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No. CCCCII. APRIL, 1849. Vol. LXV.

# BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

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## MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

The historical and critical essay is a species of literary composition which has arisen, and been brought to perfection, in the lifetime of a single generation. Preceding writers, indeed, had excelled in detached pieces of a lighter and briefer kind; and in the whole annals of thought there is nothing more charming than some of those which graced the age of Queen Anne, and the reigns of the first Georges. But though these delightful essays remain, and will ever remain, models of the purest and most elegant composition, and are always distinguished by just and moral reflections, yet their influence has sensibly declined; and they are turned to, now, rather from the felicity of the expression by which they are graced, than either the information which they contain, the originality by which they are distinguished, or the depth of the views which they unfold. It is still true that "he who would attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant without being ostentatious, must give his days and his nights to the study of Addison." It is not less true, that he who would appreciate the force of which the English language is capable, and acquire the condensed vigour of expression which enters so largely into the highest kind of composition, will ever study the prose of Johnson; as much as the poet, for similar excellencies, will recur to the Vanity of Human Wishes, or the epistles and satires of Pope.

But, with the advent of the French Revolution, the rise of fiercer passions, and the collision of dearer interests, the elegant and amusing class of essays rendered so popular by Addison and his followers passed away. The incessant recurrence of moralising, the frequent use of allegory, the constant straining after conceits, which appear even in the pages of the *Spectator* and the *Rambler*, are scarcely redeemed by the taste of Addison, the fancy of Steele, or the vigour of Johnson. In inferior hands they became insupportable. Men whose minds were stimulated by the Rights of Man—who were entranced by the eloquence of Pitt—who followed the career of Wellington—who were stunned by the thunderbolts of Nelson—could not recur to the Delias, the Chloes, or the Phillises of a slumbering and pacific age. The proclamation of war to the palace, and peace to the cottage, sent the stories of the coquette, the prude, and the woman of sense to the right-about. What was now required was something which could minister to the cravings of an excited and enthusiastic age; which should support or combat the new ideas generally prevalent; which should bring the experience of the past to bear on the visions of the present, and tell men, from the recorded events of history, what they had to hope, and what to fear, from the passion for innovation which had seized possession of so large a portion of the active part of mankind.

The *Edinburgh Review* was the first journal which gave a decided indication of this change in the temper of the public mind. From the very outset it exhibited that vigour of thought, fearlessness of discussion, and raciness of expression, which bespoke the prevalence of independent feeling, novel yearnings, and original ideas, among the people. There was something refreshing and exhilarating in the change. Its success was immediate and immense. The long-slumbering dominion of the monthly and other reviews, which then had possession of the sceptre of criticism, was at once destroyed. Mediocrity fell into the shade when the light of genius appeared; criticism assumed a bolder and more decided character. Men rejoiced to see the pretensions of authors levelled, their vanity mortified, their errors exposed, their pride pulled

down, by the stern hand of the merciless reviewer. The practical application of the maxim, "Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur," gave universal satisfaction. Every one felt his own consequence increased, his personal feelings soothed, his vanity flattered, when the self-constituted teachers of mankind were pulled down from their lofty pinnacle.

But it was not merely in literary criticism that the *Edinburgh Review* opened a new era in our periodical literature. To its early supporters we owe the introduction of the Critical and Historical Essay, which was an entirely new species of composition, and to the frequent use of which the rapid success of that journal is mainly to be ascribed. The essay always had the name of a book prefixed to it: it professed to be a review. But it was generally a review only in name. The author was frequently never once mentioned in its whole extent. His work was made use of merely as a peg on which to hang a long disquisition on the subject of which it treated. This disquisition was not, like the essays of Addison or Johnson, the work of a few hours' writing, and drawn chiefly from the fancy or imagination of the author: it was the elaborate production of a mind imbued with the subject, and the fruit of weeks or months of careful composition. It was sometimes founded on years of previous and laborious study. Thence its great and obvious value. It not only enlarged the circle of our ideas; it added to the stock of our knowledge. Men came to study a paper on a subject in a review, as carefully as they did a regular work of a known and respectable author: they looked to it not only for amusement, but for information. It had this immense advantage—it was shorter than a book, and often contained its essence. It was distilled thought; it was abbreviated knowledge. To say that many of these elaborate and attractive treatises were founded in error—that they were directed to objects of the moment, not of durable interest, and that their authors too often

"To party gave up what was meant for mankind"—

is no impeachment either of the ability with which they were executed, or denial of the beneficial ends to which they ultimately became subservient. What though great part of the talents with which they were written is now seen to have been misdirected—of the views they contained to have been erroneous. It was that talent which raised the counter spirit that righted the public mind; it was those views which ultimately led to their own correction. In an age of intelligence and mental activity, no dread need be entertained of the ultimate sway of error. Experience, the great assertor of truth, is ever at hand to scatter its assailants. It is in an age of mental torpor and inactivity that the chains of falsehood, whether in religion or politics, are abidingly thrown over the human mind.

But, from this very cause, the political essays of the *Edinburgh Review* have been left behind by the march of the world; they have been stranded on the shoals of time; they have almost all been disproved by the event. Open one of the political essays in the Blue-and-yellow, which were read and admired by all the world thirty or forty years ago, and what do you find? Loud declamations against the continuance of the war, and emphatic assertions of the inability of England to contend at land with the conqueror of continental Europe; continual reproaches of incapacity against the ministry, who were preparing the liberation of Spain and the battle of Waterloo; ceaseless assertions that the misery of Ireland was entirely owing to misgovernment—that nothing but Catholic emancipation, and the curtailment of the Protestant church, were required to make that island the most happy, loyal, and contented realm, and its Celtic inhabitants the most industrious and well-conditioned in Europe; loud denunciations that the power of the crown "had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished;" lamentations on the evidently approaching extinction of the liberties of England, under the combined action of a gigantic war expenditure and a corrupt selfish oligarchy; strong recommendations of the speedy abolition of slavery in our West India colonies, as the only mode of enabling our planters to compete with the efforts of the slave-sugar states. Time has enabled the world to estimate these doctrines at their true value. It is not surprising that the *political* essays of a journal, professing such principles, have, amidst great efforts towards bolstering up, and ceaseless strains of party laudation, been quietly consigned by subsequent times to the vault of all the Capulets.



It is on its literary, critical, and historical essays, therefore, that the reputation of the journal now almost entirely rests. No bookseller has yet ventured on the hazardous step of publishing its political essays together. They will not supplant those of Burke. But it is otherwise with its literary lucubrations. The publication of the collected works of its leading contributors, in a separate form, has enabled the world to form a tolerably correct opinion of their respective merits and deficiencies. Without taking upon ourselves the office of critics, and fully aware of the delicacy which one periodical should feel in discussing the merits of another, we may be permitted to present, in a few words, what appear to us to be the leading characteristics of the principal and well-known contributors to that far-famed journal. This is the more allowable, as some of them have paid the debt of nature, while others are reposing under the shadow of their well-earned laurels, far removed from the heat and bustle of the day. Their names are familiar to every reader; their works have taken a lasting place in English as well as American literature; and their qualities and excellencies are so different as at once to invite and suggest critical discrimination.

The great characteristic of Lord Jeffrey is, with some striking exceptions, the fairness and general justice of the criticism which his works exhibit, the kindly feeling which they evince, and the lively illustrations with which they abound. He had vast powers of application. When in great practice at the bar, and deservedly a leading counsel in jury cases, he contrived to find time to conduct the *Edinburgh Review*, and to enrich its pages by above a hundred contributions. There

is no great extent of learning in them, few original ideas, and little of that earnestness of expression which springs from strong internal conviction, and is the chief fountain of eloquent and overpowering oratory. He rarely quotes classical or Italian literature, and his writings give no token of a mind stored with their imagery. He seldom gives you the feeling that he is serious, or deeply impressed with his subject. He seldom strikes with force, but very often touches with felicity. The feeling which pervades his writings is always excellent, often generous; his taste is correct, his criticism in general just; and it is impossible not to admire the light and airy hand with which he treats of the most difficult subjects, and the happy expressions with which he often illustrates the most abstruse ideas. He deals more in Scotch metaphysics than suits the present age: he made some signal and well-known mistakes in the estimation of contemporary poetry; and laboured, without effect, to *write up* Ford, Massinger, and the old dramatists, whom their inveterate indecency has justly banished from general popularity. But these faults are amply redeemed by the attractions of his essays in other respects. There are no more charming reviews in our language than some which his collected papers contain: and no one can rise from their perusal with any surprise that the accomplished author of works containing so much just and kindly criticism should deservedly be a most popular and respected judge.

386 It is impossible to imagine a more thorough contrast to Lord Jeffrey than the writings of Sidney Smith exhibit. Though a reverend and pious divine, the prebendary of St Paul's had very little of the sacerdotal character in him. His conversational talents were great, his success in the highest London society unbounded; but this intoxicating course neither relaxed the vigour of his application, nor deadened the warmth of his feelings. His powers, and they were of no ordinary kind, were always directed, though sometimes with mistaken zeal, to the interests of humanity. His sayings, like those of Talleyrand, were repeated from one end of the empire to the other. These brilliant and sparkling qualities are conspicuous in his writings, and have mainly contributed to their remarkable success both in this country and America. There is scarcely any scholarship, and little information, to be met with in his works. Few take them up to be instructed; many to be amused. He has little of the equanimity of the judge about him, but a great deal of the wit and jocularity of the pleader. He would have made a first-rate jury counsel, for he would alternately have driven them by the force of his arguments, and amused them by the brilliancy of his expressions. There is no more vigorous and forcible diatribe in our language than his celebrated letter on North American repudiation, which roused the attention, and excited the admiration, of the repudiators themselves. He has expressed in a single line a great truth, applicable, it is to be feared, to other nations besides the Americans: "They preferred any load of infamy, however great, to any burden of taxation, however light." But Sidney Smith's blows were expended, and wit lavished, in general, on subjects of passing or ephemeral interest: they were not, like the strokes of Johnson, levelled at the universal frailties and characteristics of human nature. On this account, though their success hitherto has been greater, it is doubtful whether his essays will take so high a lasting place in English literature as those of Lord Jeffrey, which in general treat of works of permanent interest.

Sir James Mackintosh differs as widely from the original pillars of the *Edinburgh Review* as they do from each other. The publication of his collected essays, with the historical sketch and fragment which he has left, enables us now to form a fair estimate of his powers. That they were great, no one can doubt; but they are of a different kind from what was at first anticipated. Not a shadow of a doubt can now remain, that, though his noble mind had not been in a great degree swallowed up as it was in the bottomless gulf of London society, and he had spent his whole forenoons for the last fifteen years of his life in writing his history, instead of conversing with fashionable or literary ladies, his labours would have terminated in disappointment. The beginning of a history which he has left, is a sufficient proof of this: it is learned, minute, and elaborate, but dull. The Whigs, according to their usual practice with all writers of their own party, hailed its appearance with a flourish of trumpets; but we doubt whether many of them have yet read it through. He had little dramatic power; his writings exhibit no traces of a pictorial eye, and though he had much poetry in his mind, they are not imbued with the poetic character. These deficiencies are fatal to the *popularity* of any historian: no amount of learning or philosophical acuteness can supply their want in the *narrative* of events. Guizot is a proof of this: he is, perhaps, one of the greatest writers on the philosophy of history that ever lived; but his history of the English Revolution is lifeless beside the pages of Livy or Gibbon. Sir James Mackintosh was fitted to have been the Guizot of English history. His mind was essentially didactic. Reflection, not action, was both the bent of his disposition and the theatre of his glory. His History of England, written for Lardner's *Encyclopedia*, can scarcely be called a history; it is rather a series of essays on history. It treats so largely of some events, so scantily of others, that a reader not previously acquainted with the subject, might rise from its perusal with scarcely any idea of the thread of English story. But no one who was already informed on it can do so, without feeling his mind stored with original and valuable reflection, just and profound views. His collected essays from the *Edinburgh Review*, lately put together, are not so discursive as those of Lord Jeffrey, nor so amusing as those of Sidney Smith; but they are much more profound than either, and treat of subjects more permanently interesting to the human race. Many of them, particularly that on representative governments, abound with views equally just and original. It is impossible not to regret, that a mind so richly stored with historical knowledge, and so largely endowed with philosophic penetration, should have left so few lasting monuments of its great and varied powers.

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Much as these very eminent men differ from each other, Mr Macaulay is, perhaps, still more clearly distinguished from either. Both his turn of mind and style of writing are peculiar, and

exhibit a combination rarely if ever before witnessed in English, or even modern literature. Unlike Lord Jeffrey, he is deeply learned in ancient and modern lore; his mind is richly stored with the poetry and history both of classical and Continental literature. Unlike Mackintosh, he is eminently dramatic and pictorial; he alternately speaks poetry to the soul and pictures to the eye. Unlike Sidney Smith, he has avoided subjects of party contention and passing interest, and grappled with the great questions, the immortal names, which will for ever attract the interest and command the attention of man. Milton, Bacon, Machiavelli, first awakened his discriminating and critical taste; Clive, Warren Hastings, Frederick the Great, called forth his dramatic and historic powers. He has treated of the Reformation and the Catholic reaction in his review of Ranke; of the splendid despotism of the Popedom in that of Hildebrand; of the French Revolution in that of Barère. There is no danger of his essays being forgotten, like many of those of Addison; nor of pompous uniformity of style being complained of, as in most of those of Johnson. His learning is prodigious; and perhaps the chief defects of his composition arise from the exuberant riches of the stores from which they are drawn. When warmed in his subject he is thoroughly in earnest, and his language, in consequence, goes direct to the heart. In many of his writings—and especially the first volume of his history, and his essay on the Reformation—there are reflections equally just and original, which never were surpassed in the philosophy of history. That he is imbued with the soul of poetry need be told to none who have read his Battle of the Lake Regillus; that he is a great biographer will be disputed by none who are acquainted with the splendid biographies of Clive and Hastings, by much the finest productions of the kind in the English language.

Macaulay's style, like other original things, has already produced a school of imitators. Its influence may distinctly be traced, both in the periodical and daily literature of the day. Its great characteristic is the shortness of the sentences, which often equals that of Tacitus himself, and the rapidity with which new and distinct ideas or facts succeed each other in his richly-stored pages. He is the Pope of English prose: he often gives two sentiments and facts in a single line. No preceding writer in prose, in any modern language with which we are acquainted, has carried this art of abbreviation, or rather cramming of ideas, to such a length; and to its felicitous use much of the celebrity which he has acquired is to be ascribed. There is no doubt that it is a most powerful engine for the stirring of the mind, and when not repeated too often, or carried too far, has a surprising effect. Its introduction forms an era in historical composition. To illustrate our meaning, and at the same time adorn our pages with passages of exquisite, almost redundant beauty, we gladly transcribe two well-known ones, taken from the most perfect of his historical essays. Of Lord Clive he says—

> "From Clive's second visit to India dates the political ascendency of the English in that country. His dexterity and resolution realised, in the course of a few months, more than all the gorgeous visions which had floated before the imagination of Dupleix. Such an extent of cultivated territory, such an amount of revenue, such a multitude of subjects, was never added to the dominion of Rome by the most successful proconsul. Nor were such wealthy spoils ever borne under arches of triumph, down the Sacred Way, and through the crowded forum, to the threshold of Tarpeian Jove. The fame of those who subdued Antiochus and Tigranes grows dim, when compared with the splendour of the exploits which the young English adventurer achieved, at the head of an army not equal in numbers to one-half of a Roman legion. From Clive's third visit to India, dates the purity of the administration of our eastern empire. He first made dauntless and unsparing war on that gigantic system of oppression, extortion, and corruption, which had previously prevailed in India. In that war he manfully put to hazard his ease, his fame, and his splendid fortune. The same sense of justice which forbids us to conceal or extenuate the faults of his earlier days, compels us to admit that those faults were nobly repaired. If the reproach of the Company and its servants has been taken away; if in India the yoke of foreign masters, elsewhere the heaviest of all yokes, has been found lighter than that of any native dynasty; if to that gang of public robbers which formerly spread terror through the whole of Bengal, has succeeded a body of functionaries not more highly distinguished by ability and diligence, than by integrity, disinterestedness, and public spirit; if we now see such men as Munro, Elphinstone, and Metcalfe, after leading victorious armies, after making and deposing kings, return proud of their honourable poverty from a land which once held to every greedy factor the hope of boundless wealth,—the praise is in no small degree due to Clive. His name stands high on the roll of conquerors; but it is found in a better list—in the list of those who have done and suffered much in the cause of mankind. To the warrior, history will assign a place in the same rank with Lucullus and Trajan; nor will she deny to the reformer a share of that veneration with which France cherishes the memory of Turgot, and with which the latest generation of Hindoos will contemplate the statue of Lord William Bentinck."[1]



The well-known description of Hastings' trial is as follows:—

> "The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus—the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings; the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon, and the just absolution of Somers; the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party, inflamed with just resentment; the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame. Neither

military nor civil pomp was wanting. The avenues were lined with grenadiers; the streets were kept clear by cavalry; the peers, robed in gold and ermine, were marshalled by the heralds, under the Garter king-at-arms. The judges, in their vestments of state, attended to give advice on points of law. Near a hundred and seventy lords, three-fourths of the Upper House, as the Upper House then was, walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembling to the tribunal. The junior baron present led the way—George Eliott, Lord Heathfield, recently ennobled for his memorable defence of Gibraltar against the fleets and armies of France and Spain. The long procession was closed by the Duke of Norfolk, earl-marshal of the realm, by the great dignitaries, and by the brothers and sons of the king. Last of all came the Prince of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing. The gray old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience, such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened, and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated round the queen the fair-haired young daughters of the house of Brunswick. There the ambassadors of great kings and commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when, before a senate which still retained some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen, side by side, the greatest painter and the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which has preserved to us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labours in that dark and profound mine from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition—a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid. There appeared the voluptuous charms of her to whom the heir of the throne had in secret plighted his faith. There, too, was she, the beautiful mother of a beautiful race,the Saint Cecilia whose delicate features, lighted up by love and music, art has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticised, and exchanged repartees under the rich peacock hangings of Mrs Montague. And there the ladies, whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried Westminster against Palace and Treasury, shone round Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire."[2]



As a contrast to these splendid pictures, we subjoin the portrait of the Black Hole of Calcutta, which proves that, if the author is in general endowed with the richness of Ariosto's imagination, he can, when necessary, exhibit the terrible powers of Dante.

"Then was committed that great crime—memorable for its singular atrocity, memorable for the tremendous retribution by which it was followed. The English captives were left at the mercy of the guards, and the guards determined to secure them for the night in the prison of the garrison, a chamber known by the fearful name of the Black Hole. Even for a single European malefactor that dungeon would, in such a climate, have been too close and narrow. The space was only twenty feet square. The air-holes were small and obstructed. It was the summer solstice—the season when the fierce heat of Bengal can scarcely be rendered tolerable to natives of England by lofty halls, and by the constant waving of fans. The number of the prisoners was 146. When they were ordered to enter the cell, they imagined that the soldiers were joking; and, being in high spirits on account of the promise of the nabob to spare their lives, they laughed and jested at the absurdity of the notion. They soon discovered their mistake. They expostulated, they entreated, but in vain. The guards threatened to cut all down who hesitated. The captives were driven into the cell at the point of the sword, and the door was instantly shut and locked upon them.

"Nothing in history or fiction—not even the story which Ugolino told in the sea of everlasting ice, after he had wiped his bloody lips on the scalp of his murderer—approaches the horrors which were recounted by the few survivors of that night. They cried for mercy; they strove to burst the door. Holwell, who even in that extremity retained some presence of mind, offered large bribes to the gaolers. But the answer was, that nothing could be done without the nabob's orders; that the nabob was asleep, and that he would be angry if anybody woke him. Then the prisoners went mad with despair. They trampled each other down, fought for the places at the windows—fought for the pittance of water with which the cruel mercy of the murderers mocked their agonies—raved, prayed, blasphemed, implored the guards to fire among them. The gaolers, in the meantime, held lights to the bars, and shouted with laughter at the frantic struggles of the victims. At length the tumult died away in low gaspings and moanings. The day broke. The nabob had slept off his debauch, and permitted the door to be opened; but it was some time before the soldiers could make a lane for the survivors, by piling up on each side the heaps of corpses on which the burning climate had already begun to do its loathsome work. When, at length, a passage was made, twenty-three ghastly figures, such as their own mothers would not have known, came forth alive. A pit was instantly dug: the dead bodies, a hundred and twenty-three in

number, were flung into it promiscuously, and covered up."[3]

This style does admirably well for short biographies, such as those of Warren Hastings or Clive, in the *Edinburgh Review*, in which the object is to condense the important events of a whole lifetime into comparatively few pages, and fascinate the reader by as condensed and brilliant a picture as it is possible to present, of the most striking features of their character and story. But how will it answer for a lengthened history, such as Macaulay's great work promises to be, extending to twelve or fifteen volumes? How will it do to make the "extreme medicine of the constitution its daily bread?" Ragouts and French dishes are admirable at a feast, or on particular occasions, but what should we say to a diet prescribed of such highly seasoned food every day? It is true, there are not many such brilliant and striking passages as those we have quoted. The 390
subject, of course, would not admit of, the mind of the reader would sink under, the frequent repetition of such powerful emotion. But the style is generally the same. It almost always indicates a crowd of separate ideas, facts, or assertions, in such close juxtaposition that they literally seem wedged together. Such is the extent of the magazine of reading and information from which they are drawn, that they come tumbling out, often without much order or arrangement, and generally so close together that it is difficult for a person not previously acquainted with the subject to tell which are of importance and which are immaterial.

This tendency, when as confirmed and general as it has now become, we consider by far the most serious fault in Mr Macaulay's style; and it is not less conspicuous in his general history than in his detached biographies. Indeed, its continuance in the former species of composition is mainly owing to the brilliant success with which it has been attended in the latter. In historical essays it is not a blemish, it is rather a beauty; because, in such miniature portraits or cabinet pieces, minuteness of finishing and crowding of incidents in a small space are among the principal requisites we desire, the chief charm we admire. But the style of painting which we justly admire in Albano and Vanderwerf, would be misplaced in the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, or even the extended canvass of the Transfiguration. We do not object to such elaborate finishing, such brevity of sentences, such crowding of facts and ideas, in the delineation of the striking incidents or principal characters of the work; what we object to is its continuance on ordinary occasions, in the drawing of inconsiderable characters, and in what should be the simple thread of the story. Look how easy Hume is in his ordinary narrative—how unambitious Livy, in the greater part of his history. We desiderate such periods of relaxation and repose in Macaulay. We there always discover learning, genius, power; but the prodigal display of these powers often mars their effect. We see it not only in delineating the immortal deeds of heroes, or the virtues of princesses, but in portraying the habits of serving-women or the frailties of maids of honour. With all its elevated and poetical qualities, the mind of Macaulay occasionally gives token of its descent from our common ancestress, Eve, in an evident fondness for gossip. It would perhaps be well for him to remember that the scandal of our great great-grandmothers is not generally interesting, or permanently edifying; and that he is not to measure the gratification it will give to the world in general, by the avidity with which it is devoured among the titled descendants of the fair sinners in the Whig coteries. There is often a want of breadth and keeping in his pictures. To resume our pictorial metaphor, Macaulay's pages often remind us of the paintings of Bassano, in which warriors and pilgrims, horses and mules, dromedaries and camels, sheep and lambs, Arabs and Ethiopians, shining armour and glistening pans, spears and pruning-hooks, scimitars and shepherds' crooks, baskets, tents, and precious stuffs, are crammed together without mercy, and with an equal light thrown on the most insignificant as the most important parts of the piece.

