Allegro though you be, Coco, I am not. With you nothing can go ill, for you have nothing to lose, either in money or in character; but to me, who am old, bankruptcy and a prison are not matters of jest." "Nonsense, again, you are not going to prison *yet!*" "Not *at all*, I hope, Coco," said the poor little lazy woman in the corner. "If I had my 5000 ducats, and my vineyard, again, at Sorrento, that you persuaded me to sell for your *Scavi* at Calvi, which never brought me any thing but a few lamps, and *lots of lachrymatories!*" "Basta, 'tis too late to talk about what you *would do* if you had it to do over again. Let bygones be bygones. Who knows what this gentleman may come to buy of us? and he never would have come to you but from his previous acquaintance with *me*. Isn't it so, sir? Ah, there are some pretty things *there*," continued he, following our eyes into a placarded recess. "Antichi Sono?" and we look into his face; "I'd as lief sell my own flesh and blood, as any thing *here* that was not. Think, sir, of my position. I am the *responsible* head of this firm. That good old gentleman, having begun antiquities late in life, does not know much about them. The signora there has taste, plenty; but it is not a lady's business to know the prices of things she may value or take an interest in; for suppose, now, she should wish to make money by the sale of *Coco*, she would hardly know what to ask for him." The old man fidgeted; Coco shot a glance at the blue spectacles, which were raised at this sally. But the signora, who sat behind them, said nothing. "Whence came these same things?" we inquire, for on going close up to them, they seemed not unfamiliar to us. Before Coco could coin the forthcoming lie, the old man had told us whence they came. "From Baroni's shop!" adding that they had cost 700 ducats. This confirmed the story we had heard from the beginning to its end. Our clever scoundrel had contrived, it seems, to engage the old man in a speculative excavation at Calvi; from which a few lachrymatories turning up, the old man's cupidity was excited; and, on the false representations made to him by Coco, he sold his estate; left the country; and hiring the expensive shop in which we see him, *leaves Coco to stock it!* which he does by the purchase of such merchandise as *his friends* have to dispose of—"When," says he, "they don't sell them too dear!" The old man admits that his employer is very clever; but says quietly, that he has not much *fiducia* in his honesty. Coco says, on his side, that his employer is mean in his conduct towards him, and pays his activity and zeal in a very niggardly manner. Thus neither is satisfied with the other. Meantime the public are saying, that in less than a year the shop will be again for sale; that Coco will have bolted; and that the old man, if he be alive, will be fretting his soul out in St Elmo! Nobody speculates upon what is to become of the lady with the blue spectacles. *We* predict, that should she be alive, and the old man dead, in the course of another year, she will have entirely given up her taste for things old and curious, and have become curious to try something new and comely; if, indeed, Coco shall have left her any money to indulge in such a fancy.

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On returning from this visit to our hotel, about an hour later, we found Coco under the gateway, and on the look-out for us. *More solito*, he had something to show us. The porter looked after us inquiringly, as we bid him follow up-stairs; but was surprised by a counter look, and by our calling him by his *name*. Even on the stairs, he could not forbear sundry short ejaculations, by way of preparing us for what we were to see presently. "*Ah! ché bella roba!* Ah, what flowers of the mint I have brought you to see to-day!—bought for a song—at three Carlini a-piece! You shall have them at three and a half—I content myself with small gains. But you, sir, who are discreet, and know the value of these things, shall judge whether I have told you a falsehood or no." By this time we were in our room. The dirty bag was untied; and there leaped out of it, not indeed a cat, but a large heap of consular coins, with which we seemed forthwith to be vastly familiar; and no wonder; since, on inspecting them, we found that the whole had been ours not twelve hours before, we having disposed of them to a refiner for their weight in silver, to melt. "Take them all, sir, *tutti quanti*, at three Carlines and a half a-piece." "No; nor yet for two Carlines, Coco," said we, putting the paper from us. Upon which the cunning fellow hoped *he* had not been taken in; having certainly purchased them in the persuasion of reselling them, as a catch, to us. "The *Italian marquis*, of whom he had bought them, assured him, on his honour, that he had made a rare bargain with him." "Are the coins your own, Coco?" "To my cost are they, signor, unless you re-purchase them." "I sold them only this morning, Coco, for the weight of the silver; you must try somebody else." Upon which Coco, with admirable presence of mind, replaced them in his bag, and said "he had made a *mistake!*" "We regretted that he had not purchased them from us at the rate of one Carline and a-half per piece; in place of having been duped into paying three and a-half." Though he saw plainly, from our manner, that we were aware of his roguery, he was not put out; but shrugging his shoulders, and twitching the angles of a mouth remarkable for its mobility, he merely said—"Pazienza! a bargain's a bargain; we grow wiser as we grow older," and speedily withdrew.

### BIRBONE III.

BASSEGGIO.

"Unde habeas quærit nemo, sed oportet habere."

Near a fountain in one of the main streets of the west end of Rome, in which a recumbent figure bends over his ever-gushing urn; his body half hid from sight, and slowly dissolving in the water, under protection of a dimly lit shrine of a gaily painted Madonna; a tarnished brass plate with the word B— engraved thereon, is inserted into the panels of a dingy-looking door, out of which a long piece of dirty string dangles through a hole. If you touch the electric cord, the shock is instantly transmitted to the other end, and the importunate tinkling of a well-hung bell is responded to by a clicking of the latch, when an invisible arm pulls back the door, and your entrance is secured into a passage encumbered with broken busts and bas-reliefs, tier above tier, and a series of marble tablets, with *Dis manibus* inscriptions, let into the wall on either side. If, now, you pick your way amid the many stumbling-blocks that beset it, till you have reached the stair, (a narrow stair and dark, and encumbered like the passage, with numerous relics of antiquity,) a female voice, loudly shrilling from above, demands your business—"Chi c'e?"—you answer of course "*Amico*," and are bid to mount accordingly. Arrived at the summit of the stair, that same voice, the high-pitched key of which startled you from below, sounds less disagreeable, now that you are close beside the fair proprietress of it, who at once greets you affably, begs you to be seated, has seated herself beside you, and, premising that her "*marito*" will appear anon, has begun to ask you a hundred questions, some of which you are relieved from answering by the actual advent of Signor B—, who makes his politest bow, while Madame introduces you as an old acquaintance. You see at a glance *this* part of Signor B—'s history, that he has bought a young and pretty wife out of many years' traffic in antiquities. Whatever else he may at any other time have purchased, was with intention to dispose of afterwards, a suitable opportunity offering. But this pretty wife he keeps like an inedited coin, or fancies that he keeps to himself entirely. Few antiquaries have shown more enterprise than B—. Possessed of little, very little money in his youth, he did not, like many other Roman youths of this day, squander it away in cigars, and was under twenty when he undertook his first commercial expedition. He went into Egypt, could not buy the Pyramids, they were too large for his portmanteau; then into Greece; then to Sicily. He sailed to Syracuse, landed at Naxos, sacked Taormina and Catania; came back and sold his curiosities well; went abroad again, and again returned like an industrious bee laden with spoils. Enriched at length by these numerous journeys, he was able to purchase a vineyard, and to plant it. His next step was to build a villa upon it, and to marry an ancient dame, who, dying shortly, left him at liberty to marry again. The lady whom he now calls his own being at the time poor, his treasures soon won her heart, while his house flattered her ambition, and so they made a match of it; and she now accompanies him in most of his antiquarian prowling excursions during the summer; and the *ménage*, on the whole, for an Italian *ménage*, goes on well enough.