When he is engaged in a subject, however, in which minute painting is not misplaced, and the condensation of striking images is a principal charm, Mr Macaulay's pictorial eye and poetical powers appear in their full lustre. We observe with pleasure that he has not forgotten the example and precept of Herodotus, who considered geography as a principal part of history; and that, in the description of countries, he has put forth the whole vigour of his mind with equal correctness of drawing and brilliancy of colouring. As a specimen, we subjoin the admirable picture of the plain of Bengal, in the life of Clive:—

> "Of the provinces which had been subject to the house of Tamerlane, the wealthiest was Bengal. No part of India possessed such natural advantages, both for agriculture and for commerce. The Ganges, rushing through a hundred channels to the sea, has formed a vast plain of rich mould, which, even under the tropical sky, rivals the verdure 391
> of an English April. The rice-fields yield an increase such as is elsewhere unknown. Spices, sugar, vegetable oils, are produced with marvellous exuberance. The rivers afford an inexhaustible supply of fish. The desolate islands along the sea-coast, overgrown by noxious vegetation, and swarming with deer and tigers, supply the cultivated districts with abundance of salt. The great stream which fertilises the soil is, at the same time, the chief highway of Eastern commerce. On its banks, and on those of its tributary waters, are the wealthiest marts, the most splendid capitals, and the most sacred shrines of India. The tyranny of man had for ages struggled in vain against the overflowing bounty of nature. In spite of the Mussulman despot, and of the Mahratta freebooter, Bengal was known through the East as the garden of Eden, as the rich kingdom. Its population multiplied exceedingly. Distant provinces were nourished from the overflowing of its granaries; and the noble ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms. The race by whom this rich tract was peopled, enervated by a soft climate, and accustomed to peaceful avocations, bore the same relation to other Asiatics which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic

children of Europe. The Castilians have a proverb, that in Valencia the earth is water, and the men women; and the description is at least equally applicable to the vast plain of the lower Ganges. Whatever the Bengalee does he does languidly. His favourite pursuits are sedentary. He shrinks from bold exertion; and though voluble in dispute, and singularly pertinacious in the war of chicane, he seldom engages in a personal conflict, and scarcely ever enlists as a soldier. We doubt whether there be a hundred Bengalees in the whole army of the East India Company. There never, perhaps, existed a people so thoroughly fitted by nature and by habit for a foreign yoke."[4]

The talent of military description, and the picture of battle, is one of a very peculiar kind, which is often wholly awanting in historians of a very high character in other respects. It is a common observation, that all battles in history are like each other—a sure proof that their authors did not understand the subject; for every battle, fought from the beginning of time, in reality differs from another as much as every countenance. In his previous writings, Mr Macaulay had enjoyed few opportunities of exhibiting his strength in this important particular; though it might have been anticipated, from the brilliancy of his imagination, and the powerful pictures in his *Lays of Rome*, that he would not be inferior in this respect to what he had proved himself to be in other parts of history. But the matter has now been put to the test; and it gives us the highest satisfaction to perceive, from the manner in which he has treated a comparatively trifling engagement, that he is fully qualified to portray the splendid victories of Marlborough, the bold intrepidity of Hawke, and the gallant daring of Peterborough. It would be difficult to find in history a more spirited and graphic description than he has given in his great work of the battle of Sedgemoor, with the scene of which he seems, from early acquaintance, to be peculiarly familiar:—

"Monmouth was startled at finding that a broad and profound trench lay between him and the camp he had hoped to surprise. The insurgents halted on the edge of the hollow, and fired. Part of the royal infantry, on the opposite bank, returned the fire. During three quarters of an hour the roar of musketry was incessant. The Somersetshire peasants behaved as if they had been veteran soldiers, save only that they levelled their pieces too high. But now the other divisions of the royal army were in motion. The Life Guards and Blues, came pricking up from Weston Zoyland, and scattered, in an instant, some of Grey's horse, who had attempted to rally. The fugitives spread a panic among the fugitives in the rear, who had charge of the ammunition. The waggoners drove off at full speed, and never stopped till they were some miles from the field of battle. Monmouth had hitherto done his part like a stout and able warrior. He had been seen on foot, pike in hand, encouraging his infantry by voice and example. But he was too well acquainted with military affairs not to know that all was over. His men had lost the advantage which surprise and darkness had given them. They were deserted by the horse and by the ammunition waggons. The king's forces were now united, and in good order. Feversham had been awakened by the firing, had adjusted his cravat, had looked himself well in the glass, and had come to see what his men were doing. What was of much more consequence, Churchill (Marlborough) had rapidly made an entirely new disposition of the royal infantry. The day had begun to break. The event of a conflict on an open plain by broad sunlight could not be doubtful. Yet Monmouth should have felt that it was not for him to fly, while thousands, whom affection for him had hurried to destruction, were still fighting manfully in his cause. But vain hopes, and the intense love of life, prevailed. He saw that, if he tarried, the royal cavalry would soon be in his rear: he mounted, and rode off from the field.



Yet his foot, though deserted, made a gallant stand. The Life Guards attacked them on the right, the Blues on the left; but these Somerset clowns, with their scythes and the but-ends of their muskets, faced the royal horse like old soldiers. Oglethorpe made a vigorous attempt to break them, and was manfully repulsed. Sarsfield, a brave Irish officer, whose name afterwards obtained a melancholy celebrity, charged on the other flank. His men were beaten back: he himself was struck to the ground, and lay, for a time, as one dead. But the struggle of the hardy rustics could not last; their powder and ball were spent. Cries were heard of, "Ammunition! for God's sake, ammunition!" But no ammunition was at hand. And now the king's artillery came up. Even when the guns had arrived, there was such a want of gunners, that a sergeant of Dumbarton's regiment had to take upon himself the management of several pieces. The cannon, however, though ill served, brought the engagement to a speedy close. The pikes of the rebel battalions began to shake—the ranks broke. The king's cavalry charged again, and bore down everything before them. The king's infantry came pouring across the ditch. Even in that extremity, the Mendip miners stood bravely to their arms, and sold their lives dearly. But the rout was in a few minutes complete; three hundred of the soldiers had been killed or wounded. Of the rebels, more than a thousand lay dead on the moor."[5]

We have dwelt so long on the general characteristics and peculiar excellencies of Mr Macaulay's compositions, that we have hardly left ourselves sufficient space to enter so fully as we could wish into the merits of the great work on which he has staked his reputation with future times. It was looked forward to with peculiar, and we may say unexampled interest, both from the known celebrity and talents of the author—not less as a parliamentary orator than a practised critic—and the importance of the blank which he was expected to fill up in English literature. He has contracted an engagement with the public, to give the *History of England* during the last

century; to fill up the void from the English to the French Revolution. He came after Hume, whose simple and undying narrative will be coeval with the long and eventful thread of English story. He has undertaken the history of the glorious age of Queen Anne, and the era of the first Georges—of the victories of Marlborough, and the disasters of North—of the energy of Chatham, and the brilliancy of Bolingbroke; he has to recount equally the chivalrous episode of Charles Edward and the heroic death of Wolfe—the inglorious capitulation of Cornwallis, and the matchless triumphs of Clive. That the two first volumes of his work have not disappointed the public expectation is proved by the fact, that, before two months had elapsed from publication, they had already reached a third edition.

We shall not, in treating of the merits of this very remarkable production, adopt the not uncommon practice of reviewers on such occasions. We shall not pretend to be better informed on the details of the subject than the author. We shall not set up the reading of a few weeks or months against the study of half a lifetime. We shall not imitate certain critics who look at the bottom of the pages for the authorities of the author, and, having got the clue to the requisite information, proceed to examine with the utmost minuteness every particular of his narrative, and make in consequence a vast display of knowledge wholly derived from the reading which he has suggested. We shall not be so deluded as to suppose we have made a great discovery in biography, because we have ascertained that some Lady Caroline of the last generation was born 393
on the 7th October 1674, instead of the 8th February 1675, as the historian, with shameful negligence, has affirmed; nor shall we take credit to ourselves for a journey down to Hampshire to consult the parish register on the subject. As little shall we in future accuse Macaulay of inaccuracy in describing battles, because on referring, without mentioning it, to the military authorities he has quoted, and the page he has referred to, we have discovered that at some battle, as Malplaquet, Lottum's men stood on the right of the Prince of Orange, when he says they stood on the left; or that Marlborough dined on a certain day at one o'clock, when in point of fact he did not sit down, as is proved by incontestable authority, till half-past two. We shall leave such minute and Lilliputian criticisms to the minute and Lilliputian minds by whom alone they are ever made. Mr Macaulay can afford to smile at all reviewers who affect to possess more than his own gigantic stores of information.

In the first place, we must bestow the highest praise on the general sketch of English history which he has given down to the period of Charles. Such a *precis* forms the most appropriate introduction to his work, and it is done with a penetration and justice which leaves nothing to be desired. Several of his remarks are equally original and profound, and applicable—not only to a right understanding of the thread of former events, but to the social questions with which the nation is engaged at the present moment. We allude in particular to the observations that the spread of the Reformation has been everywhere commensurate with that of the Teutonic race, and that it has never been able to take root among those of Celtic descent; that, in modern times, the spread of intelligence and the vigour of the human mind, has been coextensive with the establishment of the Reformed opinions, while despotism in governments, and slumber in their subjects, has characterised, with certain brilliant exceptions of infidel passion, those in which the ancient faith is still prevalent; and that the Romish belief and observances were the greatest blessing to humanity, during the violence and barbarism of the middle ages, but the reverse among enlightened nations of modern times. It is refreshing to see opinions of this obviously just and important kind advanced, and distinctions drawn, by a writer of the high celebrity and vast knowledge of Mr Macaulay. It is still more important when we have only just emerged from an age in which the admission of the Roman Catholics into parliament was so strenuously recommended, as the greatest boon which could possibly be conferred on society—and are entering on another, in which its ceremonies and excitements have become the refuge of so many even in this country, at least of the softer sex, and in the highest ranks, with whom the usual attractions of the world have begun to fail or become insipid—to see the evident tendency of the Romish faith characterised in a manner equally removed from the bigoted prejudices of the Puritans, and the blind passion of modern Catholic proselytism, by an author bred up amid the din of Roman Catholic Emancipation, and a distinguished contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*.

We wish we could bestow equal praise on the justice of the views, and impartiality of the delineation of character, in the critical period of the Great Rebellion, which Mr Macaulay treats more at length; and lest he should fear that our praise will be valueless, as being that of a panegyric, we shall be proud to give him fierce battle on that point. We thank God we are not only old Tories, but, as the Americans said of a contemporary historian, the "*oldest of Tories*;" and we are weak enough to be confirmed in our opinions by the evident fact that they are those of a small minority of the present age. It is not likely, therefore, that we should not find an opportunity to break a lance with our author in regard to Charles I. and the Great Rebellion. We must admit, however, that Mr Macaulay is much more impartial in his estimate of that event, than he was in some of his previous essays; that he gives with anxious fairness the arguments on the opposite side of the question; and that he no longer represents the royal victim as now a favourite only with women—and that because his countenance is pacific and handsome on the 394
canvass of Vandyke, and he took his son often on his knee, and kissed him.

Mr Macaulay represents the Great Rebellion as a glorious and salutary struggle for the liberties of England;—a struggle to the success of which, against the tyranny of the Stuarts, the subsequent greatness of England is mainly to be ascribed. The trial and execution of Charles I. he describes as an event melancholy, and to be deplored; but unavoidable and necessary, in consequence of the perfidy and deceit of a "man whose whole life had been a series of attacks on

the liberties of England." He does full justice to the courage and dignity with which he met his fate, but holds that he was deservedly destroyed, though in a most violent and illegal manner, in consequence of his flatteries and machinations.[6] "There never," says he, "was a politician to whom so many frauds and falsehoods were brought home by undeniable evidence." We take a directly opposite view of the question. We consider the resistance of the Long Parliament to Charles as a series of selfish and unprincipled acts of treason against a lawful sovereign; not less fatal to the liberties of the country at the time, than they were calculated in the end to have proved to its independence, and which would long ere this have worked out its ruin, if another event had not, in a way which its author did not intend, worked out a cure for the disease. We consider the civil war as commenced from blind selfishness, "ignorant impatience of taxation," and consummated under the combined influence of hypocritical zeal and guilty ambition. We regard the death of Charles as an atrocious and abominable murder, vindicated by no reasons of expedience, authorised by no principle of justice, which has lowered for ever England to the level of the adjoining nations in the scale of crime; and which, had it not been vindicated by subsequent loyalty and chivalrous feeling, in the better part of the people, would long since have extinguished alike its liberties and its independence. Even Hume has represented the conduct and motives of the leaders of the Long Parliament in too favourable a light—and it is no wonder he did so, for it is only since his time that the selfish Passions have been brought into play on the political theatre—which at once explains the difficulties with which Charles had to struggle, and put in a just light his tragic fate.

Mr Hume represents the Long Parliament, in the commencement of the contest with the king, as influenced by a generous desire to secure and extend the liberties of their country, and as making use of the constitutional privilege of giving or withholding supplies for that important object. If this was really their object, we should at once admit they acted the part of true patriots, and are entitled to the lasting gratitude of their country and the world. But, admitting this was what they professed, that this was their stalking-horse, in what respect did their conduct correspond with such patriotic declarations? Did they use either their legitimate or usurped power for the purpose of extending and confirming the liberties of their country, or even diminishing the weight of the public burdens which pressed most severely on the people? So far from doing so, they multiplied these burdens fiftyfold; they levied them, not by the authority of parliament, but by the terrors of military execution; and while they refused to the entreaties of the king the pittance of a few hundred thousand pounds, to put the coasts in a state of defence, and protect the commerce of his subjects, they levied of their own authority, and without parliamentary sanction, no less than *eighty-four millions* sterling, between 1640 and 1659, in the form of military contributions—levied for no other purpose but to deluge the kingdom with blood, destroy its industry, and subject its liberties to the ruin of military oppression. True, Charles I. dissolved many parliaments, was often hasty and intemperate in the mode of doing so; for eleven years reigned without a House of Commons, and brought on the collision by his attempt to levy ship-money, for the protection of the coasts, of his own authority. But why did he do so? Why did he endeavour to dispense with the old and venerable name of parliament, and incur the odium, and run the risk, of governing alone in a country where the hereditary revenue was so scanty, and the passion for freedom so strong that, even with all the aids from parliament, he had never enjoyed so large an income as two millions a-year? Simply because he was driven to it by necessity; because he found it was absolutely impossible to get on with parliaments which obstinately refused to discharge their first of duties—that of providing for the public defence—or discharge his duties as chief magistrate of the realm, in conformity either with his coronation oath or the plain necessities and obligations of his office, from the invincible resistance which the House of Commons, on every occasion, made to parting with money.



Their conduct was regulated by a very plain principle—it was perfectly consistent, and such as, under the existing constitution, could not fail very soon to bring government to a dead-lock, and compel the sovereign either at once to abdicate his authority, or barter it away piecemeal against small grants of money, reluctantly, and in the most parsimonious spirit, granted by his subjects. They said, "Govern any way you please, defend the country the best way you can, get out of your difficulties as you think fit, but do not come to us for money. Anything but that. It is your business to defend us, it is not ours to contribute to our defence. Let our coasts be insulted by the French, or pillaged by the Dutch; let our trade be ruined, and even our fishermen chased into their harbours, by the Continental privateers; but don't come to us for money. If we give you anything, it will be as little as we can in decency offer; and, in return for such liberal concessions, you must on every occasion surrender an important part of the prerogative of the crown." The king did this for some years after he came to the throne, always trusting that his concessions would secure at length a liberal supply of money, for the public defence, from the House of Commons. He said, and said with truth, that he had conceded more to his subjects than any monarch that ever sat on the throne of England. The Petition of Rights, granted early in his reign, proved this: it contained nearly all the guarantees since desired or obtained for English freedom. But all was unavailing. The Commons would give no money, or they would give it only in exchange for the most essential prerogatives of the crown, without which public defence was impossible, and anarchy must have usurped its place.

They began the civil war at length, and handed the nation over to the horrors of domestic slaughter and military despotism, because the king would not consent to part with the command of the armed force—a requisition so monstrous that it plainly amounted to an abrogation of the royal authority, and has never, since the Restoration, been seriously contended for by Radicals, Repealers, or Chartists, even in the worst periods of the Irish Rebellion or French Revolution. It

is not surprising that subsequent times for long mistook the real nature of the king's situation, and threw on him blame for events of which, in reality, he was blameless. Mankind were not then so well acquainted as they have since become, with the strength of an ignorant impatience of taxation. Since then, they have seen it divide the greatest empires, ruin the most celebrated commonwealths, disgrace the most famed republics, paralyse the most powerful states. It has broken down the central authority, and divided into separate kingdoms the once puissant German empire; it has ruined and brought partition on the gallant Polish democracy; it induced on France the horrors of the Revolution, and permanently destroyed its liberties by causing the Notables to refuse Calonne's proposition for equal taxation; it has disgraced the rise of American freedom, by the selfishness of repudiation and the cupidity of conquest. These were the evils, and this the disgrace, which Charles I. strove to avert in his contest with the Long Parliament; these the evils, and this the disgrace, which their leaders strove to impose on this country. We have only to look at the Free-trade Hall at Manchester, at this time re-echoing with applause at proposals to disband our army and sell our ships, in order to be able to sell cotton goods a halfpenny per pound cheaper than at present, to see what was the spirit with which Charles I. had to contend during the Great Rebellion. 396

Historians have often expressed their surprise at the vigour of the rule of Cromwell, and the energetic manner in which he caused the national flag to be respected by foreign states. But, without detracting from the well-earned fame of the Protector in this respect, it may safely be affirmed, that the main cause of his success in foreign transactions was, that he had got the means of making the English pay taxes. He levied them with the sabre and the bayonet. Between contributions, sequestrations, and impositions, his commissioners contrived to wrench enormous sums, for those days, out of the country. He raised the revenue from £2,000,000 a-year to nearly £6,000,000. He got quit of the disagreeable burden of parliamentary grants. He found his troops much more effectual tax-gatherers. He did what, by gentler means, and in a less oppressive way, Charles had tried to do. He levied sums from the nation adequate for the public defence, and which enabled it to take the place to which it was entitled in the scale of nations. Had the original leaders of the Long Parliament not been superseded by his iron hand, they would have left England as much exposed to foreign insult, as much in peril of foreign invasion, as Poland proved from the triumph of the same selfish principles.

It is true Charles at length became a dissembler, and made many promises which were afterwards broken. But why did he become a dissembler? How did it happen that his nature, originally open, unreserved, and chivalrous, even to a fault, became at length cautious, and marked by dissimulation? Simply because he was assailed on all sides by dissemblers and dissimulators. He was driven to it by stern necessity in his own defence, and as the only way of carrying on the government. The whole conduct of his parliaments to him was one tissue of falsehood and deceit. They constantly professed loyalty with their lips, while they were thinking only of treason in their hearts; they were loud in their protestations of zeal for the public service, when they were thinking only of keeping close their purse-strings, and shaking off every imaginable tax levied for the public defence. Like their descendants in Transatlantic realms, they, "preferred any load of infamy, however great, to any burden of taxation, however light." It was only by fair words, by promising more than he was able to perform, by bartering the prerogative of the crown for parsimonious grants—£200,000 one year, £300,000 another—that he was able to provide, in the most penurious way, for the public service. His faithful Commons were impressed with the idea, and proceeded on the principle, that the monarch was an enemy cased in armour, and that it was their business to strip him of every article he possessed, so as to leave him entirely at their mercy, and reduce the government to a pure untaxed democracy. They first got the shield; they next seized the helmet; the breast-plate could not long be withheld; and at last they began to fight for the sword. Was consistency, or perfect sincerity of conduct, practicable with such men? Have not the English, in their wars in the East, been under the necessity of borrowing from their opponents much of their vigour and violence, and not unfrequently their ambition and dissimulation? Let us figure to ourselves Queen Victoria, without a national debt or parliamentary influence, going to Mr Cobden and the Commons in Free-Trade Hall, Manchester, and asking for funds to support the army and navy in a defensive war, which promised no extension of the market for cotton goods; or the president of the American republic proposing a direct income-tax of five per cent on his faithful repudiators, to support a war which held out a prospect neither of Mexican silver nor Californian gold, and we shall have some idea of the difficulties with which the unhappy Charles had to contend in his parliamentary struggles, and appreciate the stern necessity which turned even his noble and chivalrous character to temporary shifts, and sometimes discreditable expedients. 397

Again, as to the death of Charles, can it be regarded in any other light but as a foul and atrocious murder? He was tried neither by the Peers nor the Commons—neither by the courts of law, nor a national convention—but by a self-constituted junto of military officers, rebels to his government, traitors to their country, who, having exhausted in their remorseless career every imaginable crime of robbery, rape, arson, assault, and treason, now added WILFUL MURDER—cold-blooded murder, to the number. However it is viewed, the crime was equally unpardonable and inexpedient. If the country was still to be regarded as a monarchy, though torn by intestine divisions, then were Cromwell and all his brother regicides not only murderers, but traitors, for they put to death their lawful sovereign. If the bonds of allegiance are to be held as having been broken in the preceding convulsions, and the contest considered as that of one state with another—which is the most favourable view to adopt for the regicides—then Charles, when he fell into their hands, was a prisoner of war; and it was as much murder to put him to death as it would

have been in the English, if they had slain Napoleon when he came on board the Bellerophon, or in Charles V., if he had despatched Francis I. when he became his prisoner after the battle of Pavia. The immediate object at issue when the civil war began—the right claimed by the Commons of appointing officers to the militia—was one in which they were clearly and confessedly in the wrong, and one which, if granted by Charles, as all the previous demands of the Commons had been, would infallibly have landed the nation in the bottomless pit of an untaxed, unbridled, and senseless democracy, as incapable of self-defence as Poland, as regardless of external rights as Rome in ancient, or America in modern times.

The extreme peril to English liberties and independence which arose from the exorbitant pretensions and disastrous success of the Long Parliament, with their canting military successors, distinctly appears in the deplorable state and disgraceful situation of England from the Restoration in 1661 to the Revolution in 1688. Notwithstanding all their professions of regard for freedom, and their anxiety to secure the liberties of the subject, the Long Parliament had done nothing for either in future times, while they had destroyed both in present. They had not even introduced a *habeas corpus* act to guard against arbitrary imprisonment. They had not given life appointments to the judges. They had made no provision for the impartial selection of juries. They had left the courts of law what, till the Revolution, they had ever been in English history—the arena in which the contending factions in the state alternately overthrew or murdered each other. They were too decided tyrants in their hearts to part with any of the weapons of tyranny in their hands. They had made no permanent provision for the support of the crown, or the maintenance of a force by sea and land adequate to the public defence; but left their sovereign at the mercy of a parliament of Cavaliers eager for vengeance, thirsting for blood, but nearly as indisposed to make any suitable grants for the public service as any of their predecessors had been. The "ignorant impatience of taxation" was as conspicuous in the parsimony of their supplies as it had been in those of Charles's parliament. But such was the strength of the reaction in favour of monarchy and royal authority, in consequence of the intensity of the evils which had been suffered from democratic and parliamentary government, that there was scarcely any sacrifice of public liberties that the royalist parliaments were not at first disposed to have made, provided it could be done without trenching on their pecuniary resources. An *untaxed despotism* was their idea of the perfection of government, as an untaxed republic had been the bright vision of the parliamentary leaders. Had Charles II. been a man of as much vigour and perseverance as he was of quickness and talent, and had his abilities, which were wasted in the boudoirs of the Duchess of Portsmouth or the Countess of Castlemaine, been devoted, like those of Louis XI. or Cardinal Richelieu, to a systematic attack on the public liberties, he might, without difficulty, have subverted the freedom of England, and left, as a legacy of the Long Parliament, to future times, not only the murder of their sovereign, but the final ruin of the national liberties.



Mr Macaulay has done one essential service to the cause of truth by the powerful and graphic, and, we doubt not, correct account he has given in his first volume of the desperate feuds of the rival parties with each other during this reign, and the universal prostitution of the forms of justice, and the sanctity of courts of law, to the most cruel and abominable purposes. There is no picture of human iniquity and cruelty more revolting than is presented in the alternate triumphs of the Whig and Tory parties, from the excitement produced by the Popish and Ryehouse plots, and the noble blood which was shed alternately by both parties in torrents on the scaffold, to allay the terrors of insensate folly, or satiate the revenge of aroused indignation. The hideous iniquity of the courts of law during those disastrous days, and the entire concurrence of the ruling majority of the moment in their atrocious proceedings, demonstrate how lamentably the Long Parliament had failed in erecting any bulwarks for the public liberties, or strengthening the foundations of public virtue. At the same time, the disgraceful spectacle of our fleets swept from the Channel, or burnt in their harbours by the Dutch, proves how wretched a provision the Great Rebellion had made for the lasting defence of the realm. Nor was private morality, either in high or low places, on a better footing. The king and all his ministers received the pensions of Louis XIV.; the whole leaders of the patriots, from Algernon Sidney downwards, with the exception of Lord Russell, followed his example. The ladies of the metropolis, as well as the court, were intent only on intrigue. The licentiousness of the stage was such as almost exceeds belief. Nothing was thought of in the House of Commons but saving money, or satisfying revenge. Such was the parsimony of parliament, whether the majority was Whig or Royalist, that the most necessary expenses of the royal household could only be defrayed by pensions from France. French mistresses directed the king's councils, and almost exclusively occupied his time; French alliance misdirected the national forces; French manners entirely subverted the national morals. England, from its vacillation in foreign policy, had forfeited all the respect of foreign nations, while, from the general selfishness and corruption which prevailed, it had lost all respect for itself. The Long Parliament and Great Rebellion, from the necessary reaction, to which they gave rise, of loyalty against treason, and of the thirst for pleasure against the cant of hypocrisy, had all but ruined England; for they had exchanged its liberties for tyranny, its morals for licentiousness.

In truth England *was ruined*, both externally and internally, from these causes, had it not been for one of those events by which Providence at times confounds the counsels of men, and changes the destiny of nations. The accession of James II., and the systematic attack which, in concert with Louis XIV., he made on the Protestant faith, at length united all England against the fatal attempt. The spectacle of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in France, in November 1605, showed the Protestants what they had to expect from the measures simultaneously adopted, and in virtue of a secret compact, by James II. in England. The Treaty of Augsburg in 1686, by which

the Protestant states of the Continent were united in a league against this Roman Catholic invasion, and to which William III. on the Revolution, immediately got England to accede, was the foundation of the grand alliance which secured independence to the Reformed faith, and liberty to Europe, as effectually as the grand alliance in 1813 rescued it from the tyranny of Napoleon. We go along entirely with Mr Macaulay's admirable account of the causes which led to the general coalition of parties against James—the abominable cruelty of Jeffrey's campaign in the west, after the suppression of Monmouth's rebellion, and the evident determination the monarch evinced to force the slavery and absurdities of the Romish faith on a nation too generally enlightened to submit to either. It is refreshing to see these just and manly sentiments, so long the glory of England, coming from a man of his weight and learning, after the sickly partiality for Roman Catholic agitators which, for the purposes of faction, have so long pervaded many of his party, and the inexplicable return to the sway of priests and confessors which has recently appeared among some of our women of fashion. We hold that James justly forfeited his crown for his share in these atrocious proceedings, and entirely concur with Mr Macaulay in regarding the Revolution as the turning-point of English history—the *terminus a quo*, from which we are to date its celebrity in arms and literature, its mighty advance in strength and power, and the establishment of its liberties on a lasting foundation. We congratulate the country that the task of recording the circumstances, and tracing the consequences of this great event, has fallen into the hands of a gentleman so singularly qualified to do it justice, and sincerely wish him a long lease of life and health to bring his noble work to a conclusion.



If we were disposed to criticise at all the manner in which he has executed the part of this great work hitherto presented to the public, we should say that, in the tracing the causes of events, he ascribes too much to domestic, and too little to foreign influences; and that in the delineation of character, though he never advances what is false, he not unfrequently conceals, or touches but lightly, on what is true. He represents England as almost entirely regulated in its movements by internal agitation or parliamentary contests; forgetting that that agitation, and these contests, were in general themselves, in great part, produced by the simultaneous changes going on in opinion and external relations on the Continent. His history, as yet at least, is too exclusively English, not sufficiently European. Thus he mentions only incidentally, and in three lines, the treaty of Augsburg in 1686, which bound Protestant Europe against France, and entirely regulated the external policy and internal thought of England for the next century. So also in the delineation of character: we can never fall to admire what he has done, but we have sometimes cause to regret what he has left undone. He has told us, what is undoubtedly true, that James II. did not, after the struggle began in England, evince the courage, he had previously shown in action with the Dutch; but he has not told us what is equally true, that in those actions he had fought as often, and evinced heroism as great, as either Nelson or Collingwood. He has told us that James sedulously attended to the royal navy, and was successful because he was the only honest man in his dockyards; but he has not told us what is equally true, that it was that attention to the navy, and the effort to raise funds for it, which the Long Parliament from selfish parsimony positively refused to grant, which cost Charles I. his throne and life, and, now renewed by his son, laid the foundation of the navy which gained the battle of La Hogue, 1692, broke the naval power of Louis XIV., and for the next century determined the maritime struggle between France and England.

He has told us sufficiently often, that the beginning of the Duke of Marlborough's fortunes was the gift of £5000, which he received from the beautiful mistress of the king, Lady Castlemaine. This is undoubtedly true; and he has added what we have no doubt is equally so, that on one occasion he was so near being caught with her ladyship that he only escaped by leaping out of the window. He has added, also, that whenever he was going to do anything particularly base, Marlborough always began speaking about his conscience, and the Protestant faith. We have no objection to the leaping the window, for it is very probable, and at all events *piquant*—and *se non e vero e ben trovato*; but we object vehemently to his protestations in favour of the Reformed religion being set down as a hypocritical cover for base and selfish designs, for that is imputing motives—a mode of proceeding never allowed in the humblest court of justice, and in an especial manner reprehensible in a firstrate historian, who is painting a character for the instruction and consideration of future times. And since Mr Macaulay has so prominently brought forward what is to be blamed in Marlborough's career, (and no one can condemn more severely than we do his treachery to James, though it has been so long praised by Whig writers,) we hope he will record with equal accuracy, and tell as often, that he refused repeatedly the offer of the government of the Low Countries, with its magnificent appointment of £60,000 a-year, made to him by the Emperor after the battle of Ramilies, lest by accepting it he should induce dissension in the alliance; that his private correspondence with the duchess evinces throughout the war the most anxious desire for its termination; and that, at the time when the factious Tory press represented him as prolonging hostilities for his own sordid purposes, he was anxiously endeavouring to effect a general pacification at the conferences of Gertruydenberg, and writing a private and very earnest letter to his nephew, the Duke of Berwick, then at the head of the French army, urging him to use his influence with Louis XIV. in order to bring about a peace. We would strongly recommend Mr Macaulay to consider the advice we have heard given to a historian in the delineation of character: "Make it a point of conscience to seek out, and give with full force, all authentic *favourable* anecdotes of persons whom you *dislike*, or to whose opinions you are *opposed*. As to those whom you like, or who are of your own party, you may exercise your own discretion."



Cordially concurring, however, as we do with Mr Macaulay, in his estimate of the beneficial

effects of the Revolution of 1688, there is one peculiar benefit which he may possibly not bring so prominently forward as its importance deserves, and which, therefore, we are anxious to impress upon the public mind. It is true that it purified the bench, confirmed the Habeas Corpus Act, closed the human shambles which the Court of King's Bench had been, pacified Scotland, and for above a century effected the prodigy of keeping Ireland quiet. But did yet greater things than these; and the era of the Revolution is chiefly remarkable for the new dynasty having taught the government *how to raise taxes in the country*, and thus brought England to take the place to which she was entitled in the scale of nations, by bringing the vast national resources to bear upon the national struggles. Charles I. had lost his crown and his head in the attempt to raise money—first legally, and then, when he failed in that, illegally—in the realm, adequate to the national defence. Cromwell had asserted the national dignity in an honourable way, only because his troops gave him the means of levying sufficient supplies, for the first time in English history, at the point of the bayonet. But with the termination of his iron rule, and the restoration of constitutional sway at the Restoration, the old difficulty about supplies returned, and government, to all practical purpose,was nearly brought to a dead-lock. The Commons, now Royalist, would vote nothing, or next to nothing, in the way of money; and the nation was defeated and disgraced, from the impossibility of discovering any way of making it vote money for its own defence. But that which the Stuarts could never effect by appeals to honour, spirit, or patriotism, William III. and Anne soon found the means of accomplishing, by bringing into play, and enlisting on their side, different and less creditable motives. They did not oppose honour and patriotism to interest, but they contrived to rear up one set of interests to combat another. They brought with them from Holland, where it had been long practised, and was perfectly understood, the art of managing public assemblies. They no longer bullied the House of Commons—*they bribed it*; and, strange to say, it is to the entire success of the gigantic system of borrowing, expending, and corrupting, which they introduced, and which their successors so faithfully followed, that the subsequent greatness of England is mainly to be ascribed.

William III., on his accession, immediately joined the league of Augsburg against France—a league obviously rendered necessary by the exorbitant ambition and priest-ridden tyranny of Louis XIV.; and the contest, brought to a glorious termination by the treaty of Ryswick in 1697, was but a prelude to the triumphant War of the Succession, abruptly closed by the discreditable 401
peace of Utrecht in 1714. That England was the life and soul of this alliance, and that Marlborough was the right arm which won its glorious victories, is universally acknowledged; but it is not equally known, what is not less true, that it was the system of managing the House of Commons by means of loans, good places, and bribes, which alone provided the sinews of war, and prepared the triumphs of Blenheim and Ramilies. It is true the nation was, at first at least, hearty and unanimous in the contest, both from religious zeal for the Reformation and national rivalry with France; but experience had shown that, when the prospect of private plunder, as in the wars of the Edwards and Henrys, did not arouse the national strength, it was a matter of absolute impossibility to get the House of Commons to vote the necessary supplies for any time together. No necessity, however urgent, no danger, however pressing,—no claims of justice, no considerations of expedience, no regard for their children, no consideration for themselves, could induce the English of those days to vote anything like an adequate amount of taxes. As this was the state of matters in this country at the time when the whole resources of the neighbouring kingdoms were fully drawn forth by despotic power, and Louis XIV. had two hundred thousand gallant soldiers under arms, and sixty sail of the line afloat, it is evident that, unless some method of conquering this reluctance had been devised, England must speedily have been conquered and partitioned, or have sunk into the rank of a third-rate power like Sweden. But William III., before the Protestant zeal cooled, and the old love of money returned, provided a new and all-powerful agent to combat it. He founded the national debt! He and Anne raised it, between 1688 and 1708, from £661,000 to £54,000,000. He tripled the revenue, and gave so much of it to the House of Commons that they cordially agreed to the tripling. He spent largely; he corrupted still more largely. He no longer attacked in front the battery; he turned it, got into the redoubt by the gorge, and directed its guns upon the enemy. He made the national interests in support of taxation more powerful than those operating to resist it. Thence the subsequent greatness and glory of England—for by no other possible method could the impatience of taxation, so strongly rooted in the nation, have been overcome, or the national armaments have been placed on the footing rendered necessary, either for securing the national defence, or asserting the national honour.

The whole Whig Ministers, from the Revolution to 1762, when they were dispossessed of power by George III. and Lord Bute, acted on this system of government by influence and corruption. Mr Macaulay's ample acquaintance with the memoirs, published and unpublished, of that period, will doubtless enable him to give numerous anecdotes on the subject, as true and as amusing as Marlborough's leaping from Lady Castlemaine's window, or James II.'s thraldom to Catherine Sedley. The memoirs on the subject that have recently come out, give details of corruption so barefaced and gross that they would exceed belief, if their frequency, and the testimony to their authenticity from different quarters, did not defy disbelief. It is now known that, when Sir Robert Walpole's parliamentary supporters were invited to his ministerial dinner, each of them found a £500 note under his napkin.

We do not blame the Whigs for this wholesale system of influence and corruption, which pervaded every class of society, and regulated the disposal of every office, from the humblest exciseman to the prime minister. There was no other way of doing. But for it, government would, a century and a half ago, have been brought to a stand, and the nation defeated and subjugated.

We are no supporters of corruption, or the influence of money, if higher and nobler principles of action can be brought into play, and rejoice that it has now for nearly a century been exchanged for the less offensive and demoralising, but not less effectual system of influence and patronage. 402
But, though much higher motives are sometimes most powerful on extraordinary occasions, all experience proves that, at ordinary times, and in the long run, it is in vain to attempt to combat one interest but by another interest. If any man doubts it, let him try to persuade the free-trade audiences at Manchester to agree to a duty on cotton goods to uphold the navy, or the Irish in Ulster to agree to a rate to save their countrymen in Connaught from dying of famine, or the Scotch lairds to agree to a tax for a rural police, to save themselves from robbery and murder. We should rejoice if men, as a body, could be brought to act only from pure and honourable motives; but, taking them as they are, we are thankful for any system which brings the selfish motives round to the side of patriotism, and causes parliamentary influence to save us from the Russian knout or French requisitions.

One of the most interesting and original parts of Mr Macaulay's work is the account he has given, in the first volume, of the manners and customs, habits of the people, and state of society in England, prior to the Revolution, compared with what now exists. In doing so, he has only exemplified what, in his admirable essay on history in the *Edinburgh Review*, he has described as a leading object in that species of composition; and it must be confessed that his example tends greatly to show the truth of his precept. This part of his work is learned, laborious, elaborate, and in the highest degree amusing. It is also in many respects, and in no ordinary degree, instructive. But it has the same fault as the other parts of his work—it is *one-sided*. It exhibits, in the highest degree, the skill of the pleader, the brilliancy of the painter, the power of the rhetorician; but it does not equally exhibit the reflection of the sage, or the impartiality of the judge. It savours too much of a brilliant party essay in the *Edinburgh Review*. Mr Macaulay's object is to *write up* the present times and *write down* the past; and we fully admit he has done so with the greatest ability. But we are thoroughly convinced his picture, how graphic soever, is in great part deceptive. It tells the truth, but not the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It represents the ludicrous and extreme features of society as its real and average characteristics; it bears, we are convinced, the same relation, in many respects, to the real aspect of times of which it treats, which the burlesques of Mrs Trollope do to the actual and entire features of Transatlantic society. These burlesques are very amusing; they furnish diverting drawing-room reading; but would a subsequent historian be justified in assuming them as the text-work of a grave and serious description of America in the nineteenth century? We have no doubt Mr Macaulay could produce an authority from a comedy, a tract, or a satire, for every fact he advances; but we have just as little doubt that hundreds of other facts, equally authentic and true, might be adduced of an opposite tendency, of which he says nothing; and therefore his charge to the jury, how able soever, is all on one side.

His object is to show that, in *every* respect, the present age is incomparably happier and more virtuous than those which have preceded it—a doctrine which has descended to him, in common with the whole liberal party of the world, from the visions of Rousseau. We, who have a firm belief in human corruption, alike from revelation and experience, believe such visions to be a perfect chimera, and that, after a certain period of efflorescence, decay and degradation are as inevitable to societies as to individual men. There can be no doubt that, in many respects, Mr Macaulay is right. The present age is far richer, more refined, and more luxurious than any which has preceded it. In a material view, the higher and middle classes enjoy advantages, and are habituated to comforts, unknown in any former age. The chances of life have increased over the whole population twenty-five, in the higher classes at least forty per cent. Humanity has made a most cheering progress: the barbarity of former days is not only unknown, but seems inconceivable. A British tradesman is better clothed, fed, and lodged, than a Plantagenet baron. So far all is true; but *audi alteram partem*. Are we equally disinterested, magnanimous, and 403
brave, with the nations or ages which have preceded us? Are the generous affections equally victorious over the selfish? Are the love of gain, the thirst for pleasure, the passion for enjoyment, such very weak passions amongst us, that they could be readily supplanted by the ardour of patriotism, the self-denial of virtue, the heroism of duty? Would modern England have engaged in a crusade for the deliverance of the holy sepulchre? Would the merchants of London set fire to their stock-exchange and capital, as those of Numantia or Saguntum did, to save it from the spoiler? Will Free-trade Hall ever overflow with patriotic gifts, as the Bourse at Moscow did in 1812? We have laid out a hundred and fifty millions on railways, in the hope of getting a good dividend in this world: would we lay out one million in building another York Cathedral, or endowing another Greenwich Hospital? Have we no experience of an age

"When wealth accumulates and men decay?"

These are the questions an impartial judge will ask himself after reading Mr Macaulay's brilliant diatribe on the past, in his first volume.

He tells us that the country gentlemen, before the Revolution were mere ignorant country bumpkins, few of whom could read or write, and who, when they for once in their lives came up to London, went staring about on Holborn or Ludgate Hill, till a spout of water from some impending roof fell into their mouths, while a thief was fumbling in their pockets, or a painted denizen from some of the neighbouring purlieus decoyed him into her bower. Be it so. It was these country bumpkins who gained the battles of Cressy, Poitiers, Azincour, and Flodden; they

built York Cathedral and St Paul's; their sons gained the victories of Sluys and La Hogue, of Ramilies and Blenheim; they were ennobled by the devotion and sufferings of the cavaliers. We hope their well-fed, long-lived, and luxurious descendants would rise from their beds of down to do the same. He tells us the clergy of the age of Charles II. were almost all drawn from the very humblest classes, that their education was very imperfect, and that they occupied so low a place in society that no lady's-maid, who had hopes of the steward, would look at them; and that they were often glad to take up with a damsel whose character had been blown upon by the young squire. Be it so: that age produced the Clarkes and the Cudworths, the Barrows and the Tillotsons, the Taylors and the Newtons, the Halls and the Hookers, of the Church of England; and their efforts stemmed the torrent of licentiousness which, in reaction against the cant of the Covenanters, deluged the country on the accession of Charles II. The schools and colleges in which they were bred had produced Milton and Spencer, Shakspeare and Bacon, John Locke and Sir Isaac Newton. We hope that the labours of their "honourable and reverend" successors, who have been so highly educated at Oxford and Cambridge, may be equally successful in eradicating the prevailing vices of the present age, and that, after the lapse of a century and a half, their works will occupy as high place in general estimation.

To illustrate our meaning, we shall extract two paragraphs from a manuscript work on Contemporary History, which recently passed through our hands, and ask Mr Macaulay himself whether he can gainsay any fact it advances, and yet whether he will admit the justice of the picture which it draws.

"The British empire, from 1815 to 1848, exhibited the most extraordinary social and political features that the world had ever seen. No former period had presented so complete a commentary on the maxim, 'extremes meet.' It immediately succeeded the termination of a desperate and costly war, in the course of which the most herculean efforts for the national defence and the interests of the empire had been made; and it witnessed the abandonment of them all. Twenty years of desperate hostility had bequeathed to it untouched a sinking fund of fifteen millions annually; thirty-five years of unbroken peace saw that sinking fund extinguished. Protection to industry—support of the colonies—upholding of the navy, had been the watchwords of the nation during the war. Free trade, disregard of the colonies, cheap freights, became the ruling maxims during the peace which it had purchased. The only intelligible principle of action in the people seemed to be to change everything, and undo all that had been done. The different classes of society, during this divergence, became as far separated in station and condition as in opinion. The rich were every day growing richer, the poor poorer. The wealth of London, and of a few great houses in the country, exceeded all that the imagination of the East had conceived in the *Arabian Nights*: the misery of Ireland, and of the manufacturing towns, outstripped all that the imagination of Dante had figured of the terrible. The first daily exhibited, during the season, all the marvels of Aladdin's palace; the last, at the same period, presented all the horrors of Ugolino's prison. Undeniable statistics proved the reality and universality of this extraordinary state of things, which had become so common as to cease to attract attention. The income-tax returns established the existence of £200,000,000 annual income above £150, in Great Britain alone, by far the greater part of which was the produce of realised wealth; while the poor-law returns exhibited, in the two islands, four millions of paupers, or a full seventh of the population subsisting on public charity. The burden of the poor-rates in the two islands rose, before the close of the period, to £8,000,000 a-year, besides £1,300,000 for county rates. Population had increased fast, but crime far faster: it had, during forty years, advanced *ten times* as fast as the numbers of the people. General distress prevailed during the period among the working classes, interrupted only by occasional and deceptive gleams of sunshine. So acute did it become in 1847 that a noble grant of £10,000,000 from the British parliament alone prevented two millions of Irish dying of famine; as it was, 250,000 in that single year perished from starvation, and as many, in that year and the next, were driven into exile from the United Kingdom. The people in Liverpool returned thanks to God when the inundation of Irish paupers sank to 2000 a-week. Glasgow, for two years, suffered under an infliction of above a thousand weekly, which in that short time raised its poor-rates from £20,000 to £200,000 a-year. During this protracted period of suffering, the feeling of the different classes of society became as much alienated as their interests had been. Rebellion broke out in Ireland; the West Indies were ruined, and the Chartists numbered their millions in England. The Treasury shared in the general distress. It had become impossible to raise funds from the nation adequate to its necessary expenses; and, at length, so pressing did the clamour for a reduction of taxation become, that it was seriously proposed, and loudly approved by a large and influential portion of the community, to sell our ships of war, disband our troops, and surrender ourselves unarmed to the tender mercies of the adjoining nations, when war with unwonted fierceness was raging both on the continent of Europe and in our Eastern dominions.



"Nor was the aspect of society more satisfactory in its social condition—the manners of the higher, or the habits of the lower orders. Intoxication, seemingly purposely encouraged by government by a large reduction of the duties on spirits, spread the most frightful demoralisation through our great towns. Licentiousness spread to an unparalleled extent in the metropolis, and all the principal towns; and the amount of female corruption on the streets, and at the theatres, exceeded anything ever witnessed since the days of Messalina or Theodora. The drama was ruined: it was supplanted, as always occurs in the decay of nations, by the melodrama; the theatre by the amphitheatre. Drury Lane was turned into an arena for wild beasts, Covent Garden into an Italian Opera. The, magnificent attractions of the opera exceeded anything ever witnessed before; the warmth of its scenes, and the liberal display of the charms of the

*danseuses*, did not prevent it from being nightly crowded by the whole rank and fashion of the metropolis. A universal thirst for gain or excitement had seized the nation. No danger, however great, no immorality, however crying, was able to stop them, when there was the prospect of a good dividend. At one period, a hundred and fifty millions were wasted in loans to "healthy young republics," as the Foreign Secretary himself admitted in parliament; at another, a still larger sum was laid out on domestic railways, not one half of which could ever produce anything. Three guineas a-night were habitually given for a single stall-seat at the Opera, to hear a Swedish singer, during the railway mania: but then the occupant was indifferent—he put it down to the railway, and came there, reeling from the champagne and hock drank at a neighbouring hotel, at its expense. Most of these railways were mere bubbles, never meant to go on; when the fortunate projectors had got the shares landed at a premium in the hands of the widow and the orphan, they let it go to the bottom. There was a great talk about religion, but the talkers were not always exclusively set on things above. Fine ladies sometimes asked a sly question on coming out of their third service on Sunday, or their second on Friday, what was the price of Great Westerns, or whether the broad or the narrow gauge was likely to carry the day. The reading of men was chiefly confined to the newspapers; of women to novels, or occasional morsels of scandal from scandalous trials. There was great talk about the necessity of keeping up the tone of public morality; but it was appearances, not realities, which were chiefly aimed at. 'Not to leave undone, but to keep unknown,' was the maxim of the London, as it had been of the Venetian dames; the delinquents who were punished were chastised, like the Spartan youths, not for what they had done, but for what they had let be discovered. So capricious was public opinion in this particular, in the very highest circles, that it was stated by the most popular author of the day, in the *Edinburgh Review*, that the English women wakened every seven years, and massacred some unfortunate detected delinquent: they then fell asleep, satisfied with the sacrifice to propriety, for seven years, when they slaughtered another, and again sunk into a third septennial torpor. Meanwhile the morals of the manufacturing districts were daily getting worse; millions existed there who did not attend divine service on Sunday; hundreds of thousands who had never been in a church; thousands who had never heard the name of Jesus but in an oath. A hideous mass of heathen profligacy had arisen in the heart of a Christian land. From it thousands of both sexes were annually sent up to the metropolis to feed its insatiable passions, or sacrifice their souls and bodies on the altar of Moloch."