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One day—(this was when, by much frequentation of the premises, we had become intimate with its inmates)—one day we had just been *ringing* an Etruscan vase, and liked the sound thereof; and examining the painting, we liked that too; and therefore, agreeing as to price, completed the purchase, and were sitting between old husband and young wife, round a brazier mounted on an ancient tripod, with a handful of gems, *loculis quæ custoditur eburnis*, talking carelessly, and taking our *impressions* of them, and of the stones, as we talked. It was a fête day, and, now we came to notice it, Madame B— was en *grande toilette*, and had been hearing Padre S— preach, as she informed us, at St Carlo's in the Corso. When she heard we had not been there, she sighed for our sakes—"Our friend *should* have heard Padre S— to-day, is it not so?" to her husband, who assented to this good opinion of the Padre: "It was such a good sermon! all about doing as you would be done by—no loophole for a self-deceiver to escape by. I only wish A— had been there to hear it." "Bagatello!" said Signor B—, stirring the brazier, "Do you think he would not have cheated Lord V— just the same in this head of Medusa, which he palmed off upon him for an antique, knowing it was a Calandrelli? Good sermons are thrown away upon some people." "Well," sighed the lady, looking up to the ceiling, and then taking a second dose of it—"well, at least we may apply it *to ourselves*." "Not a bit of it. *We* never apply any thing to ourselves. Do you think, for instance, when I married you, I sought to mate me with a lark, or a nightingale—*risponde*." She had no difficulty in doing so. "And was I not a lark till my poor sister died—*poverella*—eighteen months ago?" "*Si, Signora!* but *since* that time you treat me with coldness; are always looking up to the sky; and always telling me your soul is with her soul in Paradise. No Paradise for me! What think you, sir?" "We always sided with those who were suffering from the loss of friends." "*Bene, bene*, for three months or so—'twas all very well, natural. But beyond this? Besides, though it were ever so sincere—what was the use of it?" "Oh! of *no use*, of course," said we. "I shall never give over mourning for her, I promise you that," said the lady, much moved. The husband shrugged his shoulders; said, "That all women were more or less foolish;" and asked us if we were married? Before we had time to answer, in came Padre S—, whose sermon had made such impression on B— and his wife. We now sit all around the brazier; both wife and husband being, for some time, loud in their praises, which were somewhat extravagant! "It was a divine sermon—St Paul could not have preached a better"—when the good man hopes it may, by God's blessing, do good, politely acknowledges the compliment implied in our regrets that we had not been of the auditory, and then rises to look round, Signor B— doing the honours, at the curiosities of the shop; at the sight of several objects of virtù, he expresses, somewhat naïvely, great

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pleasure—would like to have seen more, but has another sermon to deliver in St Jacomo—the bell is ringing!—he must say *idio* at once. As he makes his exit, (Madame kisses his hand first,) two other visitors present themselves; the one a young Roman, who comes to console her; the other a young English nobleman, who comes to buy in haste, and will have to repent at leisure afterwards. In five minutes, Madame seems to have entirely forgotten her sister; B— his wife! The one is receiving comfort in compliment; the other, in cash! Hush! Surely we heard Lord A— ask if that vamped old vase, which will fall some day to pieces, was *antique*; and B—assert that it was! Why, the paint is scarcely dry on its sides! Lord A—'s unlucky eye lights upon a bust, which, when he gets it over to England, he may match at the stone-mason's in the New Road, and at half-price—*two* words, *three* syllables, and the purchase is made "*Chi?*" Whose bust is it? "Cicero's," of course! "Quanto," what's the price of it? "Twenty Napoleons!" You old rogue B—! you are safe in sending it to Terny's, *packed*; for, if it should be seen, you might have to refund the purchase-money. *Necdum finitus?* Another bust tempts him; he inquires, and finds it is a *Jove*—a *Jove!* and is

"Jupiter, hæc nec labra moves, quum mittere vocem  
 Debueras, vel *marmoreus*, vel *aheneus*?  
 ... Quod nullum discrimen habendum est  
 Effigies inter vestras, statuamque Bathylli?"