So far our unpublished manuscript. Mr Macaulay is too well acquainted with passing events not to know that every word in the preceding picture is true, and too candid not to admit that all these observations are just. But he knows there is something to be said on the other side. He is familiar with a counter set of facts; and he could in half-an-hour write two paragraphs on the state of the country during the same period, equally true and striking, which would leave on the mind of the reader an impression of a directly opposite character. Where is the truth to be found between such opposite statements, both true in regard to the same period? In the *combination of both*, and an impartial summing up by the historian of the inferences deducible from *both sets of facts*, equally clearly and forcibly given. It is this statement of the facts on both sides which, amidst all our admiration for his genius, we often desiderate in Mr Macaulay; and nothing but the adoption of it, and taking his seat on the *Bench instead of the Bar of History*, is required to render his noble work as weighty as it is able, and as influential in forming the opinion of future ages, as it unquestionably will be in interesting the present.

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# JOHNSTON'S PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.[7]

In this age of scientific illustration, no more splendid work has been produced than the one of which we now give some general notice to our readers. It is not our purpose to panegyrise either the work or the author; but it is only justice to say, that no work more distinguished by completeness of knowledge on its subject—by the novelty, variety, and depth of its researches—by the skill of its arrangement, and by the beauty of its engravings and typography—has ever appeared in this country, or in any other. It is a magnificent tribute to the science and to the skill of England.

The author, in his desire to acknowledge his obligations, by stating that his work is founded on the *Physical Atlas* of Professor Berghaus, has done himself injustice. His volume, though naturally availing itself of all contemporary knowledge, exhibits all the originality which can make it his own.

Of all modern sciences, the science of the globe has made the most rapid, the most remarkable, and the most important progress. Bacon makes the fine remark, that while the works of man advance by successive additions, the works of Nature all go on at once: thus the machinist adds wheel to wheel, and spring to spring, but the earth produces the tree, branch and bark, trunk and leaf, together. There is something analogous to this combined operation in physical geography: a whole crowd of remarkable discoveries seem to have burst on us at once, expressly designed to invigorate and impel our progress in geographical science. Thus, our century has witnessed new phenomena of magnetism, new laws of heat and refrigeration, new laws even of the tempest, new rules of the tides, new expedients for the preservation of health at sea, new arrangements for the supply of fresh food, and even for the supply of fresh water by distillation, and all tending to the

same object—the knowledge of the globe.

The use of steam, to which modern mechanism has given almost a new existence, and certainly a new power—the conquest of wind and wave by the steam-ship, and the almost miraculous saving of time and space by the steam-carriage; the new necessity of remote enterprise, originating in the urgency of commercial and manufacturing difficulties; the opening of the thousand islands of the Indian Archipelago, till now known to us as scarcely more than the seat of savage life, or the scene of Oriental fable; the breaking down of that old and colossal barrier of restrictions and prejudices, which, more than the wall of China, excluded England from intercourse with a population amounting to a third of mankind; and most of all, those vast visitations of apparent evil, which the great Disposer of things is evidently transmuting, year by year, into real good, by propelling the impoverished multitudes of Europe into the wildernesses of the world—all exhibiting a stupendous combination of simple means, and a not less astonishing convergency to the one high purpose, the mastery of the globe—place Physical Geography at the head of the sciences essential to the happiness and power of humankind.

In the glance which we shall give at this great science, we look only to the external structure of the earth; briefly protesting against all those theories which refer its origin to an earlier period, or a longer process, than the "six days" of Scripture. It is true, that Moses may not have been a philosopher, though the man "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" may have known more than many a philosopher of later days. It is equally true, that the object of the Book of Genesis was not to give a treatise on geology. But Moses was a historian—it is the express office of a 407
historian to state *facts*; and if Moses stated the "heavens and the earth, and all that therein is," to have been created and furnished in "six days," we must either receive the statement as true, or give up the historian as a fabricator. But if we believe, in compliance with the Divine word, that "all Scripture is by inspiration of God," by what subterfuge can we escape the conclusion, that the narrative of Genesis is divine? Or if, in the childish scepticism of the German school, we require a more positive testimony, what can be more positive than the declaration of the commandment of the Sabbath, "that in six days God made heaven and earth;" founding also upon this declaration the Sabbath—an institution meant for every age, and for the veneration and sanctification of every race of mankind? If such a declaration can be false, what can be true? If ever words were plain, those are the words of plainness. The law of Sinai was delivered with all the solemnities of a law forming the foundation of every future law of earth. It would have been as majestic, and as miraculous, to have fixed the creation at a million of years before the being of Adam. But we can discover no possible reason for the history, but that it was the truth. That truth is divine.

If the geologist shall persist in repeating, that the phenomena are incompatible with the history, our reply is, "Your science is still in its infancy—a science of a day, feebly beginning to collect facts, and still so weak as to enjoy the indulgence of extravagant conclusions. There have been a thousand theories of creation—each popular, arrogant, and self-satisfied, in its own time; each swept away by another equally popular, arrogant, and self-satisfied, and all equally deserving of rejection by posterity. You must acquire *all* the facts, before you *can* be qualified to theorise. The last and most consummate work of genius, and of centuries, is a true theory."

But, without dwelling further on this high subject, we must observe, that there is one inevitable fact, for which the modern geologist makes no provision whatever; and that fact is, that the beginning of things on the globe *must* have been totally different from the processes going on before our eyes. For instance, Adam must have been created in the full possession of manhood; for, if he had been formed an infant, he must have perished through mere helplessness. When God looked on this world, and pronounced all to be "very good"—which implies the completion of his purpose, and the perfection of his work—is it possible to conceive, that he looked only on the germs of production, on plains covered with eggs, or seas filled with spawn, or forests still buried in the capsules of seeds; on a creation utterly shapeless, lifeless, and silent, instead of the myriads of delighted existence, all enjoying the first sense of being?

But, if the first formation of the world of life *must* have been the act of a vast principle, to which we have no resemblance in the subsequent increase and continuance of being, what ground have we for arguing, that the common processes of material existence in our day must have been the same in the origin of things? On the whole, we regard the declaration—"In six days God made the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is," as an *insuperable bar* to all the modern fantasies of the geologist, as a direct rebuke to his profaneness, and as a solemn judgment against his presumption.

The whole surface of the globe gives striking evidence of design, and of design contemplating the service of man. But one of the most remarkable evidences of that design is given in the *Mountain Map* of the globe. Variety of temperature, the supply of water, and the change of level, are essential to variety of production, to fertility of soil, and to the vigour and health of the human frame—the expedient to meet them all is provided in the mountain districts of the great continents. A mountain chain girdles the whole of the mass of land from the Atlantic to the Sea of Kamchatka. Minor chains, some parallel, some branching from the great northern chain, and some branches of those branches, intersect every region of the globe. The whole bears a remarkable resemblance to the position of the spine in the human frame, with its collateral muscular and venous connexion with the body. An outline view of the mountains of our 408
hemisphere would be strikingly like a sketch of the human anatomy. The general formation of the countries north and south of those chains is early the same—vast plains, extending to the sea, or

traversed and closed in by a bordering chain. The great Tartarian desert is a plain extending, under various names, five thousand miles from west to east.

Spain is a country of mountains, or rather a vast table-land, intersected by six ranges of lofty, rugged, and barren hills. Northern Africa is a basin of plains, surrounded by vast ridges. Morocco, Algiers, and Tunis, find in those hills at once their frontiers and their fertility. The Pyrenees form a chain of nearly three hundred miles long, and upwards of fifty broad—a province of mountains, intersected by valleys of romantic beauty and exuberant fertility. But the Alps, from their position between the two most brilliant nations of the Continent—France and Italy—and from the extraordinary series of memorable events of which they have been the theatre, since the earliest periods of European history, are the most celebrated range of mountains in the world. The higher Alps, beginning at the Gulf of Genoa, and extending north and east through the Grisons and the Tyrol, stretch between four and five hundred miles. They then divide into two branches, one of which reaches even to the Euxine. The breadth of the great range is, on an average, a hundred and fifty miles.

The Apennines, another memorable chain, also beginning at the Gulf of Genoa, strike direct through the heart of Italy, and end in Calabria—a line of eight hundred miles. Dalmatia and Albania are *knots* of hills; Pindus, and the mountains of Northern Greece, are bold offsets from the Eastern Alps.

Among those wonderful arrangements, the table-lands are perhaps the most wonderful. In the midst of countries where everything seemed to tend to the mountainous form, we find vast plains raised almost to a mountainous height, yet retaining their level. This form peculiarly occurs in latitudes of high temperature. The centre of Spain is a table-land of more than ninety-two thousand square miles—one half of the area of Spain.

The country between the two ranges of the Atlas is a table-land, exhibiting the richest products, and possessing the finest climate, of Northern Africa. Equatorial Africa is one immense table-land, of which, however, we can only conjecture the advantages. Whether from the difficulty of approach, the distance, or the diversion of the current of adventure to other quarters of the world, this chief portion of the African continent continues almost unknown to Europeans. The central region is a blank in our maps, but occasional tales reach us of the plenty, the pomp, and even of the civilisation and industry of the table-land. The centre of India is a table-land, possessing, in that region of fire and fever, a bracing air, and a productive, though rugged soil.

The table-lands of Asia partake of the characteristic magnitude which belongs to that mighty quarter of the globe. That of Persia has an area of more than a million and a half of square miles. That of Tibet has an area of six times the extent, with a still greater elevation above the level of the sea—its general altitude being about the height of Mont Blanc, and, in some instances, two thousand feet higher. The mean altitude of the Persian plateau is not above four thousand feet.

We have adverted to those formations of vast elevated plains in the midst of countries necessarily exposed to extreme heat, as one of the remarkable instances of providential contrivance, if we must use that familiar word in such mighty instances of design, for the comfort of animated being. We thus find, in the latitudes exposed to the fiercest heat of the sun, a provision for a temperature consistent with the health, activity, and industry of man. Persia, which, if on the level of the sea, would be a furnace, is thus reduced to comparative coolness; Tibet, which would be a boundless plain of fiery sand, exhibits that sternness of climate which makes the northern Asiatic bold, healthy, and hardy.

If the Tartar ranger over those lofty plains is not a model of European virtue, he at least has not sunk to the Asiatic slave; he is bold, active, and has been, and may be again, an universal conqueror. The same qualities have always distinguished the man of the table-land, wherever he has found a leader. The soldiery of Mysore no sooner appeared in the field, than they swept all Hindostan before them; the Persians, scarcely two centuries since, ravaged the sovereignty of the Mogul; and the tribes of the Atlas, even in our own day, made a more daring defence of their country, than all the disciplined forces of the Continent against Napoleon.



The two most remarkable ranges of Asia are, the Caucasus, extending seven hundred miles from west to east, with branches shooting north and south; and the Himalaya, a mountain chain of nearly three thousand miles in length, uniting with the Hindoo Coosh and the mountains of Assam. This range is probably the loftiest on the globe, averaging eighteen thousand feet—several of the summits rising above twenty-five thousand. Many of the *passes* are above the summit of Mont Blanc, and the whole constitutes a scene of indescribable grandeur, a throne of the solitary majesty of Nature.

But, another essential use of the mountain chains is their supply of water—the fluid most necessary to the existence of the animal and vegetable world,—and this is done by an expedient the most simple, but the most admirable. If the surcharge of the clouds, dashing against the mountain pinnacles, were to be poured down at once, it must descend with the rapidity of a torrent, and deluge the plains. But, those surcharges first take a form by which their deposit is gradual and safe, and then assume a second form, by which their transmission to the plains is gradual and unintermitting. They descend on the summits in snow, and are retained on the sides in ice. The snow feeds the glacier; the glacier feeds the river. It is calculated that, without reckoning the glaciers of the Grisons, there are fifteen hundred square miles of glacier in the

Alps alone, from a hundred to six hundred feet deep. The glacier is constantly melting, from the mere temperature of the earth; but, as if this process were too slow for its use, it is constantly moving downwards, at a certain number of feet a-year, and thus bringing the great body of ice more within the limit of liquefaction. All the chief rivers of Europe and Asia have their rise in the deposits of the mountain glaciers.

In addition to all these important uses, the mountains assist in forming the character of man. The mountaineer is generally free from the vices of the plain. He is hardy and adventurous, yet attached to home; bold, and yet simple; independent, and yet unambitious of the wealth or the distinctions of mankind. Whether shepherd or hunter, he generally dies as he lived; and, though daring in defence of his hills, he has seldom strayed beyond them for the disturbance of mankind. The Swiss may form an exception; but their hireling warfare is not ambition, but trade. Their nation is pacific, while the individuals let themselves out to kill, or be killed. The trade is infamous and irreligious, offensive to human feeling, and contrary to human duty; but it has no more reference to the habits of the mountaineer than the emigration to California has to the habits of the clown of Massachusets; the stimulant only is the same—the love of gold.

We have adverted to the mountain system of the globe, from its giving a remarkable illustration of the Divine expediency. We judge of power by the magnitude of its effects, and of wisdom by the simplicity of its means. In this instance the whole of the results seem to arise from the single and simple act of raising portions of the earth's surface above the general level. Yet from this one act, what a multitude of the most important conditions follow!—variety of climate, variety of production, the temperature of Europe introduced into the tropics, health to man and the inferior animals, the irrigation of the globe, the defence of nations, and the actual enlargement of the habitable spaces of the globe, by the elevated surface of the hills—not to mention the beauty and sublimity of the landscape, which depend wholly on the colours, the forms, and the diversity of mountains.

An interesting note on this subject says, "It appears probable, that a legitimate way is now opening towards the solution of the ultimate problem of the upheaving force. The agreement of 410
deductions from the scientific hypothesis goes far to establish, that all dislocations of strata, and the accompanying mountain chains, have resulted from the upheaval of large portions of the earth's surface by a diffused and equable energy—an energy concentrated in one point or district, only when it has produced craters of elevation. Accepting instruction from the surface of the moon, we have certain lights also respecting the history of the development of this force; for, while its concentrated action, with its varied and remarkable craters, has evolved nearly all the mountain forms in that luminary, even as we find it among the almost obliterated ancient forms of the earth, its operation in raising extensive zones, now so frequently and characteristically exhibited in our own planet, has yet scarcely appeared in the moon. The time will doubtless come, when, viewing it as a great cosmical agency, all such specialities belonging to this yet hidden power shall receive their solution."

The Ocean.—The next most important portion of the globe to man is that mighty reservoir of water which surrounds the land, penetrates into every large portion of it, supplies the moisture without which all life must rapidly perish, and forms the great means of intercourse, without which one-half of the globe would be ignorant of the existence of the other.

In the ocean, we have the complete contrast to the land, the whole giving an extraordinary evidence of that extreme diversity of means, which the Creator wills to exercise for every purpose of his creation. The land is all variety, the ocean is a plain of millions of square miles. The land never moves, the ocean is in perpetual movement. Below the surface of the land, all animal life dies; the ocean is inhabited through a great portion of its depth, and perhaps through its whole depth. The temperature of the land is as varying as its surface; the temperature of the ocean is confined within a few degrees. The temperature of the earth appears to increase with the depth to which man can descend; the temperature of the ocean, at a certain depth, seems always the same.

Even in that relation to beauty and grandeur, which evidently forms a part of the providential design, the sources of enjoyment to the human eye, in the land and the ocean, are strikingly different. On land, the sublime and the beautiful depend on variety of form—the mountain shooting to the skies, the valley deepening beneath the eye, the rush of the cataract, the sharp and lofty precipice, the broad majesty of the river, the rich and coloured culture of the distant landscape. In the ocean, the sublime arises from total uniformity. An unbroken surface, stretching round, as far as the eye can gaze, forms the grandeur; the clouds and colours of the sky, reflected on its surface, form the beauty. Even when the phenomena are most similar, the effect is different: the sunset of land and sea are equally magnificent; but the sunset on land is lovelier, from its inlaying of gold and purple light on the diversities of hill and valley, forest and field: at sea, it is merely one gorgeous blaze—splendour on cloud above and wave below. But moonlight at sea is lovelier than on land. Beautiful as it is, even on the imperfect outlines of trees and hills, a large portion of the lustre is broken and lost by the obstacles and varieties of the landscape. But at sea there is no obstruction; its lustre falls on a mighty mirror; all around is light, all above is majesty: the absence of all the sights and sounds of life deepens the sense of calm admiration, and the impression almost amounts to a feeling of the holy.

The ocean covers three-fourths of the globe, yet even this enormous extent has not been sufficient for the providential object of human intercourse. The Divine expedient was the

formation of inland seas. Nothing in the distribution of land and sea is more remarkable, than the superior magnitude of the world of waters to the world of land, in a globe whose chief purpose was evidently the support of man. The Pacific alone is larger than all the land. From the west coast of America, to the eastern coast of Africa, spreads one sheet of water—a traverse of sixteen thousand miles. The valley of the Atlantic has a breadth of five thousand miles, while its length reaches from pole to pole—its surface is an area of more than twenty millions of square miles. 411

Yet, it is perfectly possible that this proportion was once of a different order. As we know nothing of the antediluvian world but by the Mosaic history, and as that history has not revealed the original boundaries of the land and sea, no positive conclusion can be obtained. Yet, from the deposits of marine products in the existing soil, it has been conclusively conjectured, that the land has been once the bed of the ocean, while the present bed of the ocean has been the land. The almost total absence of the human skeleton among fossils, and some old and dim traditions of a continent submerged, where the waters of the Atlantic now roll, may add to the conjecture. The globe *then* would have afforded room for a population threefold that which it is now destined to contain. If it is now capable of supporting sixteen times its present number, as has been calculated, it would then have been equal to the sustenance of little less than fifty thousand millions. Yet, what would be even that space to the magnitude of Jupiter; or that number to the beings of flesh and blood, however differing from man, which may at this moment, in that most magnificent planet, be enjoying the bounty of Providence, and replenishing a circumference of two hundred and forty thousand miles!

Uniform as the ocean is, it is a vast theatre of contrivances. To prevent the impurity which must arise from the decay of the millions of fish, and perhaps of quadruped and reptile life, constantly dying in its depths,—it is saline. To prevent the stagnation of its waters, which would reinforce the corruption, it is constantly impelled by currents, by the trade-wind, and by the universal tide. At the equator the tide moves with a rapidity which would shatter the continents; but it is met by shallows, by ridges of rock, and by islands; a vast system of natural breakwaters which modify its force, and reduce it to an impulse compatible with safety.

The water of the sea retains its fluidity down to four degrees below the freezing point of fresh water; the object is, perhaps, the preservation of the millions of animated beings contained in the waters; but as, in the tropic latitudes, its exposure to the sun might engender disease, or create tempests, vast refrigeratories are provided at both the poles, which are constantly sending down huge masses of ice to cool the ocean. Some of those floating masses are from ten to twelve miles long, and a hundred feet high above the water, with probably three hundred feet below. They have been met with two thousand miles on their way to the equator, and have sensibly cooled the sea for fifty miles round, until they wholly dissolved. Of course, on subjects of this order, human observation can do little more than note the principal effects—the rest can be only probable conjecture. It may be, that human sagacity has never ascertained the hundredth part of the purposes of any one of the great agents of nature. Still, it is the business of science to inquire, as it is the dictate of experience to acknowledge, that every addition to discovery gives only additional proof of the sleepless vigilance, boundless resources, and practical benevolence of the great Ruler of all.

The variety of uses derived from a single principle is a constant, and a most admirable, characteristic of nature. The primary purpose of the ocean is probably, to supply the land with the moisture necessary to production. But, the collateral effects of the mighty reservoir are felt in results of the first importance, yet of a wholly distinct order. The ocean refreshes the atmosphere, to a certain degree renews its motion, and obviously exerts a powerful agency in preventing alike excessive heat and excessive cold. The tides, which prevent its stagnation—a stagnation which would cover the earth with pestilence—also largely assist navigation in the estuaries, in the lower parts of the great rivers, and in all approaches to the shore. The currents, a portion of this great agency, (still perhaps to give us new sources of wonder,) fulfil at least the triple office of agitating the mass of ocean, of speeding navigation, and of equalising or softening the temperature of the shores along which they pass, in all directions. They seem equivalent to 412
the system of high-roads and cross roads in a great country. It had been said of rivers, that "they are roads which travel;" but their difficulty is, that they travel only one way. The currents of the ocean obviate the difficulty, by travelling all ways. And, perhaps, we may look forward to a time when, by the command of wind and wave given by the steamboat, and by our increased knowledge of "ocean topography," if we may use the phrase; a ship may make its way across the ocean without ever being out of a current; a result which would be obviously a most important accession, if not to the speed, at least to the security of navigation.

Those ocean traversers evidently belong to a *system*. Some are permanent, some are periodical, and some are casual. The permanent arise chiefly from the effect of the flow from the poles to the equator. Descending from the poles in the first instance, they pour north and south. They gradually feel the earth's rotation; but on their arrival at the tropics, being still inferior in velocity to the equatorial sea, they seem to roll backwards; in other words, they form a current from east to west. This current is farther impelled by the trade-winds.

The progress of this great perpetual current includes almost every part of the ocean. In going westward, it necessarily rushes against the coast of America, where it divides into two vast branches, one running south with great force, and the other north-west. A succession of currents, all connected, obviously form a "moving power" to prevent the stagnation of the ocean, and, by their branches, visit every shore of the globe.

Some of those currents are of great breadth, but they generally move slow. Humboldt calculates that a boat, carried *only* by the current from the Canaries to Caraccas, would take *thirteen months* for the voyage. Still there would be obvious advantages to navigation in moving along a district of ocean in which all the speed, such as it was, furthered the movement of the vessel, and which offered none of the common sources of hindrance.

But another curious effect of the Atlantic currents is to be commemorated, as giving us probably the first knowledge of the western world. "Two corpses, the features of which indicated a race of unknown men, were thrown on the coast of the Azores, towards the end of the fifteenth century. Nearly at the same period the brother-in-law of Columbus, Pedro Correa, governor of Porto Santo, found on the strand of the island pieces of bamboo of an extraordinary size, brought thither by the western currents."

Those coincidences might have confirmed the idea of the great navigator. But Columbus still deserves all the glory. A thousand conjectures may be formed, and a thousand confirmations given, and yet all be lost to the world. The true discoverer is the man of practice. Columbus was *that* man; and we are to remember also his indefatigable labour in realising that practice, the unexhausted resolution with which he struggled against the penury and neglect of the Continental courts, his noble scorn of the sneers of European ignorance, and the heroic patience with which he sustained the murmuring of his crews, and asked "but one day more." The world has never seen a man more equal to his great purpose; if he was not a direct instrument appointed to the noblest discovery of man.

But those evidences of connexion are not unfrequently given to our more observant time. "When the wind has been long from the west, a branch of the Gulf Stream runs with considerable force in a north-easterly direction towards the coasts of Europe. By this the fruit of trees belonging to the torrid zone of America is annually cast ashore on the western coasts of Ireland and Norway. Pennant observes, that the seeds of plants which grow in Jamaica, Cuba, and the adjacent countries, are collected on the shores of the Hebrides. Thither also barrels of French wine, the remains of vessels wrecked in the West Indian seas, have been carried. In 1809, H.M.S. Little Belt was dismasted at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and her bowsprit was found, eighteen months after, in the Basque Roads. The mainmast of the Tilbury, burned off Hispaniola, in the Seven Years' War, was brought to our shores.



"To the Gulf Stream, England and Ireland are partially indebted for the mildness of their climate. The prevailing winds are the south-west. Coming over a vast space of the comparatively heated ocean, it is calculated, that if those winds were so constant as to bring us all the heat which they are capable of conveying, they would raise the column of air over Great Britain and France, in winter, at once to the temperature of summer."

But interesting as it might be thus to range through the great phenomena of the globe, and demonstrate its abundant and astonishing adaptation to the purposes of living existence, our more immediate object is to mark to the reader the materials of this noble volume.

The especial sciences of which it treats are, geology, hydrography, meteorology, and natural history, with their several subdivisions; the whole delivered in the most intelligible form of modern knowledge, and with the fullest information acquired by modern research; and illustrated by maps, the skill of whose execution can have been equalled only by the labour of their formation.

The volume commences with the geological structure of the globe in all its branches, and with separate articles given to the mountain chains of Asia, Africa, Europe, and America, all illustrated by maps: then follow the glaciers and glacial phenomena, with maps; then the phenomena of the volcanoes and volcanic regions, developed by charts and descriptions,—this department closing with that most curious, most disputed, and still most obscure of all subjects, the Palæontology of the British Isles.

The second division—hydrography, commences with charts of the ocean, and with charts of those wondrous, and still comparatively obscure, agencies, the eleven currents which intersect it in all quarters. Then follow charts of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, now forming such new and interesting objects to the navigator and the philanthropist. We then have maps of the tides and river systems.

The Indian Ocean, now scarcely more than beginning to be the subject of scientific inquiry, will probably assist us effectively in the discoveries of those most important agents, the winds. The monsoon and the typhoon of those seas exhibit characters apparently almost exclusive. To ascertain their general direction, and their especial limits, must be a great boon to the commerce which is now directing itself, with such renewed vigour, to those tempting regions. The lights which have been thrown on the use of the barometer, and on the rise and direction of the West Indian storms, have already given a species of guidance to this important investigation; and if the theory of the hurricane can never render its power harmless, it may, at least, make human precaution more vigilant, and, of course, more successful.

Those investigations are naturally followed by the third great division of the work—meteorology. The value of exact observations on wind and weather must have been felt from the

beginning of the world; but, until our day, it was little more than the science of the shepherd, who foretold a high wind or a shower, generally when both had already come. The barometer and thermometer, though both well known, and both admirable, had done but little for a science, which, without exactness of practice and connexion of causes, is nothing.

Humboldt, by his attempt to trace lines of temperature on the map of the globe, first raised those scattered conceptions into the shape of a science. Yet Humboldt was not the original inventor of the inquiry into the mean temperatures. Meyer of Gottingen first threw the observations on this important and evasive subject into the well-known formula, which made the temperature depend on the square of the cosine of the latitude. Playfair followed, by including in his formula the elevation of the place and the season. The object of Humboldt was, to determine, by a series of curves on the earth's surface,the points at which—however the temperature differed from time to time—the average annually was the same. On this important subject we are now furnished with a map of striking detail and execution.

The late magnetic researches pursued round the globe may, at no remote period, establish a 414
connexion between the revolution of the magnetic poles and the isothermal lines, as had been long since conjectured. But, as practical science advances, we shall probably see all the great agencies of nature combined,—if not all shown to be but the modifications of *one*.

The Hyetographic or rain chart of this volume gives a most complete and minute detail of a most important subject. It exhibits the rains of the globe, in their constant gradation from the equator to the pole, in their influence on the seasons, and in their degrees from the plains to the summit of the hills. A map is added, on the polarisation of the atmosphere—almost a new science —with an explanatory article by Sir David Brewster.

The fourth division is Natural History; itself divided into Phytology, Zoology, and Ethnography. This division abounds in maps, and in these departments they are obviously of the most necessary use. In the description of plants and animals, the pencil must speak, the tongue loses its faculty; a sketch, executed at the moment, will give a fuller explanation than any dexterity or copiousness of language can. We accordingly have here charts of all the geographical positions of the plants important to the food of man, and of the geographical distribution of plants on the surface of the globe.

The Zoological charts give the regions, the habitats, and the characters of all the diversities of animal life on the land—from the mammalia to the birds and reptiles.

The Ethnographical portion, or view of the general position and races of the European nations, commences with a fine map, by Kombst, exhibiting a view of all its varieties, with reference to birth, language, religion, and forms of government. Having thus glanced at the scientific contents of this noble volume, we propose to give some sketches of those portions of the globe which, within the last half century, have become the refuge or the property of the emigration from the British shores.

Australia, the *fifth* continent, is nearly as large as Europe. Divided by the tropic, it is capable of producing the chief plants of both the temperate and the tropical zones. Its principal geological feature is a mountain chain, which, extending through its whole length on its eastern coast, runs on the north into New Guinea, and on the south into Van Diemen's Land. From its immense size, (two thousand four hundred miles from east to west, and one thousand seven hundred from north to south,) and from the savage state of its native population, the exact nature of its central portion is yet only to be conjectured. But conjecture has been busy; and by some it is held, that the centre is a Mediterranean, from the direction of some of the rivers; by others, that it is a huge Sahara, from the hot winds which often blow towards the coast. But two late expeditions, sent from Sydney, have passed, without difficulty, the one as far as Torres Strait, and the other almost to the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria. It is true, that neither of those was towards the centre; but they had the wiser practical object, of ascertaining the nature of the country most important to the British settler—that great tract lying between the mountains of the cast coast and the sea. And that country they found to be fair and fertile, temperate and easily accessible. The whole expedition of Colonel Mitchel, the surveyor-general, has almost the air of romance. He describes the country, in the latter half of his advance to the north, as not only of remarkable richness, but of singularly picturesque beauty; the latter a quality of the most unusual order in Australia. To the customary complaint of want of water in the interior, Colonel Mitchel answers, that Australia, to remedy this defect, wants nothing but labour; that it has rivers which supply water in the rainy season sufficient for the use of the year; that the formation of the land everywhere suggests the idea of vast reservoirs; and that man has only to complete what nature has begun. The British settlements in the south and west will probably soon bring these resources into action.

Large deposits of minerals are already beginning to bring wealth to the settlers. Coal has been found. The tide of emigration which some years ago was checked, has suddenly flowed with 415
increased force to Australia; and the vigour of the English character, the only character in the world *capable* of effective colonisation, has already made Sidney a flourishing metropolis, and before another century (a moment in the life of nations) will exhibit to Europe an English empire at the antipodes! And this is the history of a land which, though coasted by the celebrated Cook in 1770, was never trod by a colonist till nearly twenty years after. This wonder has been wrought within the lifetime of one generation.

Van Diemen's Land affords a striking evidence of the variety in which nature seems to delight. It forms a contrast in everything to its huge neighbour: it is small, it is a mass of mountains, it is well watered, it is rainy, it is agricultural, and it abounds in fine harbours. On the whole, it bears the same relation to Australia which Ireland might bear to England, if England were united to the Continent. It is also about the size of Ireland—Van Diemen's Land containing nearly twenty-eight thousand square miles, Ireland perhaps thirty thousand.

In Europe, the continent is richer than the islands; at the antipodes, the islands are richer than the continent. New Zealand, the last colony of England, promises to be one of the noblest of the British possessions. It may either be regarded as *one* island, fifteen hundred miles long, or as three, divided by boisterous channels, and lashed everywhere by a roaring ocean. It has remarkable advantages for colonisation—a fertile soil, boundless forests, beds of minerals, and picturesque beauty. The mountains in its interior have all the grandeur of the Alps, with more than their forest clothing, and (more picturesque than all) with the volcano, which is wanting to the supremacy of the Alps. It has table-lands for the agriculturist, sites on a luxuriant coast for cities, fine harbours for commerce, copious rivers for communication, and mountains of from twelve to fourteen thousand feet high, to irrigate the soil, and supply the heated regions with the luxury of perpetual ice. The climate seems to be healthy; and the country, by its boldness, storms, varying temperature, and even by the roughness of the billows which toss for ever on its shore, appears destined for the school of Englishmen and English constitutions.

To the north of Australia, and almost within sight—another vast and lovely region, and another contrast to the great continent—lies New Guinea, fourteen hundred miles long, and two hundred broad. Its appearance from the sea is magnificent—an immense undulation of luxuriance covering the coasts, and rising up the sides of mountain ranges loftier than Mont Blanc. But the tropical excess of vegetation may render it dangerous to European life: at all events, it will be only wisdom to people Australia before we intrude on the naked foresters, and do battle against the more fatal enemy, the swamps of New Guinea.

Borneo, which has so lately become an object of English interest, by the settlement of Sir James Brooke, is also a large and noble island; it has the bold mountain interior, the table-lands, the rivers, and the harbours, which belong to New Guinea. The English settlement, and the presence of British ships, may introduce such imperfect civilisation as the Oriental savage can ever receive; piracy may be partially put down, and even honesty may be partially introduced. But there is this great drawback to the success of English colonisation—that the land is already peopled, and that the strangers are more likely to fall into the indolent habits and luxurious vice of the native, than the native ever to rise to the manly habits of the Englishman.

The Indian Archipelago is almost a new world to the European. Though known to the Dutch soon after the decay of that empire which the Portuguese secured by the discoveries of de Gama, and occasionally touched upon by English commerce, it had been almost forgotten among the stirring scenes in which Europe was involved in the last three centuries. Our conquests in Hindostan, our possession of Ceylon, the capture of the Dutch colonies in the French war, and, later still, our establishment at Singapore, and the opening of China, have turned the eyes of England to those exuberant countries; and we shall now probably reunite them to the world of Europe.



But we must hope that, beyond commerce, and the communication of the comforts and intelligence of English life, our ambition will not extend. Those climates are generally hazardous to European life; they are not less hazardous to the manliness and vigour of English habits, and even to the force of the English character. It has been said that, if the first generation of colonists are English to the grave, the second are Indian from the cradle. They contract the lassitude of the tropics; they become incapable of effort: dissipation is the natural resource of opulent idleness; they linger through life from excess to excess; and, unless a revolution of the hardier native drives them out, or an emigration of their hardier countrymen keeps them in, the colony sinks into the ground.

The new impulse reserved for our century is Colonisation. Always existing, even from the earliest ages of mankind, it had hitherto scarcely deserved the name. The French colonisation of Canada had not advanced, in a century, beyond the nook where they first nestled themselves, and where the most absurd of all policies—that of allowing them to place their language on a footing with the manlier tongue of their conquerors—has perpetuated them as a separate race, with all their absurdities, all their prejudices, and even with all their hostility to the British name. The Spanish colonisation of South America amounted to scarcely more than settling the descendants of the Spanish garrisons, of the Spanish refugees, and of the attendants on the viceroys.

The only true *colonists* were the English of North America; who, for a hundred years, poured a feeble stream towards the prairies of the Mississippi, recruited and stained by the vagabondage of Europe. But no great impulse of national necessity gave depth and force to the current. But within these two years a more powerful impression has been made by necessity. The Irish famine of 1846, and the following year, drove multitudes to seek for bread on the shores of America. Some hundred thousands probably have left Europe behind for ever, and are now delving and woodcutting in the forests of the western world. A German emigration, though of a more tardy order, has followed, from a pressure, if not of direct famine, yet of difficulty. And within the last year a powerful impulse has been also made in the direction of Australia, of all countries the one which offers the fairest prospect for the Englishman. The success of these emigrations will

naturally tend to continue the outpourings of Europe. The emigrants, once settled and successful, will encourage the movement of those whom they have left behind, as much embarrassed as they themselves originally were; and the comforts which come into the possession of industry, in a land of cheap purchase—unburthened with taxes, and unburthened with the still heavier taxes which the vanities of old countries lay on the myriads of middle life—must form a strong temptation, or rather a rational inducement, to seek independence at the antipodes.

But the sudden discovery of the Californian gold-country has given a still more determined urgency to emigration. That a vast territory, which, if we are to rely on the reports of its labourers, is a sheet of gold, should have lain for three hundred years in the hands of the Spaniards, wholly unknown to a people always hungry for gold, is among the wonders which sometimes strike across us in the history of nations. But its immediate effect is, unquestionably, to aid the general tendency. It is already drawing thousands from every part of the world towards California. Columns of men, followed by their trains of oxen and wains of merchandise, are already pouring over every track of the West. In a few years, the desert will probably be filled with population; and when the mines are exhausted, or taken into the possession of the government, the more valuable mine will remain, in the existence of a new nation, in the commerce of the Pacific, and in the richness of a soil unploughed since the Deluge.

The effect of this emigration, for the moment, is obviously to assist the reception of the multitudes from Europe. It is thinning the population of the United States, carrying off the labourers, and turning every unoccupied eye in the direction of the west. The drudgery of 417
Ireland, the skilled labour of England, and the patient and not unintelligent toil of Germany, will daily find the mart more open; and thus even the mania of gold-digging will have its effect on the sober welfare of mankind.

But a still more important effect, though more remote, may follow from the Californian mines. The celebrated Burke, sixty years ago, predicted that the new population on the plains of the Mississippi would extinguish the power, if not the existence, of the cities on the coast, and that when those "English Tartars," as he imaginatively described them, once poured down on the New Yorks, Bostons, and Philadelphias, they would turn them into warehouses, and their sites into watering-places. They would have fulfilled his prophecy long since, but for the boundless expanse of territory which lay behind this "Tartar" region. Their discontents evaporated into the wilderness; the provincial who looked with a jealous eye on the man of cities, found it easier to travel than to make war; and he forthwith set up a state for himself in the boundless prairie. A Californian republic may erect a formidable balance to the domination of the old States. Washington will no longer be the capital of America, and the north of the New World may yet have a stronger resemblance to Europe—with its great kingdoms, its little princes, and its commercial cities—than the anomalous government of the Stripes and Stars.

But the noblest of all the projects which have ever excited the curiosity of the world is still to be consummated—the communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific—a canal across the Isthmus of Darien. That isthmus is but twenty miles broad, but a passage across it would shorten the voyage to China, perhaps to six weeks, instead of four months; annihilate, the perils of the navigation round South America, and bring Europe into rapid contact with Australia, India, and the unexplored glories and exhaustless opulence of the finest archipelago in the ocean.

The project is so natural that it had been a hundred times conceived; but the perpetual wars of Europe, the angry jealousy of Spain, and, in later years, the disturbances of the native governments, have wholly obstructed the mightiest benefit ever offered to the progress of civilisation. The enterprise of the Americans had not overlooked this key to both hemispheres, and, some years since, a compact was entered into with a company headed by the American Biddle. But it was suffered to die away; other contracts succeeded, equally abortive, the government on the spot demanding terms of such exorbitance that it was impossible to carry the work into execution. With the usual short-sightedness of the foreigner, they had placed all their profit on the rent and tolls of the canal, foolishly forgetting that their *real* profit was to be found in the wealth which the intercourse of all nations must bring into their country.

Two projects are now said to be under consideration—a railroad, which would be exclusively for the benefit of the Americans; and a canal capable of carrying large vessels across the Isthmus, and which would be open to all nations. There can be no question as to the superior benefits of the latter to mankind.

Of the five routes, four are exposed to obstacles arising from elevation of ground, (the track to Panama rises a thousand feet,) from insalubrity, and from other circumstances of the soil and the locality. The fifth, by the river of Nicaragua, evidently deserves the preference. It lies through a fine river, reaching from the Atlantic to a central lake, and thence descends through a second river to the Pacific. The whole distance would be but two hundred and seventy-eight miles, which would require locks and other works, (the rivers being at intervals interrupted by rapids,) but this portion would amount to but eighty-two miles. The lake-sailing would be a hundred and twenty-five miles. The whole expense, estimating it at the prices of Europe, would be less than four millions sterling. Sanguine calculators value the profits at twelve per cent. But whatever might be the smallness of the dividends in the first instance, there can be no imaginable doubt that, with fair dealing on the part of the local government, the Isthmus would soon be worth all the 418
mines of Peru, with all the gold-washings of California besides.

The next great enterprise would be the junction of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, by a passage across the Isthmus of Suez. There is already a road, but the passage is slow and difficult, from the heat, the soil, and the imperfect conveyance. Two proposals have been long since made, the one for a canal and the other for a railroad. To the canal there seem to be insuperable objections, the shallowness of the sea at Suez, the shifting nature of the sands on the way, which would soon fill up the canal, and the difficulty of water for its supply. It has been also ascertained by the survey of the French engineers that the Red Sea is about thirty feet higher than the Mediterranean.

The railroad is obviously not merely the true expedient, but the only one. But it is almost impossible to deal the foreigner on any subject of prospective profit. The habit of living but for the day deteriorates all the movements of national progress. Unless he can grasp his profit at once, it exists no longer to his eye. With the man of the East, the grasp is eager and avaricious. Mehemet Ali might have brought millions of wealth into Egypt by a railroad, while he was wasting thousands in paltry contrivances to make a royal revenue for himself, out of the contending bargains of English and French engineers. The result is, that except a miserable canal between Alexandria and the Nile, dry half the year, and scarcely navigable during the other half, nothing has been done; and the journey across the isthmus occupies nearly two days, gives infinite trouble, and makes money only for donkey-boys and tavern-keepers, which, by a railroad, might be effected luxuriously in three hours.

The Ethnography of this volume forms the material of a treatise, which might itself be expanded into a volume. Some years ago the population of the globe was computed at 860 millions; but, from the accelerated rapidity of increase, year by year, we should suppose it to be now 900 millions; and even that, a number which, unless some great human catastrophe should arrive, would speedily increase to 1000 millions! The laws of population are yet imperfectly comprehended; but, like all the other great problems of nature, they are given for our inquiry, and will ultimately yield to our inquiry.

The chief obstacle to population is evidently neither poverty, nor general discomfort of living, nor inferiority of food. Under all these circumstances, population accumulates in an extraordinary degree. The population of Ireland is a case in point. War seems to exercise but a slight check on population. Barrenness of soil must have its effect, for where men cannot eat, they, of course, cannot live; but insecurity of property, implied in tyrannical government, is the great depopulator. Men will not labour, where they cannot be certain of the fruits of their labour; they sink into lassitude, indolence, and beggary. The actual power of life departs from them, and they either perish by the first pressure of famine, sink under the first attack of disease, or emigrate, to make the experiment of renewing their existence in a freer soil. But the subject is still equally obscure, boundless, and interesting.

Till within these few years, French and German scepticism, always hostile to the Mosaic revelation, had adopted the opinion that the races of mankind were of different parentage, and thus that the scriptural account was *untrue*. But the manlier research and honester philosophy of Dr Pritchard, and others, in this country, have proved the assertion to be as unfaithful to facts, as the argument was sophistical. Whatever may be the external differences in the five great races of the earth—the Circassian, the Mongolian, the Malayan, the Ethiopian, and the American—all are fully capable of being accounted for by the accidents of climate, food, temperature, and position, while the internal configuration of all is the same. There is still the more convincing similitude in their faculties, affections, intelligence, passions, and language. All that constitutes the class "Mankind" is the *same*, from the mountaineer of Circassia, the finest, and probably the original, type of the human form, to the Esquimaux, probably the most degraded. Even evidences of relationship in higher things might be given. All, in various degrees, acknowledge a Supreme Ruler of earth and heaven, admit the necessity of worship, retain some traditions of paradise, recognise the general morals of life, have impressions of justice, temperance, and truth, however often forgotten. All look to a future state of being!



But we must now close our remarks on the volume, which Mr Johnston has thus contributed to the knowledge, and, we will believe, to the admiration of his time. The mere circumstance of its appearing under the auspices of its present publishers, has not in the slightest degree coloured our necessarily rapid and cursory criticism. If we had found the volume in the dust of a monkish library, we should have pronounced it a masterly performance; if we were about to offer a gift to the rising intelligence of our age, there is none which we should offer in preference. So ample, so definite, and yet so comprehensive are the stores of information presented by this admirable digest of physical science—of all that we know regarding the structure of the great globe we inhabit, and regarding whatever lives and moves on its surface, together with the laws that regulate the whole—and, at the same time, so absolutely necessary is that information for the proper culture of the mind, that we must confess it was with a sigh of regret, while turning over the leaves of the magnificent folio, that we felt that such a work could only be destined for the wealthy and for the privileged class who have access to public libraries, but that it was likely to remain "a book sealed" to the great bulk of general inquirers. Our fears, however, on this subject, we rejoice to be informed, are groundless; and, since commencing this paper, we have learned that a reduced edition is on the eve of publication. As was also to have been desired, this is to appear in a serial form, so as to render it accessible to every class of readers, and at only one-fifth of the original cost.

This is as it should be. To the scholar, to the student, and to the already large yet daily

increasing multitude of inquirers who cultivate natural science, the *Physical Atlas* is a treasure of incalculable value. It brings before the mind's eye, in one grand panoramic view, and in a form clear, definite, and easily comprehensible, all the facts at present known relative to the great subjects of which it treats, and may be regarded as a lucid epitome of a thousand scattered volumes, more or less intrinsically valuable, of which it contains the heart and substance.

From this time henceforward an acquaintance with physical geography must form the basis of educational knowledge, and on no basis so adequate can the superstructure of general scholarship be reared. History, without such an acquirement previously made, can only be half understood; and, in ignorance of it, the works of creation are, at best, but a maze without a plan. If we were called on to give proof to the world of the combination of vigorous diligence, manly acquirement, clear reasoning, and philosophical conception of which the British mind is capable, we should lay on the table this noble volume of Mr Johnston. Indeed, if we might hazard a prediction, the future is not far distant when such a work must be indispensably requisite to every educational establishment, and be found in the hands of every scholar. 420

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# THE CAXTONS.—PART XII.

## Chapter LIX.

The Hegira is completed—we have all taken roost in the old tower. My father's books have arrived by the waggon, and have settled themselves quietly in their new abode—filling up the apartment dedicated to their owner, including the bed-chamber and two lobbies. The duck also has arrived, under wing of Mrs Primmins, and has reconciled herself to the old stewpond; by the side of which my father has found a walk that compensates for the peach wall—especially as he has made acquaintance with sundry respectable carps, who permit him to feed them after he has fed the duck —a privilege of which (since, if any one else approaches, the carps are off in an instant) my father is naturally vain. All privileges are valuable in proportion to the exclusiveness of their enjoyment.

Now, from the moment the first carp had eaten the bread my father threw to it, Mr Caxton had mentally resolved, that a race so confiding should never be sacrificed to Ceres and Primmins. But all the fishes on my uncle's property were under the special care of that Proteus Bolt—and Bolt was not a man likely to suffer the carps to earn their bread without contributing their full share to the wants of the community. But, like master, like man! Bolt was an aristocrat fit to be hung *à la lanterne*. He out-Rolanded Roland in the respect he entertained for sounding names and old families; and by that bait my father caught him with such skill that you might see that, if Austin Caxton had been an angler of fishes, he could have filled his basket full any day, shine or rain.

"You observe, Bolt," said my father, beginning artfully, "that those fishes, dull as you may think them, are creatures capable of a syllogism; and if they saw that, in proportion to their civility to me, they were depopulated by you, they would put two and two together, and renounce my acquaintance."

"Is that what you call being silly Jems, sir?" said Bolt; "faith, there is many a good Christian not half so wise!"

"Man," answered my father thoughtfully, "is an animal less syllogistical, or more silly-Jemmical than many creatures popularly esteemed his inferiors. Yes, let but one of those Cyprinidæ, with his fine sense of logic, see that, if his fellow-fishes eat bread, they are suddenly jerked out of their element, and vanish forever; and though you broke a quartern loaf into crumbs, he would snap his tail at you with enlightened contempt. If," said my father soliloquising, "I had been as syllogistic as those scaly logicians, I should never have swallowed that hook, which—hum! there —least said soonest mended. But, Mr Bolt, to return to the Cyprinidæ."

"What's the hard name you call them 'ere carp, your honour?" asked Bolt.

"Cyprinidæ, a family of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales," replied Mr Caxton; "their teeth are generally confined to the Pharyngeans, and their branchiostegous rays are but few—marks of distinction from fishes vulgar and voracious."

"Sir," said Bolt, glancing to the stewpond, "if I had known they had been a family of such importance, I am sure I should have treated them with more respect."

"They are a very old family, Bolt, and have been settled in England since the fourteenth century. A younger branch of the family has established itself in a pond in the gardens of Peterhoff, (the celebrated palace of Peter the Great, Bolt—an emperor highly respected by my brother, for he killed a great many people very gloriously in battle, besides those whom he sabred for his own private amusement.) And there is an officer or servant of the imperial household, whose task it is to summon those Russian Cyprinidæ to dinner by ringing a bell, shortly after which, you may see the emperor and empress, with all their waiting, ladies and

gentlemen, coming down in their carriages to see the Cyprinidæ eat in state. So you perceive, Bolt, that it would be a republican, Jacobinical proceeding to stew members of a family so intimately associated with royalty." 421

"Dear me, sir!" said Bolt, "I am very glad you told me. I ought to have known they were genteel fish, they are so mighty shy—as all your real quality are."

My father smiled, and rubbed his hands gently; he had carried his point, and henceforth the Cyprinidæ of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales were as sacred in Bolt's eyes as cats and ichneumons were in those of a priest in Thebes.