And this too, he buys for twenty Napoleons more; and having paid the purchase-money, away goes the possessor of Jupiter, and at the same juncture away goes the Cavaliere—each perfectly satisfied with his visit.

"*Molto intelligente*, that countryman of yours," said B—, spelling his card. "He seems to take things very much upon trust," said we. "'Tis a pity he don't understand Italian or French better. Otherwise, I *might* have perhaps suggested better things than those he has actually chosen. But after all," added he, "people don't like being put out of conceit with their own opinions; and think you personally interested, if you offer yours unasked." "I should have been sorry to have taken that vase as antique, as he has done; or to have paid the tenth of the price he has paid you for it." "Oh! don't be afraid; he can afford it—an English gentleman!—and to *him* it is worth what he paid for it; else, if he did not think so, who forced him to take it?" "I *wonder* now what Father S— would have said to it;" asked Madame of her husband, looking up to the ceiling, and sighing. "Nothing, 'twas not in his province to pronounce judgment in such a matter." We too *wondered*, perhaps, what he might have said to Madame, touching her Cavaliere, whose discourse seemed to have told almost as powerfully on her as *his* sermon at St Carlo's. We wondered, but *to ourselves*, and making the common-place remark, that it seemed easier to *preach* than to *practise*, exchanged smiles with B— and his wife, and withdrew, to think over what we had seen; and to arrive at our own conclusions, touching the general utility of fashionable and popular preaching!

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#### BIRBONE IV.

HERR ASCHERSON.

"Rogare malo, quam emere."—SUIDAS.

Sly old fox, what pen shall do justice to thy cunning! Grave, venerable, ancient cheat, who showest a *Bible*, left thee by some pious enthusiast (the old family pew-book, morocco, in silver clasps—well thou lookest to them at least) in return for many dealings with thee, and in requital, so thou sayest, for thine incomparable disinterestedness and honesty!

It would be no harder task to unwind a mummy, than to unroll and unriddle *thee*, old rogue, in thy endless windings and detours! "Have no dealings with A—," said that *timid* rogue, the Florentine attorney R—; "the man is so gigantic a cheat, that he frightens me!" "and cunning to a degree" was D—'s account of him. "He is up to a thing or two," said S—, looking knowing, and putting his finger, like Harpocrates, to his mouth, that it went no further. A brother dealer called him a Hebrew; another (himself as sly as any fox) admitted that he had been overreached by him. His name, whenever mentioned, seldom failed to call forth a smile, or a shrug, in those who had not dealt with him; and a thundering oath against his German blood in those that had. Mr A— was therefore too remarkable a man for us, ourself an incipient collector, not to visit; and so, as soon as we got to Naples, we dispatched a note, and the next day followed it in person; rang at the bell, and were ushered into his sanctum; where we beheld the old *necromancer* standing at his table, looking out for us. He put down his eyeglass and his old coin; and said in answer to our question, which was in English, "Ya! ya! mein name is A—." Forgetting at this moment what R— had said of him, and only recollecting that they were acquainted, we began, by way of introducing ourselves to his best things, to say, that we had lately seen his friend R— at Rome—"Dat is not mein friend, dat is mein enemy," said he, displeased at our mentioning the name; and looking at us half suspiciously, half spitefully. "I hav notin to say wit him more," and he took a huge pinch of snuff, and wasted a deal on his snuffy waistcoat and shirt frill. We at once saw our mistake, which indeed, but for our anxiety to get to business, we should not, assuredly, have

been guilty of. We had now to make the best of it. "A mistake, Mr. A—, we assure you. Mr. R— might say that, on *one* occasion, you *had* been *brusque* with him; but advised us, notwithstanding, to pay you a visit, regretting that, from some little difference between you, *he* could not give us the introduction, which, under more favourable circumstances, he would have pressed upon us;" an announcement which completely mollified the old rogue, who, in his heart of hearts, was thinking that a new victim had turned up to him, and one of Rusca's recommending. "It is pleasant to make peace between two honest men," said we; "Rusca and you should not have quarrelled. Ill-natured people take advantage of these disputes, and begin to profess open distrust as to the age and genuineness of whatever you sell." "For dis reason I hate not Mr Rusca; but he has too much *strepitusness* of voice—*il s'emporte trop facilement*." "Ah," interpose we in the mediatorial capacity we had assumed, "'tis the character of the Italian to do so." "Ya, dat is true," assented he; and then we went to look at his coins. "We are not blind friends of Rusca's," said we, sitting down to the first tray which he gave us to look at, and seeing, from the character of the coins therein exhibited, that A— had presumed we *might* be. "We only buy from R— when he is discreet, and does not overcharge; which, *entre nous*, he is very apt to do." The old man glanced at us approvingly, and trying hard to look honest, said, "Ya, ya; when he can get *ein* piastre he will not take *ein halb*—but when I ask a piastre for any tings, (and he was grave again,) it is tantamount as to say, 'dis is de *leastest* preis to give.'" "All here has a fixed price, has it?" "Ya, ya." "And what may this pretty little figure be worth?" "I shall confess dat is dear; two hundred piastres is de preis—Rusca would have said four hundred to begin mit." We admitted its beauty; but said two hundred spread out upon the table were also beautiful. "De good ting is de dear ting," said he, and we admitted the truth of the proposition, both in the abstract and in its application; took up a specious-looking coin, which he took as abruptly out of our hand—"Nein *gewiss nicht*," we must not buy that. "Why?" Because some people had not scrupled to tell him (though they knew better) that it was a Rusca. "Rusca!" said we, "and what does that mean?" "In Neapolitan *patois*," said he, "we call all our specious but doubtful wares Ruscas! But dis," continued he, taking up a companion to it—"dis I baptize in my own name, and offer for a true John A—." "Ah!" sighed we, but without *emphasis*, as if it had only *just* occurred to us "how difficult, now-a-days, *not* to be deceived;" and we replaced the J— A— in his box accordingly. "Ven all amateurs," said he, (following out his own thought, rather than replying to ours,) "ven all amateurs were connoisseurs likewise, we might say goot-night to dis bissnesse."

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In the days of our novitiate, when we used to say, and think we knew (as the phrase is) what would please us, and would buy according to our means, we found (as indeed all purchasers in these matters find) that time, while it brought with it a nicer appreciation in judging works of art, diminished also our opinion of what we had formerly purchased; and, to avoid fresh disappointments, we used to apply to an *antiquario* to give us his advice *pro re nata*;—as the reader will see by the following note of Herr A—, which, as it prevented our making one or two foolish purchases, was not without its value, and we preserved it accordingly. It ran *verbatim* thus—

"Sir,—You may copy my catalogue, but on Montag ber sur I must hav back. The *botel* is not good in such a manner. The *figure* is of no great value; it is not antic, and not fair; so is the *bust* in stone not antic, and not nice; and every thing that is neither antic nor fair I cannot give any worth. Your obedient servant,

"A—.

"Pray you must not tell to any one my estimation of any thing."

Neither did we, excepting to *Maga*, to whom we tell every thing.

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END OF VOL. LIX.

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**Footnotes:**

[1] *Lives of Men of Letters and Science who Flourished in the Time of George III.* By HENRY LORD BROUGHAM, with Portraits. London: Colburn.

[2] *Reynard the Fox—a renowned Apologue of the Middle Ages reproduced in Rhyme.* By S. NAYLOR. Longman & Co. London: 1845.

[3] Finlay's *Greece under the Romans*, p. 250.

[4] "Mihi multum legenti multum audienti quæ populus Romanus domi militiæque præclara facinora fecissent, forte lubuit attendere quæ res maxime tanta negotia sustinuit. At mihi multa agitanti constabat, paucorum civium egregiam virtutem cuncta patravisse: eoque factum ut divitias paupertas, multitudinem paucitas, superaret."—Sallust, *Bell. Cat.*, 32.