My poor father! with what true and unostentatious philosophy thou didst accommodate thyself to the greatest change thy quiet, harmless life had known, since it had passed out of the brief burning cycle of the passions. Lost was the home, endeared to thee by so many noiseless victories of the mind—so many mute histories of the heart—for only the scholar knoweth how deep a charm lies in monotony, in the old associations, the old ways, and habitual clockwork of peaceful time. Yet, the home maybe replaced—thy heart built its home round it everywhere—and the old tower might supply the loss of the brick house, and the walk by the duck-pond become as dear as the haunts by the sunny peach wall. But what shall replace to thee the bright dream of thine innocent ambition,—that angel-wing which had glittered across thy manhood, in the hour between its noon and its setting? What replace to thee the Magnum Opus—the Great Book?—fair and broadspreading tree—lone amidst the sameness of the landscape—now plucked up by the roots! The oxygen was subtracted from the air of thy life. For be it known to ye, O my compassionate readers, that with the death of the Anti-Publisher Society the blood-streams of the Great Book stood still—its pulse was arrested—its full heart beat no more. Three thousand copies of the first seven sheets in quarto, with sundry unfinished plates, anatomical, architectural, and graphic, depicting various developments of the human skull, (that temple of Human Error), from the Hottentot to the Greek; sketches of ancient buildings, Cyclopean and Pelasgic; Pyramids, and Pur-tors, all signs of races whose handwriting was on their walls; landscapes to display the influence of Nature upon the customs, creeds, and philosophy of men—here showing how the broad Chaldean wastes led to the contemplation of the stars, and illustrations of the Zodiac, in elucidation of the mysteries of symbol-worship; fantastic vagaries of earth fresh from the Deluge, tending to impress on early superstition the awful sense of the rude powers of nature; views of the rocky defiles of Laconia; Sparta, neighboured by the "silent Amyclæ," explaining, as it were, geographically, the iron customs of the warrior colony, (arch Tories, amidst the shift and roar of Hellenic democracies,) contrasted by the seas, and coasts, and creeks of Athens and Ionia, tempting to adventure, commerce, and change. Yea, my father, in his suggestions to the artist of those few imperfect plates, had thrown as much light on the infancy of earth and its tribes as by the "shining words" that flowed from his calm starry knowledge! Plates and copies, all rested now in peace and dust—"housed with darkness and with death" on the sepulchral shelves of the lobby to which they were consigned—rays intercepted—worlds incompleted. The Prometheus was bound, and the fire he had stolen from heaven lay embedded in the flints of his rock. For so costly was the mould in which Uncle Jack and the Anti-Publisher Society had contrived to cast this Exposition of Human Error, that every bookseller shyed at its very sight, as an owl blinks at daylight, or human error at truth. In vain Squills and I, before we left London, had carried a gigantic specimen of the Magnum Opus into the back-parlours of firms the most opulent and adventurous. Publisher after publisher started, as if we had held a blunderbuss to his ear. All Paternoster Row uttered a "Lord deliver us." Human Error found no man so egregiously its victim as to complete those two quartos, with the prospect of two others, at his own expense. Now, I had earnestly hoped that my father, for the sake of mankind, would be persuaded to risk some portion,—and that, I own, not a small one—of his remaining capital on the conclusion of an undertaking so elaborately begun. But there my father was obdurate. No big words about mankind, and the advantage to unborn generations, could stir him an inch. "Stuff!" said Mr Caxton peevishly. "A man's duties to mankind and posterity begin with his own son; and having wasted half your patrimony, I will not take another huge slice out of the poor remainder to gratify my vanity, for that is the plain truth of it. Man must atone for sin by expiation. By the book I have sinned, and the book must expiate it. Pile the sheets up in the lobby, so that at least one man may be wiser and humbler by the sight of Human Error, every time he walks by so stupendous a monument of it." 422

Verily, I know not how my father could bear to look at those dumb fragments of himself—strata of the Caxtonian conformation lying layer upon layer, as if packed up and disposed for the inquisitive genius of some moral Murchison or Mantell. But, for my part, I never glanced at their repose in the dark lobby, without thinking, "Courage, Pisistratus, courage! there's something worth living for; work hard, grow rich, and the Great Book shall come out at last."

Meanwhile, I wandered over the country, and made acquaintance with the farmers, and with Trevanion's steward—an able man, and a great agriculturist—and I learned from them a better notion of the nature of my uncle's domains. Those domains covered an immense acreage, which, save a small farm, was of no value at present. But land of the same kind had been lately redeemed by a simple kind of draining, now well known in Cumberland; and with capital, Roland's barren moors might become a noble property. But capital, where was that to come from? Nature gives us all except the means to turn her into marketable account. As old Plautus saith so wittily, "Day, night, water, sun, and moon, are to be had gratis; for everything else—down, with your dust!"

# CHAPTER LX.

Nothing has been heard of Uncle Jack. When we moved to the tower, the Captain gave him an invitation—more, I suspect, out of compliment to my mother than from the unbidden impulse of his own inclinations. But Mr Tibbets politely declined it. During his stay at the brick house, he had received and written a vast number of letters—some of those he received, indeed, were left at the village post-office, under the alphabetical addresses of A B or X Y. For no misfortune ever paralysed the energies of Uncle Jack. In the winter of adversity he vanished, it is true, but even in vanishing he vegetated still. He resembled those *algæ*, termed the *Prolococcus nivales*, which give a rose-colour to the Polar snows that conceal them, and flourish unsuspected amidst the general dissolution of Nature. Uncle Jack, then, was as lively and sanguine as ever—though he began to let fall vague hints of intentions to abandon the general cause of his fellow creatures, and to set up business henceforth purely on his own account; wherewith my father—to the great shock of my belief in his philanthropy—expressed himself much pleased. And I strongly suspect that, when Uncle Jack wrapped himself up in his new double Saxony, and went off at last, he carried with him something more than my father's good wishes in aid of his conversion to egotistical philosophy.

"That man will do yet," said my father, as the last glimpse was caught of Uncle Jack standing up on the stage-coach box, beside the driver—partly to wave his hand to us as we stood at the gate, and partly to array himself more commodiously in a box coat, with six capes, which the coachman had lent him.

"Do you think so, sir!" said I, doubtfully. "May I ask why?"

Mr Caxton.—On the cat principle—that he tumbles so lightly. You may throw him down from St Paul's, and the next time you see him he will be scrambling a-top of the Monument.

Pisistratus.—But a cat the most viparious is limited to nine lives—and Uncle Jack must be now far gone in his eighth. 423

Mr Caxton—(*not heeding that answer, for he has got his hand in his waistcoat.*)—The earth, according to Apuleius, in his *Treatise on the Philosophy of Plato*, was produced from right-angled triangles; but fire and air from the scalene triangle—the angles of which, I need not say, are very different from those of a right-angled triangle. Now I think there are people in the world of whom one can only judge rightly according to those mathematical principles applied to their original construction; for, if air or fire predominates in our natures, we are scalene triangles;—if earth, right-angled. Now, as air is so notably manifested in Jack's conformation, he is, *nolens volens*, produced in conformity with his preponderating element. He is a scalene triangle, and must be judged, accordingly, upon irregular, lop-sided principles; whereas you and I, commonplace mortals, are produced, like the earth, which is our preponderating element, with our triangles all right-angled, comfortable, and complete—for which blessing let us thank Providence, and be charitable to those who are necessarily windy and gaseous, from that unlucky scalene triangle upon which they have had the misfortune to be constructed, and which, you perceive, is quite at variance with the mathematical constitution of the earth!

Pisistratus.—Sir, I am very happy to hear so simple, easy, and intelligible an explanation of Uncle Jack's peculiarities; and I only hope that, for the future, the sides of his scalene triangle may never be produced to our rectangular conformations.

Mr Caxton—(*descending from his stilts, with an air as mildly reproachful as if I had been cavilling at the virtues of Socrates.*)—You don't do your uncle justice, Pisistratus: he is a very clever man; and I am sure that, in spite of his scalene misfortune, he would be an honest one—that is, (added Mr Caxton, correcting himself,) not romantically or heroically honest—but honest as men go—if he could but keep his head long enough above water; but, you see, when the best man in the world is engaged in the process of sinking, he catches hold of whatever comes in his way, and drowns the very friend that is swimming to save him.

Pisistratus.—Perfectly true, sir; but Uncle Jack makes it his business to be *always* sinking!

Mr Caxton—(*with naïveté.*)—And how could it be otherwise, when he has been carrying all his fellow creatures in his breeches' pockets! Now he has got rid of that dead weight, I should not be surprised if he swam like a cork.

Pisistratus—(*who, since the* Anti-*Capitalist, has become a strong Anti-Jackian.*)—But if, sir, you really think Uncle Jack's love for his fellow-creatures is genuine, that is surely not the worst part of him!

Mr Caxton.—O literal ratiocinator, and dull to the true logic of Attic irony, can't you comprehend that an affection may be genuine as felt by the man, yet its nature be spurious in relation to others. A man may genuinely believe he loves his fellow creatures, when he roasts them like Torquemada, or guillotines them like St Just! Happily Jack's scalene triangle, being more produced from air than from fire, does not give to his philanthropy the inflammatory character which distinguishes the benevolence of inquisitors and revolutionists. The philanthropy, therefore, takes a more flatulent and innocent form, and expends its strength in

mounting paper balloons, out of which Jack pitches himself, with all the fellow creatures he can coax into sailing with him. No doubt Uncle Jack's philanthropy is sincere, when he cuts the string and soars up out of sight; but the sincerity will not much mend their bruises when himself and fellow creatures come tumbling down, neck and heels. It must be a very wide heart that can take in all mankind—and of a very strong fibre, to bear so much stretching. Such hearts there are, Heaven be thanked!—and all praise to them! Jack's is not of that quality. He is a scalene triangle. He is not a circle! And yet, if he would but let it rest, it is a good heart—a very good heart," 424
continued my father, warming into a tenderness quite infantine, all things considered. "Poor Jack! that was prettily said of him—'That if he were a dog, and he had no home but a dog-kennel, he would turn out to give me the best of the straw!' Poor brother Jack!"

So the discussion was dropped; and, in the meanwhile, Uncle Jack, like the short-faced gentleman in the SPECTATOR, "*distinguished himself* by a profound silence."

## CHAPTER LXI.

Blanche has contrived to associate herself, if not with my more active diversions—in running over the country, and making friends with the farmers—still in all my more leisurely and domestic pursuits. There is about her a silent charm that it is very hard to define—but it seems to arise from a kind of innate sympathy with the moods and humours of those she loves. If one is gay, there is a cheerful ring in her silver laugh that seems gladness itself; if one is sad, and creeps away into a corner to bury one's head in one's hands, and muse—by-and-by—and just at the right moment—when one has mused one's fill, and the heart wants something to refresh and restore it, one feels two innocent arms round one's neck—looks up—and lo! Blanche's soft eyes, full of wistful compassionate kindness; though she has the tact not to question—it is enough for her to sorrow with your sorrow—she cares not to know more. A strange child!—fearless, and yet seemingly fond of things that inspire children with fear—fond of tales of fay, sprite, and ghost—which Mrs Primmins draws fresh and new from her memory, as a conjuror draws pancakes hot and hot from a hat. And yet so sure is Blanche of her own innocence, that they never trouble her dreams in her lone little room, full of caliginous corners and nooks, with the winds moaning round the desolate ruins, and the casements rattling hoarse in the dungeon-like wall. She would have no dread to walk through the ghostly keep in the dark, or cross the churchyard, what time,

"By the moon's doubtful and malignant light,"

the grave-stones look so spectral, and the shade from the yew-trees lies so still on the sward. When the brows of Roland are gloomiest, and the compression of his lips makes sorrow look sternest, be sure that Blanche is couched at his feet, waiting the moment when, with some heavy sigh, the muscles relax, and she is sure of the smile if she climbs to his knee. It is pretty to chance on her gliding up broken turret stairs, or standing hushed in the recess of shattered windowless casements, and you wonder what thoughts of vague awe and solemn pleasure can be at work under that still little brow.

She has a quick comprehension of all that is taught to her; she already tasks to the full my mother's educational arts. My father has had to rummage his library for books, to feed (or extinguish) her desire for "farther information;" and has promised lessons in French and Italian—at some golden time in the shadowy "By-and-By,"—which are received so gratefully that one might think Blanche mistook *Telemaque* and *Novelle Morali* for baby-houses and dolls. Heaven send her through French and Italian with better success than attended Mr Caxton's lessons in Greek to Pisistratus! She has an ear for music, which my mother, who is no bad judge, declares to be exquisite. Luckily there is an old Italian settled in a town ten miles off, who is said to be an excellent music master, and who comes the round of the neighbouring squirearchy twice a-week. I have taught her to draw—an accomplishment in which I am not without skill—and she has already taken a sketch from nature, which, barring the perspective, is not so amiss; indeed, she has caught the notion of "idealising" (which promises future originality) from her own natural instincts, and given to the old wych-elm, that hangs over the stream, just the bough that it wanted to dip into the water, and soften off the hard lines. My only fear is, that Blanche should become too dreamy and thoughtful. Poor child, she has no one to play with! So I look out, and get her a dog—frisky and young, who abhors sedentary occupations—a spaniel, small and coal-black, 425
with ears sweeping the ground. I baptise him "Juba," in honour of Addison's Cato, and in consideration of his sable curls and Mauritanian complexion. Blanche does not seem so eerie and elf-like, while gliding through the ruins, when Juba barks by her side, and scares the birds from the ivy.

One day I had been pacing to and fro the hall, which was deserted; and the sight of the armour and portraits—dumb evidences of the active and adventurous lives of the old inhabitants, which seemed to reprove my own inactive obscurity—had set me off on one of those Pegaséan hobbies on which youth mounts to the skies—delivering maidens on rocks, and killing Gorgons and monsters—when Juba bounded in, and Blanche came after him, her straw hat in her hand.

BLANCHE.—I thought you were here, Sisty: may I stay?

PISISTRATUS.—Why, my dear child, the day is so fine, that instead of losing it in-doors, you ought to be running in the fields with Juba.

JUBA.—Bow—wow!

BLANCHE.—Will you come too? If Sisty stays in, Blanche does not care for the butterflies!

Pisistratus, seeing that the thread of his day-dreams is broken, consents with an air of resignation. Just as they gain the door, Blanche pauses, and looks as if there were something on her mind.

PISISTRATUS.—What now, Blanche? Why are you making knots in that ribbon, and writing invisible characters on the floor with the point of that busy little foot?

BLANCHE—(*mysteriously*).—I have found a new room, Sisty. Do you think we may look into it?

PISISTRATUS.—Certainly, unless any Bluebeard of your acquaintance told you not. Where is it?

BLANCHE.—Up stairs—to the left.

PISISTRATUS.—That little old door, going down two stone steps, which is always kept locked?

BLANCHE.—Yes! it is not locked to-day. The door was ajar, and I peeped in; but I would not do more till I came and asked you if you thought it would not be wrong.

PISISTRATUS.—Very good in you, my discreet little cousin. I have no doubt it is a ghost-trap; however, with Juba's protection, I think we might venture together.

Pisistratus, Blanche, and Juba, ascend the stairs, and turn off down a dark passage to the left, away from the rooms in use. We reach the arch-pointed door of oak planks nailed roughly together; we push it open, and perceive that a small stair winds down from the room: it is just over Roland's chamber.

The room has a damp smell, and has probably been left open to be aired, for the wind comes through the unbarred casement, and a billet burns on the hearth. The place has that attractive, fascinating air which belongs to a lumber room, than which I know nothing that so captivates the interest and fancy of young people. What treasures, to them, often lie hid in those quaint odds and ends which the elder generations have discarded as rubbish! All children are by nature antiquarians and relic-hunters. Still there is an order and precision with which the articles in that room are stowed away that belies the true notion of lumber—none of the mildew and dust which give such mournful interest to things abandoned to decay.

In one corner are piled up cases, and military-looking trunks of outlandish aspect, with R. D. C. in brass nails on their sides. From these we turn with involuntary respect, and call off Juba, who has wedged himself behind in pursuit of some imaginary mouse. But in the other corner is what seems to me a child's cradle—not an English one evidently—it is of wood, seemingly Spanish rosewood, with a rail-work at the back, of twisted columns; and I should scarcely have known it to be a cradle but for the fairy-like quilt and the tiny pillows, which proclaimed its uses.

On the wall above the cradle were arranged sundry little articles, that had, perhaps, once made the joy of a child's heart—broken toys with the paint rubbed off, a tin sword and trumpet, and a few tattered books, mostly in Spanish—by their shape and look, doubtless, children's books. Near these stood, on the floor, a picture with its face to the wall. Juba had chased the mouse that his fancy still insisted on creating, behind this picture, and, as he abruptly drew back, it fell into the hands I stretched forth to receive it. I turned the face to the light, and was surprised to see merely an old family portrait; it was that of a gentleman in the flowered vest and stiff ruff which referred the date of his existence to the reign of Elizabeth—a man with a bold and noble countenance. On the corner was placed a faded coat of arms, beneath which was inscribed, "HERBERT DE CAXTON, EQ: AUR: ÆTAT: 35." 

On the back of the canvass I observed, as I now replaced the picture against the wall, a label in Roland's handwriting, though in a younger and more running hand than he now wrote. The words were these:—"The best and bravest of our line. He charged by Sidney's side on the field of Zutphen; he fought in Drake's ship against the armament of Spain. If ever I have a ——" The rest of the label seemed to have been torn off.

I turned away, and felt a remorseful shame that I had so far gratified my curiosity,—if by so harsh a name the powerful interest that had absorbed me must be called. I looked round for Blanche; she had retreated from my side to the door, and, with her hands before her eyes, was weeping. As I stole towards her, my glance fell on a book that lay on a chair near the casement, and beside those relics of an infancy once pure and serene. By the old-fashioned silver clasps I recognised Roland's bible. I felt almost as if I had been guilty of profanation in my thoughtless intrusion. I drew away Blanche, and we descended the stairs noiselessly, and not till we were on our favourite spot, amidst a heap of ruins on the feudal justice-hill, did I seek to kiss away her tears and ask the cause.

"My poor brother," sobbed Blanche; "they must have been his—and we shall never, never see him again!—and poor papa's bible, which he reads when he is very, very sad! I did not weep enough when my brother died. I know better what death is now! Poor papa, poor papa! Don't die, too, Sisty!"

There was no running after butterflies that morning; and it was long before I could soothe Blanche. Indeed, she bore the traces of dejection in her soft looks for many, many days; and she often asked me, sighingly, "Don't you think it was very wrong in me to take you there?" Poor little Blanche, true daughter of Eve, she would not let me bear my due share of the blame; she would have it all in Adam's primitive way of justice,—"The woman tempted me, and I did eat." And since then Blanche has seemed more fond than ever of Roland, and comparatively deserts me, to nestle close to him, and closer, till he looks up and says, "My child, you are pale; go and run after the butterflies;" and she says now to him, not to me,—"Come too!" drawing him out into the sunshine with a hand that will not loose its hold.

Of all Roland's line this Herbert de Caxton was "the best and bravest!" yet he had never named that ancestor to me—never put any forefather in comparison with the dubious and mythical Sir William. I now remembered once, that, in going over the pedigree, I had been struck by the name of Herbert—the only Herbert in the scroll—and had asked, "What of him, uncle?" and Roland had muttered something inaudible and turned away. And I remembered also, that in Roland's room there was the mark in the wall where a picture of that size had once hung. It had been removed thence before we first came, but must have hung there for years to have left that mark on the wall;—perhaps suspended by Bolt, during Roland's long Continental absence. "If ever I have a ——." What were the missing words? Alas, did they not relate to the son—missed for ever, evidently not forgotten still?

## CHAPTER LXII.

My uncle sate on one side the fireplace, my mother on the other; and I, at a small table between them, prepared to note down the results of their conference; for they had met in high council, to assess their joint fortunes—determine what should be brought into the common stock, and set apart for the civil list, and what should be laid aside as a sinking fund. Now my mother, true woman as she was, had a womanly love of show in her own quiet way—of making "a genteel figure" in the eyes of the neighbourhood—of seeing that sixpence not only went as far as sixpence ought to go, but that, in the going, it should emit mild but imposing splendour—not, indeed, a gaudy flash—a startling Borealian coruscation, which is scarcely within the modest and placid idiosyncrasies of sixpence—but a gleam of gentle and benign light, just to show where a sixpence had been, and allow you time to say, "Behold," before



"The jaws of darkness did devour it up."

Thus, as I once before took occasion to apprise the reader, we had always held a very respectable position in the neighbourhood round our square brick house; been as sociable as my father's habits would permit; given our little tea-parties, and our occasional dinners, and, without attempting to vie with our richer associates, there had always been so exquisite a neatness, so notable a house-keeping, so thoughtful a disposition, in short, of all the properties indigenous to a well-spent sixpence, in my mother's management, that there was not an old maid within seven miles of us who did not pronounce our tea-parties to be perfect; and the great Mrs Rollick, who gave forty guineas a-year to a professed cook and housekeeper, used regularly, whenever we dined at Rollick Hall, to call across the table to my mother, (who therewith blushed up to her ears,) to apologise for the strawberry jelly. It is true that when, on returning home, my mother adverted to that flattering and delicate compliment, in a tone that revealed the self-conceit of the human heart, my father—whether to sober his Kitty's vanity into a proper and Christian mortification of spirit, or from that strange shrewdness which belonged to him—would remark that Mrs Rollick was of a querulous nature; that the compliment was meant not to please my mother, but to spite the professed cook and housekeeper, to whom the butler would be sure to repeat the invidious apology.

In settling at the tower, and assuming the head of its establishment, my mother was naturally anxious that, poor battered invalid though the tower was, it should still put its best leg foremost. Sundry cards, despite the thinness of the neighbourhood, had been left at the door; various invitations, which my uncle had hitherto declined, had greeted his occupation of the ancestral ruin, and had become more numerous since the news of our arrival had gone abroad; so that my mother saw before her a very suitable field for her hospitable accomplishments—a reasonable ground for her ambition that the tower should hold up its head, as became a tower that held the head of the family.

But not to wrong thee, O dear mother, as thou sittest there, opposite the grim captain, so fair and so neat,—with thine apron as white, and thy hair as trim and as sheen, and thy morning cap, with its ribbons of blue, as coquettishly arranged as if thou hadst a fear that the least negligence on thy part might lose thee the heart of thine Austin—not to wrong thee by setting down to frivolous motives alone thy feminine visions of the social amenities of life, I know that thine heart, in its provident tenderness, was quite as much interested as ever thy vanities could be, in the hospitable thoughts on which thou wert intent. For, first and foremost, it was the wish of thy soul that thine Austin might, as little as possible, be reminded of the change in his fortunes,—might miss as little as possible those interruptions to his abstracted scholarly moods, at which, it is true, he used to fret and to pshaw and to cry Papæ! but which nevertheless always did him good, and freshened up the stream of his thoughts. And, next, it was the conviction of thine

understanding that a little society, and boon companionship, and the proud pleasure of showing his ruins, and presiding at the hall of his forefathers, would take Roland out of those gloomy reveries into which he still fell at times. And, thirdly, for us young people, ought not Blanche to find companions in children of her own sex and age? Already in those large black eyes there was something melancholy and brooding, as there is in the eyes of all children who live only with their elders; and for Pisistratus, with his altered prospects, and the one great gnawing memory at his heart—which he tried to conceal from himself, but which a mother (and a mother who had loved) saw at a glance—what could be better than such union and interchange with the world around us, small as that world might be, which woman, sweet binder and blender of all social links, might artfully effect?—So that thou didst not go like the awful Florentine, 428

"Sopra lor vanita che par persona,

'over thin shadows that mocked the substance of real forms,' but rather it was the real forms that appeared as shadows or *vanita*.

What a digression!—can I never tell my story in a plain straightforward way? Certainly I was born under the Cancer, and all my movements are circumlocutory, sideways, and crab-like.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

"I think, Roland," said my mother, "that the establishment is settled. Bolt, who is equal to three men at least; Primmins, cook and housekeeper; Molly a good stirring girl—and willing, (though I've had some difficulty in persuading her, poor thing, to submit not to be called Anna Maria!) Their wages are but a small item, my dear Roland."