[5] They were as high as L.9 sterling in the time of Constantine, a sum probably equal to L.20 of our money. But the freemen were the higher classes alone, and it is probable a similar class, both in France and England, pay at least as much at this time.—See Gibbon, iii. 88.

[6] Gibbon, c. i. and c. xxxii. Agathias states the military establishment in its best days at 675,000, which is much more likely its real amount. Agathias, v. p. 157, Paris edition.

[7] Gibbon, vol. vi. c. xxxvi. p. 235.

[8] *Ibid.* vol. iii. c. xviii. p. 87. Edition in twelve volumes.

[9] "Arantur Gallicana rura *barbaris bobus*, et juga Germanica captiva præbent colla nostris cultoribus."—*Probi Epist. ad Senatum, in Vopesio.*

[10] Michelet, *Histoire de France*, vol. i. p. 104-108.

[11] Finlay's *Greece under the Romans*.

[12] Tacitus, *Annal.*, xii. 43.

[13] *De Bello Gild.*, v. 64, 65.

[14] Gibbon, c. xxix.

[15]

"Advenio supplex, non ut proculcet Araxen  
Consul ovans, nostræve premant pharetrata secures  
Susa, nec ut Rubris aquilas figamus arenis.  
Hæc nobis, hæc ante dabas.—Nunc pabula tantum  
Roma precor. Miserere tuæ, Pater Optime, gentis—  
Extremam defende famem.

\* \* \* \* \*

Tot mihi pro meritis Lybiam Nilumque dedere  
Ut *dominam plebem* bellatoremque senatum  
Classibus astivis alerent.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nunc inhonorus, egens, perfert miserabile pacis  
Supplicium, nulloque palam circumdatus hoste  
Obessi discrimen habet. Per singula letum  
Impendet momenta mihi, dubitandaque pauci  
Præscribunt alimenta dies."—CLAUD. *De Bello Gild.*

[16] Finlay's *Greece under the Romans*, 435, 436.

- [17] Ibid. 517.
- [18] Gibbon, c. xxxi. p. 351.
- [19] Ibid. c. xxxiii. vol. vi. p. 20.
- [20] *Greece under the Romans*, 456, 467.
- [21] Josephus, ii. 16.
- [22] Finlay, 515.
- [23] Ibid. 406.
- [24] Sismondi, *Chute de l'Empire Romaine*, i. 36.
- [25] Novell, 81.
- [26] Finlay, 246, 247.
- [27] Finlay, 117.
- [28] Ammianus Marcellinus, c. xiv.
- [29] Finlay, 544. Ammianus Marcellinus, c. xix.
- [30] Sismondi, *Chute de l'Empire Romaine*, i. 50.
- [31] Gibbon, i. 261, c. vi.
- [32] Gibbon, c. vi. vol. i. p. 262.
- [33] Ibid. c. vi. vol. i. p. 268.
- [34] Ibid. p. 268.
- [35] Ibid. c. xvii. vol. ii. p. 86.
- [36] Gibbon, c. xvii. vol. iii. p. 92.
- [37] Finlay, pp. 49-50.
- [38] Novell Majorian, tit. iv. p. 34. Gibbon, c. xxxvi. vol. vi. p. 173.
- [39] Gibbon, c. i. vol. i. p. 30.
- [40] Ibid. c. i. vol. i. p. 37.
- [41] Ibid. c. xvii. vol. iii. p. 93.
- [42] Ibid. c. ii. vol. i. p. 91.
- [43] Plin. *Hist. Nat.* iii. 5.
- [44] Περὶ τοῦ μῆθειν Δανειξίσθαι "De Ære Alieno vitando."—*Plutarch*.
- [45] Finlay, 90.
- [46] "Verumque confitentibus latifundia perdidere Italiam, immo ac provincias."—Plin. *Hist. Nat.*
- [47] Sismondi, *Chute de l'Empire Romaine*, i. 51.
- [48] Ammianus Marcellinus, c. xiv.
- [49] Sismondi, *Chute de l'Empire Romaine*, i. 44.
- [50] Finlay, 219, 220.
- [51] It is curious to find Tacitus praising the establishment of *bounties* on the importation of foreign grain by Tiberius, without a word on the evil effects of the system.—*Annal.* vi. 13. "Quibus e provinciis et quanto majorum, quam Augustus rei frumentariæ copiam advectaret."
- [52] Finlay, 53.
- [53] Finlay, 105.
- [54] Ibid. 137.
- [55] Tacitus, *Annal.* xii. 43.
- [56] Michelet, *Histoire de France*, i. 277.
- [57] *Edinburgh Review*. April 1846. No. 168. Page 370-371.
- [58] Sismondi, *Chute de l'Empire Romaine*, i. 233.
- [59] Finlay, 389.