"Hem!" said Roland, "since we can't do with fewer servants at less wages, I suppose we must call it small—"

"It is so," said my mother with mild positiveness. "And, indeed, what with the game and fish, and the garden and poultry-yard, and your own mutton, our housekeeping will be next to nothing."

"Hem!" again said the thrifty Roland, with a slight inflection of the beetle brows. "It may be next to nothing, ma'am—sister—just as a butcher's shop may be next to Northumberland House, but there is a vast deal between nothing and that next neighbour you have given it."

This speech was so like one of my father's;—so *naïve* an imitation of that subtle reasoner's use of the rhetorical figure called ANTANACLASIS, (or repetition of the same words in a different sense,) that I laughed and my mother smiled. But she smiled reverently, not thinking of the ANTANACLASIS, as, laying her hand on Roland's arm, she replied in the yet more formidable figure of speech called EPIPHONEMA, (or exclamation,) "Yet, with all your economy, you would have had us—"

"Tut!" cried my uncle, parrying the EPIPHONEMA with a masterly APOSIOPESIS (or breaking off;) "tut! if you had done what I wished, I should have had more pleasure for my money!"

My poor mother's rhetorical armoury supplied no weapon to meet that artful APOSIOPESIS, so she dropped the rhetoric altogether, and went on with that "unadorned eloquence" natural to her, as to other great financial reformers:—"Well, Roland, but I am a good housewife, I assure you, and—don't scold; but that you never do,—I mean don't look as if you would like to scold; the fact is, that, even after setting aside £100 a-year for our little parties—"

"Little parties!—a hundred a-year!" cried the Captain aghast.

My mother pursued her way remorselessly,—"Which we can well afford; and without counting your half-pay, which you must keep for pocket-money and your wardrobe and Blanche's, I calculate that we can allow Pisistratus £150 a-year, which, with the scholarship he is to get, will keep him at Cambridge," (at that, seeing the scholarship was as yet amidst the Pleasures of Hope, I shook my head doubtfully;) "and," continued my mother, not heeding that sign of dissent, "we shall still have something to lay by."

The Captain's face assumed a ludicrous expression of compassion and horror; he evidently thought my mother's misfortunes had turned her head.

His tormentor continued.

"For," said my mother, with a pretty calculating shake of her head, and a movement of the right forefinger towards the five fingers of the left hand, "three hundred and seventy pounds—the interest of Austin's fortune—and fifty pounds that we may reckon for the rent of our house, make £420 a-year. Add your £330 a-year from the farm, sheep-walk, and cottages that you let, and the total is £750. Now with all we get for nothing for our housekeeping, as I said before, we can do very well with five hundred a-year, and indeed make a handsome figure. So, after allowing Sisty £150, we still have £100 to lay by for Blanche." 429

"Stop, stop, stop!" cried the Captain, in great agitation; "who told you that I had £330 a-year?"

"Why, Bolt—don't be angry with him."

"Bolt is a blockhead. From £330 a-year take £200, and the remainder is all my income, besides my half-pay."

My mother opened her eyes, and so did I.

"To that £130 add, if you please, £130 of your own. All that you have over, my dear sister, is yours or Austin's, or your boy's; but not a shilling can go to give luxuries to a miserly, battered old soldier. Do you understand me?"

"No, Roland," said my mother, "I don't understand you at all. Does not your property bring in £330 a-year?"

"Yes, but it has a debt of £200 a-year on it," said the Captain, gloomily and reluctantly.

"Oh, Roland!" cried my mother tenderly, and approaching so near that, had my father been in the room, I am sure she would have been bold enough to kiss the stern Captain, though I never saw him look sterner and less kissable. "Oh, Roland!" cried my mother, concluding that famous EPIPHONEMA which my uncle's APOSIOPESIS had before nipped in the bud, "and yet you would have made us, who are twice as rich, rob you of this little all!"

"Ah!" said Roland, trying to smile, "but I should have had my own way then, and starved you shockingly. No talk then of 'little parties,' and suchlike. But you must not now turn the tables against me, nor bring your £420 a-year as a set-off to my £130."

"Why," said my mother generously, "you forget the money's worth that you contribute—all that your grounds supply, and all that we save by it. I am sure that that's worth a yearly £300 at the least."

"Madam—sister," said the Captain, "I'm sure you don't want to hurt my feelings. All I have to say is, that, if you add to what I bring an equal sum—to keep up the poor old ruin—it is the utmost that I can allow, and the rest is not more than Pisistratus can spend."

So saying, the Captain rose, bowed, and before either of us could stop him, hobbled out of the room.

"Dear me, Sisty!" said my mother, wringing her hands, "I have certainly displeased him. How could I guess he had so large a debt on the property?"

"Did not he pay his son's debts? Is not that the reason that—"

"Ah," interrupted my mother, almost crying, "and it was that which ruffled him, and I not to guess it? What shall I do?"

"Set to work at a new calculation, dear mother, and let him have his own way."

"But then," said my mother, "your uncle will mope himself to death, and your father will have no relaxation, while you see that he has lost his former object in his books. And Blanche—and you too. If we were only to contribute what dear Roland does, I do not see how, with £260 a-year, we could ever bring our neighbours round us! I wonder what Austin would say! I have half a mind—no, I'll go and look over the week-books with Primmins."

My mother went her way sorrowfully, and I was left alone.

Then I looked on the stately old hall, grand in its forlorn decay. And the dreams I had begun to cherish at my heart swept over me, and hurried me along, far, far away into the golden land, whither Hope beckons Youth. To restore my father's fortunes—reweave the links of that broken ambition which had knit his genius with the world—rebuild these fallen walls—cultivate those barren moors—revive the ancient name—glad the old soldier's age—and be to *both* the brothers what Roland had lost—a son! These were my dreams; and when I woke from them, lo! they had left behind an intense purpose, a resolute object. Dream, O youth—dream manfully and nobly, and thy dreams shall be prophets!

## CHAPTER LXIV.

### LETTER FROM PISISTRATUS CAXTON, TO ALBERT TREVANION, ESQ., M. P.

(*The confession of a youth who, in the Old World, finds himself one too many.*)

"My dear Mr Trevanion,—I thank you cordially, and so we do all, for your reply to my letter, informing you of the villanous traps through which we have passed not indeed with whole skins, but still whole in life and limb—which considering that the traps were three, and the teeth sharp, was more than we could reasonably expect. We have taken to the wastes, like wise foxes as we are, and I do not think a bait can be found that will again snare the fox paternal. As for the fox filial, it is different, and I am about to prove to you that he is burning to redeem the family disgrace. Ah! my dear Mr Trevanion, if you are busy with 'blue books' when this letter reaches

you, stop here, and put it aside for some rare moment of leisure. I am about to open my heart to you, and ask you, who know the world so well, to aid me in an escape from those *flammantia mœnia*, wherewith I find that world begirt and enclosed. For look you, sir, you and my father were right when you both agreed that the mere book life was not meant for me. And yet what is not book life, to a young man who would make his way through the ordinary and conventional paths to fortune? All the professions are so book-lined, book-hemmed, book-choked, that wherever these strong hands of mine stretch towards action, they find themselves met by octavo ramparts, flanked with quarto crenellations. For first, this college life, opening to scholarships, and ending, perchance, as you political economists would desire, in Malthusian fellowships—premiums for celibacy—consider what manner of thing it is!

"Three years, book upon book,—a great Dead Sea before one, three years long, and all the apples that grow on the shore full of the ashes of pica and primer! Those three years ended, the fellowship, it may be, won,—still books—books—if the whole world does not close at the college gates. Do I, from scholar, effloresce into literary man, author by profession?—books—books! Do I go into the law?—books—books. *Ars longa, vita brevis*, which, paraphrased, means that it is slow work before one fags one's way to a brief! Do I turn doctor? Why, what but books can kill time, until, at the age of forty, a lucky chance may permit me to kill something else? The church? (for which, indeed, I don't profess to be good enough,)—that is book life *par excellence*, whether, inglorious and poor, I wander through long lines of divines and fathers; or, ambitious of bishopricks, I amend the corruptions, not of the human heart, but of a Greek text, and through defiles of scholiasts and commentators win my way to the See. In short, barring the noble profession of arms—which you know, after all, is not precisely the road to fortune—can you tell me any means by which one may escape these eternal books, this mental clockwork, and corporeal lethargy. Where can this passion for life that runs riot through my veins find its vent? Where can these stalwart limbs, and this broad chest, grow of value and worth, in this hot-bed of cerebral inflammation and dyspeptic intellect? I know what is in me; I know I have the qualities that should go with stalwart limbs and broad chest. I have some plain common sense, some promptitude and keenness, some pleasure in hardy danger, some fortitude in bearing pain—qualities for which I bless Heaven, for they are qualities good and useful in private life. But in the forum of men, in the market of fortune, are they not *flocci, nauci, nihili*?

"In a word, dear sir and friend, in this crowded Old World, there is not the same room that our 431
bold forefathers found for men to walk about, and jostle their neighbours. No; they must sit down like boys at their form, and work out their tasks, with rounded shoulders and aching fingers. There has been a pastoral age, and a hunting age, and a fighting age. Now we have arrived at the age sedentary. Men who sit longest carry all before them: puny delicate fellows, with hands just strong enough to wield a pen, eyes so bleared by the midnight lamp that they see no joy in that buxom sun, (which draws me forth into the fields, as life draws the living,) and digestive organs worn and macerated by the relentless flagellation of the brain. Certainly, if this is to be the Reign of Mind, it is idle to repine, and kick against the pricks; but is it true that all these qualities of action that are within me are to go for nothing! If I were rich, and happy in mind and circumstance, well and good; I should shoot, hunt, farm, travel, enjoy life, and snap my fingers at ambition. If I were so poor and so humbly bred that I could turn gamekeeper or whipper-in, as pauper gentlemen virtually did of old, well and good too; I should exhaust this troublesome vitality of mine, by nightly battles with poachers, and leaps over double dykes and stone walls. If I were so depressed of spirit that I could live without remorse on my father's small means, and exclaim with Claudian, 'The earth gives me feasts that cost nothing,' well and good too; it were a life to suit a vegetable, or a very minor poet. But as it is!—here I open another leaf of my heart to you! To say that, being poor, I want to make a fortune, is to say that I am an Englishman. To attach ourselves to a thing positive, belongs to our practical race. Even in our dreams, if we build castles in the air, they are not *Castles of Indolence*,—indeed they have very little of the castle about them, and look much more like Hoare's Bank on the east side of Temple Bar! I desire, then, to make a fortune. But I differ from my countrymen, first, by desiring only what you rich men would call but a *small* fortune; secondly, in wishing that I may not spend my whole life in that said fortune-making. Just see, now, how I am placed.

"Under ordinary circumstances, I must begin by taking from my father a large slice of an income that will ill spare paring. According to my calculation, my parents and my uncle want all they have got—and the subtraction of the yearly sum on which Pisistratus is to live, till he can live by his own labours, would be so much taken from the decent comforts of his kindred. If I return to Cambridge, with all economy, I must thus narrow still more the *res angusta domi*—and when Cambridge is over, and I am turned loose upon the world—failing, as is likely enough, of the support of a fellowship—how many years must I work, or rather, alas! not work, at the bar (which, after all, seems my best calling) before I can in my turn provide for those who, till then, rob themselves for me?—till I have arrived at middle life, and they are old and worn out—till the chink of the golden bowl sounds but hollow at the ebbing well! I would wish that, if I can make money, those I love best may enjoy it while enjoyment is yet left to them; that my father shall see *The History of Human Error*, complete, bound in Russia on his shelves; that my mother shall have the innocent pleasures that content her, before age steals the light from her happy smile; that before Roland's hair is snow-white, (alas! the snows there thicken fast,) he shall lean on my arm, while we settle together where the ruin shall be repaired or where left to the owls; and where the dreary bleak waste around shall laugh with the gleam of corn:—for you know the nature of this Cumberland soil—you, who possess much of it, and have won so many fair acres from the wild;—you know that my uncle's land, now (save a single farm) scarce worth a shilling an acre, needs

but capital to become an estate more lucrative than ever his ancestors owned. You know that, for you have applied your capital to the same kind of land, and, in doing so, what blessings—which you scarcely think of in your London library—you have effected!—what mouths you feed, what hands you employ! I have calculated that my uncle's moors, which now scarce maintain two or three shepherds, could, manured by money, maintain two hundred families by their labour. All this is worth trying for! therefore Pisistratus wants to make money. Not so much! he does not require millions—a few spare thousand pounds would go a long way; and with a modest capital to begin with, Roland should become a true squire, a real landowner, not the mere lord of a desert. Now then, dear sir, advise me how I may, with such qualities as I possess, arrive at that capital—ay, and before it is too late—so that money-making may not last till my grave.

"Turning in despair from this civilised world of ours, I have cast my eyes to a world far older,—and yet more to a world in its giant childhood. India here,—Australia there!—what say you, sir—you who will see dispassionately those things that float before my eyes through a golden haze, looming large in the distance? Such is my confidence in your judgment that you have but to say, 'Fool, give up thine El Dorados and stay at home,—stick to the books and the desk—annihilate that redundance of animal life that is in thee—grow a mental machine. Thy physical gifts are of no avail to thee; take thy place among the slaves of the Lamp," and I will obey without a murmur. But if I am right—if I have in me attributes that here find no market; if my repinings are but the instincts of nature, that, out of this decrepid civilisation, desire vent for growth in the young stir of some more rude and vigorous social system—then give me, I pray, that advice which may clothe my idea in some practical and tangible embodiments. Have I made myself understood?

"Rarely do we see a newspaper here, but occasionally one finds its way from the parsonage; and I have lately rejoiced at a paragraph that spoke of your speedy entrance into the administration as a thing certain. I write to you before you are a minister; and you see what I seek is not in the way of official patronage: A niche in an office!—oh, to me that were worse than all. Yet I did labour hard with you, but—*that* was different! I write to you thus frankly, knowing your warm noble heart—and as if you were my father. Allow me to add my humble but earnest congratulations on Miss Trevanion's approaching marriage with one worthy, if not of her, at least of her station. I do so as becomes one whom you have allowed to retain the right to pray for the happiness of you and yours.

"My dear Mr Trevanion, this is a long letter, and I dare not even read it over, lest if I do, I should not send it. Take it with all its faults, and judge of it with that kindness with which you have judged ever

Your grateful and devoted servant,
"Pisistratus Caxton."

## LETTER FROM ALBERT TREVANION, ESQ., M.P. TO PISISTRATUS CAXTON.

*Library of the House of Commons, Tuesday Night.*

"My dear Pisistratus,—* * * * * is up! we are in for it for two mortal hours. I take flight to the library, and devote those hours to you. Don't be conceited, but that picture of yourself which you have placed before me has struck me with all the force of an original. The state of mind which you describe so vividly must be a very common one, in our era of civilisation, yet I have never before seen it made so prominent and life-like. You have been in my thoughts all day. Yes, how many young men must there be like you, in this Old World, able, intelligent, active, and persevering enough, yet not adapted for success in any of our conventional professions—'mute, inglorious Raleighs.' Your letter, young artist, is an illustration of the philosophy of colonising. I comprehend better, after reading it, the old Greek colonisation,—the sending out not only the paupers, the refuse of an over-populated state, but a large proportion of a better class—fellows full of pith and sap, and exuberant vitality, like yourself, blending in those wise *cleruchiæ* a certain portion of the aristocratic with the more democratic element; not turning a rabble loose upon a new soil, but planting in the foreign allotments all the rudiments of a harmonious state, analogous to that in the mother country—not only getting rid of hungry craving mouths, but furnishing vent for a waste surplus of intelligence and courage, which at home is really not needed, and more often comes to ill than to good;—here only menaces our artificial embankments, but there, carried off in an aqueduct, might give life to a desert.

"For my part, in my ideal of colonisation, I should like that each exportation of human beings had, as of old, its leaders and chiefs—not so appointed from the mere quality of rank, often, indeed, taken from the humbler classes—but still men to whom a certain degree of education should give promptitude, quickness, *adaptability*—men in whom their followers can confide. The Greeks understood that. Nay, as the colony makes progress—as its principal town rises into the dignity of a capital—a *polis* that needs a polity—I sometimes think it might be wise to go still farther, and not only transplant to it a high standard of civilisation, but draw it more closely into connexion with the parent state, and render the passage of spare intellect, education, and *civility*, to and fro, more facile, by draughting off thither the spare scions of royalty itself. I know that many of my more 'liberal' friends would pooh-pooh this notion; but I am sure that the colony altogether, when arrived to a state that would bear the importation, would thrive all the better for it. And when the day shall come (as to all healthful colonies it must come sooner or later) in which the settlement has grown an independent state, we may thereby have laid the seeds of a

constitution and a civilisation similar to our own—with self-developed forms of monarchy and aristocracy, though of a simpler growth than old societies accept, and not left a strange motley chaos of struggling democracy—an uncouth livid giant, at which the Frankenstein may well tremble—not because it is a giant, but because it is a giant half completed.[8] Depend on it, the New World will be friendly or hostile to the Old, *not in proportion to the kinship of race, but in proportion to the similarity of manners and institutions*—a mighty truth, to which we colonisers have been blind.

"Passing from these more distant speculations to this positive present before us, you see already, from what I have said, that I sympathise with your aspirations—that I construe them as you would have me;—looking to your nature and to your objects, I give you my advice in a word —EMIGRATE!

"My advice is, however, founded on one hypothesis—viz., that you are perfectly sincere—you will be contented with a rough life, and with a moderate fortune at the end of your probation. Don't dream of emigrating if you want to make a million, or the tenth part of a million. Don't dream of emigrating, unless you can *enjoy* its hardships,—to *bear* them is not enough!

"Australia is the land for you, as you seem to surmise. Australia is the land for two classes of emigrants: 1st, The man who has nothing but his wits, and plenty of them; 2dly, The man who has a small capital, and who is contented to spend ten years in trebling it. I assume that you belong to the latter class. Take out £3000, and before you are thirty years old, you may return with £10,000 or £12,000. If that satisfies you, think seriously of Australia. By coach, tomorrow, I will send you down all the best books and reports on the subject; and I will get you what detailed information I can from the Colonial Office. Having read these, and thought over them dispassionately, spend some months yet among the sheep-walks of Cumberland; learn all you can, from all the shepherds you can find—from Thyrsis to Menalcas. Do more; fit yourself in every way for a life in the Bush, where the philosophy of the division of labour is not yet arrived at. Learn to 434
turn your hand to everything. Be something of a smith, something of a carpenter—do the best you can with the fewest tools; make yourself an excellent shot; break in all the wild horses and ponies you can borrow and beg. Even if you want to do none of these things when in your settlement, the having learned to do them will fit you for many other things not now foreseen. *De-fine-gentlemanise* yourself from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot, and become the greater aristocrat for so doing; for he is more than an aristocrat, he is a king, who suffices in all things for himself—who is his own master, because he wants no *valetaille*. I think Seneca has expressed that thought before me; and I would quote the passage, but the book, I fear, is not in the library of the House of Commons. But now—(cheers, by Jove. I suppose * * * * * is down! Ah! it is so; and C—— is up, and that cheer followed a sharp hit at me. How I wish I were your age, and going to Australia with you!) But now—to resume my suspended period—but now to the important point—capital. You must take that, unless you go as a shepherd, and then goodbye to the idea of £10,000 in ten years. So, you see, it appears at the first blush that you must still come to your father; but, you will say, with this difference, that you borrow the capital, with every chance of repaying it, instead of frittering away the income year after year till you are eight-and-thirty or forty at least. Still, Pisistratus, you don't, in this, gain your object at a leap; and my dear old friend ought not to lose his son and his money too. You say you write to me as to your own father. You know I hate professions; and if you did not mean what you say, you have offended me mortally. As a father, then, I take a father's rights, and speak plainly. A friend of mine, Mr Bolding, a clergyman, has a son—a wild fellow, who is likely to get into all sorts of scrapes in England, but with plenty of good in him, notwithstanding—frank, bold—not wanting in talent, but rather in prudence—easily tempted and led away into extravagance. He would make a capital colonist, (no such temptations in the Bush,) if tied to a youth like you. Now I propose, with your leave, that his father shall advance him £1500,—which shall not, however, be placed in his hands, but in yours, as head partner in the firm. You, on your side, shall advance the same sum of £1500, which you shall borrow from me, for three years without interest. At the end of that time interest shall commence, and the capital, with the interest on the said first three years, shall be repaid to me, or my executors, on your return. After you have been a year or two in the Bush, and felt your way, and learned your business, you may then safely borrow £1500 more from your father; and, in the meanwhile, you and your partner will have had together the full sum of £3000 to commence with. You see in this proposal I make you no gift, and I run no risk, even by your death. If you die, insolvent, I will promise to come on your father, poor fellow!—for small joy and small care will he have then in what may be left of his fortune. There—I have said all; and I will never forgive you if you reject an aid that will serve you so much, and cost me so little.

"I accept your congratulations on Fanny's engagement with Lord Castleton. When you return from Australia you will still be a young man, she (though about your own years) almost a middle-aged woman, with her head full of pomps and vanities. All girls have a short period of girlhood in common; but when they enter womanhood, the woman becomes the woman of her class. As for me, and the office assigned to me by report, you know what I said when we parted, and—but here J—— comes, and tells me that 'I am expected to speak, and answer N——, who is just up, brimful of malice,'—the House crowded, and hungering for personalities. So I, the man of the Old World, gird up my loins, and leave you with a sigh, to the fresh youth of the New—

'Ne tibi sit duros acuisse in prœlia dentes.'

"Yours affectionately,

## CHAPTER LXV.

So, reader, thou art now at the secret of my heart.

Wonder not that I, a bookman's son, and, at certain periods of my life, a bookman myself, though of lowly grade in that venerable class,—wonder not that I should thus, in that transition stage between youth and manhood, have turned impatiently from books.—Most students, at one time or other in their existence, have felt the imperious demand of that restless principle in man's nature, which calls upon each son of Adam to contribute his share to the vast treasury of human deeds. And though great scholars are not necessarily, nor usually, men of action,—yet the men of action whom History presents to our survey, have rarely been without a certain degree of scholarly nurture. For the ideas which books quicken, books cannot always satisfy. And though the royal pupil of Aristotle slept with Homer under his pillow, it was not that he might dream of composing epics, but of conquering new Ilions in the East. Many a man, how little soever resembling Alexander, may still have the conqueror's aim in an object that action only can achieve, and the book under his pillow may be the strongest antidote to his repose. And how the stern Destinies that shall govern the man weave their first delicate tissues amidst the earliest associations of the child!—Those idle tales with which the old credulous nurse had beguiled my infancy—tales of wonder, knight-errantry, and adventure, had left behind them seeds long latent—seeds that might never have sprung up above the soil—but that my boyhood was so early put under the burning-glass, and in the quick forcing-house, of the London world. There, even amidst books and study,—lively observation, and petulant ambition, broke forth from the lush foliage of romance—that fruitless leafiness of poetic youth! And there passion, which is a revolution in all the elements of individual man, had called a new state of being, turbulent and eager, out of the old habits and conventional forms it had buried,—ashes that speak where the fire has been. Far from me, as from any mind of some manliness, be the attempt to create interest by dwelling at length on the struggles against a rash and misplaced attachment, which it was my duty to overcome; but all such love, as I have before implied, is a terrible unsettler:—

"Where once such fairies dance, no grass doth ever grow."

To re-enter boyhood, go with meek docility through its disciplined routine,—how hard had I found that return, amidst the cloistered monotony of college! My love for my father, and my submission to his wish, had indeed given some animation to objects otherwise distasteful; but, now that my return to the University must be attended with positive privation to those at home, the idea became utterly hateful and repugnant. Under pretence that I found myself, on trial, not yet sufficiently prepared to do credit to my father's name, I had easily obtained leave to lose the ensuing college term, and pursue my studies at home. This gave me time to prepare my plans, and bring round—how shall I ever bring round to my adventurous views those whom I propose to desert? Hard it is to get on in the world—very hard! But the most painful step in the way is that which starts from the threshold of a beloved home.

How—ah, how, indeed! "No, Blanche, you cannot join me to-day; I am going out for many hours. So it will be late before I can be home."