[60] *Ibid.* 392.

[61] Gibbon, chap. ii. vol. i. p. 90.

[62] Jacob's *Historical Inquiry into the Production and Consumption of the Precious Metals*, i. 35, 42.

[63] Finlay, 88.

[64] *Ibid.* 90.

[65] Finlay, 89.

[66] Gibbon, v. 329.

[67] *Arbuthnott on Ancient Coins*, c. 5. Gibbon, i. 90, c. ii.

[68] *Greaves on Ancient Coins*, i. 229, 331.

[69] Gibbon, c. 36, vol. vi. 173.

[70] See *Edinburgh Review*. No. 168. April 1846.

[71] There are now 20,000,000 inhabitants in Italy, and it was certainly as populous in the time of Augustus, when Rome alone, which now has 180,000, contained 2,386,000 souls.

[72] *Le Peuple*. Par J. MICHELET.

[73] *Du Feu Greçois, des Feux de Guerre, et des Origines de la Poudre-à-Canon*. Par MM. REINAUD et FAVÉ.

[74] ————"Conductâ Paulus agebat Sardonyche."—Juv. *Sat.* vii.

[75] Poor Seneca, for a *moral* philosopher, seems to have been somewhat harshly handled: here patronised by cheats and gamblers, and here censured by philosophy and dissent! Now invoked by Rusca to assist him in his ingannations; now lugged on the stage to be commented on by the valet of a gambler,\* as he *debts* him, for his master's consolation, under his losses; here glanced at by Coleridge for his splendid "inconsistencies;" and here by the sour *Dissenter*, who accuses our Church's ministers of borrowing their sermons from his precepts.

"Preaching the trash they purchase at the stalls,  
And more like *Seneca's*, than *HIS!!* or *Paul's!*"

And, as he could make no higher appeal for human virtue than the authority of human wisdom for the plea of expediency, it was not to be wondered at if he should have met with no better fate than to be praised of fools, and neglected of the wise, who wisely deemed him an insufficient, and therefore a dangerous guide.

[\*] Le Joueur.

[76] The name of "*half honest*" exactly suits this class of men, who, adopting one *half* of what our admirable Taylor lays down in his golden "rules and measures of justice in bargaining," neglect the other half. "In prices of bargaining concerning *uncertain* merchandises, you may buy as cheap, ordinarily, as you can, and sell as dear as you can;" so far they and Taylor are of a mind. "Provided," continues he, "that you contract on *equal terms* with persons in *all senses* (as to the matter and skill of bargaining) *equal to yourself*; that is, merchants with merchants, *wise men with wise men*, rich with rich"—and *here* the *mezzo galant'uomo* gives up Taylor, to keep true to his name and calling.

[77] Mionnet, *De la Rareté et du Prix des Medailles Romaines*, a very useful work, which no amateur collector should fail to possess, and to carry constantly about with him, *non obstant* all the abuse heaped upon it by all the dealers.

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