Home!—the word chokes me! Juba slinks back to his young mistress, disconsolate; Blanche gazes at me ruefully from our favourite hilltop, and the flowers she has been gathering fall unheeded from her basket. I hear my mother's voice singing low, as she sits at work by her open casement. How—ah, how, indeed!

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# ANCIENT PRACTICE OF PAINTING.[9]

We are beginning to find out that the "dark ages" were not so utterly dark as they have been represented. We ascertain that there was not that universal blight upon the human mind which it has been the practice of historians to contrast with the flourishing condition of their own times. Nay, if we are now to take that measure which those historians adopted, we should estimate their own era with as disparaging a comparison with the present. But the inventions of our own days—the great advance of arts and sciences—so far from having a tendency to depreciate, throw a light upon, and acknowledge the value of, those of the middle ages. The appreciation is becoming general. We are old enough to remember the time when it was thought of little moment to block up with low unseemly edifices, or mutilate for any purpose, those amazing works of mediæval genius, our Gothic religious structures. We need but refer to the dates on the mural deformities in most of our old churches and cathedrals. Who, that will turn his eye in disgust from such monstrosities of taste, to the decorations they have misplaced and mutilated, and to the general aspect, of an indestructible character, of our minsters, will not rather ask, which were the dark ages—those of the builders and founders, or those of the obliterators and defilers? It is astonishing that such wondrous magnificence should ever have been viewed with indifference, and still more astonishing that disfigurement and desecration should have been suffered; yet men thought themselves wise in those days, and learned, and ingenious. And so they were; but in

respect of arts they were dark enough—and the spirit of Puritanism was indeed a blight infecting that darkness; and the effects of that blight have not yet passed away. It may appear strange that, after a long period of worse than neglect, we not only appreciate, but such is our admiration of those works of past genius, that we imitate them, and study them for a discovery of the canons of the art which we think we cannot with impunity set aside. We here speak of those large and conspicuous monuments of the mind of the middle ages, but the increasing admiration leads to discoveries of yet more hidden treasures. The genius that designed the structures was as busily and as devotionally employed in every kind of decoration; and with a surprising unity of feeling; and as if with one sole object, to carry out the new Christian principle—to make significant a "beauty of holiness" in all outward things, that men might look to with an awe and reverence—and learn. The sanctity of that one religious art—architecture—demanded that nothing without or within should be left "common" or "unclean," but that in the whole and minutest parts this precept should be legible and manifest—"Do all to the glory of God." All art was significant of the religion for which all art, all science was pursued. The workers of those days laboured with a loving and pious toil, and lifted up their works to an unseen and all-seeing eye, and not to the applause of men; for who was there to value, or to understand, even when in some degree they felt the influence of the skill which designed and executed such infinite variety of parts, to the manifestation of one great purpose?

We must no longer speak of the middle ages as a period of universal intellectual darkness. If it were so, it would be a miracle, contrary to the intention of miracle; and the thought has in it a kind of blasphemy, which would weaken the sustaining arm of Providence, and imply an unholy rest. We do not believe in the possibility of the human race universally retrograding. We trust that there is always something doing for the future as well as for the present; something for progression, neither acceptable nor perceived by the present generation—from whose sight it is, as it were, hidden—buried as seed in the earth, to spring up in its proper abundance, and in its 437
due time. We want a history of the human mind, sifted from the large doings—from events which fascinate us to read of, born as we are to be active, taking interest in things of a bold violence, that have really benefited the world but little, at least in the sense in which we have accepted them. The rise of one nation, the subjugation of another; dynasties, the dominion of the sword—these are the themes of histories. But in reality all these historical actions, viewed for their own purpose, are of little value; while out of all the turbulence an unintended good has been the result. There has been throughout some quiet and unobserved work going on, whose influence, felt more and more by degrees, has at length become predominant, showing that the stirring events and characters which had figured the scenes and amused spectators, were but the underplots and subordinate *personæ* of a greater and more serious drama. Since the overthrow of heathenism, the world's drama, still going on, is the development of Christianity; and doubtless even now, however sometimes with a seeming contrary action, every invention, every extension of knowledge—all arts, all sciences, are working to that end. It is strange, but true, that our very wars have furthered civilisation. The Crusades, worthless and fruitless as regards their ostensible object, have ameliorated the condition and softened the manners of our own and other nations.

In the fall of heathenism, fell the arts of heathenism; not, indeed, to be entirely obliterated—not for ever, but for a time. Their continuance would have been one of imitation: such imitation would have little suited the new condition of mankind; they were therefore removed, and hidden for awhile, that the new principle should develop itself unshackled. The arts had to arise from, and to be rebuilt upon, this new principle: all in them that would have interfered with this great purpose was allowed to be set aside, to be resumed only in after times, when that new principle should be safely and permanently established. It was only by degrees that the old buried art showed itself, and that the new was permitted to resume some of the old perfection. It may be that even yet the two streams, from such dissimilar sources, have not, in their fulness and plenitude, united: the characteristic beauty which they bear is of body and of soul; but they bear them separately, severally. What will the meeting of the waters be? and may we yet hope to see it? If it was required that there should be a kind of submerged world of heathenism, the germs of the true and beautiful would not necessarily perish. The church was, in fact, the ark of safety, to which all that intellect had effected, all arts, all sciences, all learning, fled for refuge. And as was the ark among the dark waters, so was the church and the treasures it bore providentially preserved amid the storms without that darkened and howled around it. What heathenism was to the middle ages, in respect of the hidden treasures, the middle ages are or have been to us. Their arts, their sciences, in their real beauty, have been hidden; they have had, indeed, invisible but effective virtues—the darkness, the blindness, has been ours. We have been doing the work of our age, and are now discovering the good that was in theirs, and how much we are indebted to them for our own advancement. Let us imagine for a moment all that was then done obliterated, never to have been done, we should now have to do the work of the so-called "dark ages." It would be impossible to start up what we are without them. As we reflect, their works present themselves to us in every direction. Look where we will, we shall see that the church has been the school of mankind, in which all knowledge was preserved, and from which new sources of knowledge have arisen. She was the salt of the earth, to rescue it from rankness. The germ of life was in her in the winter of the times. When the wars of the Roses would have made our England a howling wilderness, there were places and persons unprofaned and respected by the murderer, the ravisher, the spoiler. When the nobles, the great barons throughout Europe, were little better than plunderers, and robbers even on the highway—Robin Hoods, without that outlaw's fabulous 438
virtue and honest humanity—what was then doing within the walls of convents and monasteries? What were then the monks about? Embodying laws of peace, and, with a faith in the future improvement of mankind, cultivating sciences; planning and building up in idea new society,

foreseeing its wants, and for its sake pursuing the useful arts; inventing, contriving, constructing, and decorating all, and preparing even the outward face of the world, by their wondrous structures, their practical application of their knowledge, more worthily to receive a people whom it was their hope, their faith, to bring out of a state of turbulence into peace. So far as the church was concerned in governments, it is astonishing how, when the body of the state was mutilated and dislocated, she kept the heart sound; so that where it might seem tyranny would have overwhelmed all, she made, and she preserved those wholesome laws to which we now owe our liberty and every social advancement. But it is in the light of the arts and sciences our present purpose directs us to view their doings. Let us take one fact—walk the streets of even our inferior provincial towns, see not only the comforts which, in their dwellings, surround the inhabitants, but the magnificence of the shops with their glass fronts. Whence are they? The first skill, the first invention, arose from the study of ecclesiastics, and was practised by cloistered monks. Monastic institutions grew out of the church; we speak of them as one. It would not be very difficult, in fact, to trace every useful invention, in its first principle, to the same source. But with a great portion of mankind it would not be pleasing so to trace their means of enjoyment. They have been habituated to think, or at least to feel, otherwise. History has been too often written by men either averse to religion itself, or inimical to churchmen. History, such as it has been put into the hands of children, for the rudiments of their education, has taught them to lisp falsehoods against the church, the priesthood. The "rapacity" of churchmen is an early lesson. Nor can we wonder if men so educated grow up with a prejudice, and, when they begin to, scramble themselves for what they can get in the world's active concerns, and know something of their own natures, are little inclined to cast the film from their eyes, and more fairly to unravel the mysteries of historical events. Were they in candour to make the attempt, they would see rapacity elsewhere; and that, in times more irreverent than the middle ages, the churchmen have not been the plunderers, but the plundered. The church has been the nurse, of art, of knowledge, of science. Let those who are accustomed to see light but a little way beyond them, and to think all a blank darkness out of the illumination of their own day, consider how they have often seen, in many a dark and stormy night, little lights shining through a great distance, and hailed them as notices of a warm and living virtue of domestic and industrial peace; and then let them see, if they will have it that the middle ages were so dark, the similitude; when the light in many a monastic cell shone brightly upon the depth of that night, and dotted the general gloom with as living a light; when monks, when churchmen, were making plans for the minsters that we now gaze at with so much astonishment—were transcribing, were illuminating works of sacred use, were registering their discoveries in art, their "secreti"—and at the same time, were not unobservant of the highest office to watch and keep alive in their own and others' hearts the sacred fire, which still we trust burns, and will burn more and more, sending forth its light into surrounding darkness. We would speak of a general character, as we from our hearts believe it to be the true one—not asserting that there were no instances, as examples from which hostile writers might draw plausible inferences to justify their prejudice. The fairest spots are overshadowed by the passing clouds of a general storm, though there may yet be lights of safety in many a dwelling. The history of the arts is the history of civilisation, and these arts were preserved or originated in monastic institutions. If the monks were legislators, were physicians, were architects, painters, sculptors, it was because all the learning of the age was centered in them. "Neither Frederic Barbarossa, John, king of Bavaria, nor Philip the Hardy of France, could read; nor could Theodoric or Charlemagne write. Of the barons whose names are affixed to Magna Charta, very few could write."



We suspect that Mrs Merrifield has fallen into a common error, propagated by historians such as Robertson, with regard to this ignorance of letters. It was not only "usual for persons who could not write to make the sign of the cross, in confirmation of a charter," but for those who could. If a little more had been accurately ascertained of the feelings and manners of the periods in question, it would have been seen that the signature of the cross, instead of the name, was more according to the dignity of the signing person and the sanctity of the act—in fact, a better security for the full performance of the contract. We are not quite sure that "pro ignoratione literarum" implies so much as an inability to write a name; for, writing being then not the kind of clerkship which it now is, but in documents of moment, especially an artistic affair, it may not be very wonderful if "persons of the highest rank" were unable to compete with the practised hands, and were unwilling to show, and to the deterioration of the outward beauty of the documents, their inferiority in caligraphy. But, after all, the "innumerable proofs," between the eight and twelfth centuries, amount only to four.

That of Tassilo duke of Bavaria, by its wording, may express the ornamental character, "Quod manu propriâ, ut potui, characteres chirographe inchoando depinxi coram judicibus atque optimatibus meis." If, however, this Duke of Bavaria was so poor a scribe, he was at least the founder of a convent that made full amends for his deficiency—one of whose nuns, Diemudis, was the most indefatigable transcriber of any age. An amazing list of her caligraphic handicraft is extant, almost incredible, if we did not know the patient zeal of those days of fervent piety. Those who are desirous to obtain better information than is commonly received on the subject of the learning, as well as the piety of the middle ages, will be amply repaid by consulting Mr Maitland's "Dark Ages," in which the historians are refuted to their shame, and the charge of ignorance is most fairly retorted. In his very interesting volume, this list of Diemudis may be seen. The works copied are indeed religious works, which some of our historians may have looked upon with a prejudice, and as proofs of the darkness of the times. Mr Maitland's book will undeceive any who are of that opinion, containing, as it does, so many proofs, in original letters and discourses, of erudition, perfect acquaintance with the sacred Scriptures, of eloquence and intellectual

acuteness. Whatever books these "ignorant" monks and ecclesiastics possessed, there is one invention of a time included by most censurers of the "dark ages" in that invidious term, the absence of which would have deprived this "enlightened" age of half the books it possesses, of half the knowledge of the "reading public," and of we know not how many other inventions to which it may have been the unacknowledged parent: we are grateful enough to acknowledge that, without it, we should not be now writing these remarks, and should certainly lose many readers—the invention of spectacles. There are notices of them in A. D. 1299. It is said on a monument in the church of Sta. Maria Maggiore, at Florence, that Salvino degli Armati, who died in 1317, invented them. "Indeed P. Marahese attributes the invention of spectacles to Padre Alesandro," (a Dominican and miniature painter;) "but the memorial of him in the Chronicle of St Katherine, at Pisa, proves that he had seen spectacles made before he made them himself; and that, with a cheerful and willing heart, he communicated all he knew."

"The proof," says Mrs Merrifield, that Europe is indebted to religious communities for the preservation of the arts during the dark ages, rests on the fact that the most ancient examples of Christian art consist of the remains of mural pictures in churches, of illuminations in sacred books, and of vessels for the use of the church and the altar, and on the absence of all similar decorations on buildings and utensils devoted to secular uses during the same period—to which may be added, that many of the early treatises on painting were the work of ecclesiastics, as well as the paintings themselves. A similar remark may be made with regard to architecture, many of the earliest professors of which were monks." We believe Mrs Merrifield here is short of the fact; and that, where the monks were not the builders, they were in almost all instances the designers. Their architecture, indeed, and all that pertained to it, was a Christian book to teach; their designs contained Christian lessons, which the knowledge of ecclesiastics could alone supply. "Painting was essentially a religious occupation; the early professors of the art believed that they had an especial mission to make known the works and miracles of God to the common people who were unacquainted with letters:—'Agli uomini grossi che non sanno lettere.' Actuated by this sentiment, it is not surprising that so many of the Italian painters should have been members of monastic establishments. It has been observed that the different religious orders selected some particular branch of the art, which they practised with great success in the convents of their respective orders. Thus the Gesuati and Umiliati attached themselves to painting on glass and architecture, the Olivetani to tarsia work, the Benedictines and Camaldolites to painting generally; and the monks of Monte Casino to miniature painting; while the Dominicans appear to have practised all the various branches of the fine arts, (with the exception of mosaic,) and to have produced artists who excelled in each." Their devotion to the arts was, indeed, a religious devotion; their treatises commence with most earnest prayers, and solemn dedication of themselves and their works to the Holy Trinity; and not unfrequently with a long exordium, introducing the creation and fall of man, as we see in the prefaces of Theophilus and Cennino Cennini.

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Whilst the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries saw the erection of magnificent cathedrals, (our own York, Salisbury, and Westminster were built in the thirteenth,) the manners of the people were yet rude: one plate served for man and wife; there were no wooden-handled knives; a house did not contain more than two drinking-cups. There were neither wax nor tallow candles; clothes were of leather, unlined. Had the middle and lower classes, in our day, no better dwellings than were the houses belonging to those conditions so late as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, we dare not to conjecture how much worse would be their moral condition. "In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the houses of the English, of the middle and lower classes, consisted in general of a ground-floor only, divided into two apartments—namely a hall, into which the principal door opened, and which was their room for cooking, eating, and receiving visitors; and a chamber adjoining the hall, and opening out of it, which was the private apartment of the females of the family, and the bed-room at night. The greater part of the houses in London were built after this plan." The more wealthy classes were not very much better lodged; the principal difference, being an upper floor, the access to which was by a flight of steps outside. As arts advanced, manners refined: the Crusades had their domestic as well as warlike effects; they induced a taste for dress, and general luxury; and the Saracens were ready examples for imitation. It was then, and when commercial enterprise enriched a few cities, the arts of the monks began to be appreciated; but they did not readily assume a secular character—painting and other decorations were in design either religious, or historical with a religious reference or moral. It is curious that clocks were not found in convents after they had been among the articles of domestic furniture in castles and palaces. Perhaps, this may be an instance of a devotional spirit of the monks, who may have thought it an impiety to relax the discipline of reckoning time by the repetition of Ave Marias, Paternosters and Misereres. They were, however, generally adopted about the latter half of the fifteenth century.

To those who are at all advanced in life, and who must themselves remember a very different state of society from the present, and the introduction of our present luxuries and comforts into houses, and alteration of habits and manners, it must seem but a step backwards into comparative barbarism. A very few centuries take us back to paper windows; and even they were removable as furniture, not attached to the house. We have ourselves heard an old person say, that he remembered the time when there were only two carriages kept in a city, the second in importance in England—who now in that city would task himself to count the number? Nor was our own country singular in the deficiencies of the luxuries of life. The changes were general and simultaneous; and this is extraordinary, that the revival of arts and literature was not confined to one country or one place, but arose as it were from one general impulse, and simultaneously,

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among people under varieties of climate, circumstances, and manners.

It is time we should say something of the book which has led us to make this somewhat long introduction. It consists of two volumes, containing original treatises, dating from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries, on the arts of painting in oil, miniature, mosaic, and on glass; of gilding, dyeing, the preparation of colours and of artificial gems, by Mrs Merrifield, whose valuable translation of Cennino Cennini has been reviewed in the pages of Maga. Mrs Merrifield is likewise the authoress of an excellent little volume on fresco painting, very opportunely published. The present work is the result of a commission from the Government to proceed to Italy, to collect MSS., and every possible information respecting the processes and methods of oil-painting adopted by the Italians. As the Original Treatises discovered, and now published, contain much other matter besides that which relates to painting in oil, the work is more comprehensive than the first purpose of the commission would have made it. The introduction, which occupies nearly two-thirds of the first volume, is a very able performance; in it is a comprehensive view of the history of the fine arts. The conclusions drawn from the documents, the result in detail of her search and labours, are so clearly laid before the reader, with ample proofs of each particular fact and inference, as greatly to facilitate the reader in his inquiry into the documents themselves. He will find that Mrs Merrifield, by her arrangement of the parts, and bringing them to bear upon her purpose, has saved him that trouble which the nature of the work would otherwise have necessitated. Besides that her introduction contains a separate and complete treatise on each branch of art, the preliminary observations, heading each document, render its contents most tangible. At the end of the second volume is an index, which in a work of this kind it is most desirable to possess—the want of which in Mr Eastlake's excellent *Materials for a History of Oil-painting* we have often had occasion to regret; and we do hope that, in his forthcoming work on the Italian practice, he will make amends for this defect by an index which will embrace the contents of the "Materials." We have ourselves spent much time, that might have been saved by an index, in turning over the pages for passages to which we wished to refer, for that work is one strictly of reference, although interesting in the first reading.

The documents consist of the following MSS.—the manuscripts of Jehan Le Begue, of St Audemar, of Eraclius, of Alcherius, in the first volume. In the second—the Bolognese, Marciana, Paduan, Volpato, and Brussels manuscripts; extracts from all original manuscript by Sig. Gio. O'Kelly Edwards; extracts from a dissertation read by Sig. Pietro Edwards, in the academy of fine arts at Venice, on the propriety of restoring the public pictures.

As these several MSS. open to us new sources of information, most important in establishing certain facts, from whence the art of painting among us may enter upon great and important changes, it may not be altogether unprofitable to give some short account of them in their order.

The manuscript of Jehan Le Begue, "a licentiate in the law, and notary of the masters of the mint in Paris," was composed by him in the year 1431, in his sixty-third year. It is, however, professedly a compilation from works of Jehan Alcherius, or Alcerius, of whom little is known, nor is it certain that he was a painter. His work probably preceded Le Begue's about twenty years. 442
Alcherius himself was a collector of recipes, from various sources, during thirty years, and twenty years afterwards his MSS. came into the hands of Le Begue.

The manuscript of Petrus de St Audemar, according to Mr Eastlake, may be of the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century. He is supposed to have been a native of France, (Pierre de St Omer.) Some of the recipes are found in the "Clavicula," attributed to the twelfth century; but this is no argument against the date, for it was at all times the practice to make selections from former "secreti."

The manuscripts of Eraclius consist of three books—the first two metrical, the third in prose. Nothing is known of the author. "Two ancient copies only of the MS. of Eraclius have been hitherto discovered, and it is somewhat singular that both are bound up with the MSS. of Theophilus." It is not easy to fix a date to Eraclius. Mrs Merrifield thinks "that the metrical parts only constituted the Treatise '*de coloribus et artibus Romanorum*' of Eraclius, and that this part is more ancient than a great part of the third book."

Manuscripts of Alcherius.—These are of two dates, 1398, and again corrected 1411, after his return from Bologna, "according to further information, which he subsequently received by means of several authentic books treating of such subjects, and otherwise." These are the Le Begue manuscripts.

"The Bolognese manuscript is of the fifteenth century. It is a small volume in duodecimo on cotton paper, and is preserved in the library of the R. R. Canonici Regolari, in the convent of St Salvatore in Bologna." There is no name of the author—it is written sometimes "in Italianised Latin, and sometimes Italian, with a mixture of Latin words, as was usual at that period." It has no precise date. It is an interesting notice of all the decorative arts practised in Bologna at that period, and contains a systematically arranged collection of recipes.

The Marciana manuscript is of the sixteenth century, in the library of St Marco at Venice. The recipes are in the Tuscan dialect, and some are but little known. They appear to have been compiled for the use of a convent, by some monk or lay brother, who, in his capacity of physician to the infirmary, prepared both medicaments, varnishes, and pigments. Names of artists are mentioned which show that the author lived at the beginning or middle of the sixteenth century.

The Paduan manuscript, Mrs Merrifield asserts to be Venetian. It is in quarto, on paper, without date; but the handwriting is of the seventeenth century. It shows a manifest deviation from the practice established in the Marciana MS.—the introduction of spirit of turpentine as a diluent, and mastic varnish, instead of the hard varnishes of amber and sandarac. In it we find that "oil-paintings had begun to suffer from the effects of age; and that they required, or it was believed that they required, to be washed with some corrosive liquid, and to be revarnished. Directions, or rather recipes, for both these processes are given." Some of the recipes are in Latin, supposed "secreti," and therefore given in that language.

The Volpato manuscript.—The author, a painter, Giovanni Baptista Volpato, of Bassano, was born 1633—a pupil of Novelli, who had been a pupil of Tintoretto. A work from a MS. of Volpato was announced for publication at Vicenza in 1685, but it is believed that it has not been published. The MS. now first brought to light by Mrs Merrifield was lent to her, with permission to copy, by Sig. Basseggio, librarian and president of the Athenæum of Bassano. There is good reason to believe that it was written during the latter end of seventeenth, or beginning of eighteenth century.

The Brussels manuscript.—This now published is a portion of a MS. preserved in a public library of Brussels, written by Pierre Le Brun, contemporary with the Caracci and Rubens; its date is 1635.

Sig. Edwards's manuscript is written by the son of Sig. Pietro Edwards, who was employed by the Venetian and Austrian governments in the restoration of the pictures in Venice. He died in 1821. His son, Sig. O'Kelly Edwards, wrote an account of the method of restoration, with 443
interesting matters respecting the public pictures generally. Mrs Merrifield has taken extracts, the work not being permitted to be published without the permission of the Academy of Venice, which was refused.

There follow also extracts from a dissertation read by Sig. Pietro Edwards to the Academy of Fine Arts at Venice, on the propriety of restoring the public pictures.

Besides these documentary papers, Mrs Merrifield extended her inquiries among the best modern painters, copiers, and restorers, and has recorded their opinions: we cannot call them more than opinions, for there is no certain conclusion, on any one point of inquiry, to be drawn from her conferences with these persons. They give, indeed, their information, such as it is, clearly and decidedly enough, but they are at disagreement with each other. It is creditable to foreign artists to add, that only in one instance was any reluctance shown to be communicative.

It will have been observed that these documents go back far enough in time, and down to a sufficiently late date; it should be presumed, therefore, that in them will be found every particular of practice from the change of method, from the tempera to painting in oil—such as it was after "the discovery" of Van Eyck. But if we are to conclude that the discovery of Van Eyck is actually contained in these documentary "secreti" it must be admitted to have been rather a discovery of application than of material.

There is no positive distinct statement to the effect that this and this did Van Eyck, or where is the identical recipe which he introduced into Italy. This is perhaps no proof, nor cause of reasonable conjecture, that the materials of his method are not set forth in some of these MS.,—on the contrary, it may have been the cause of their not being set down as Van Eyck's, upon the assumption that a new practice and application only was introduced. Indeed it will be scarcely thought, now that so much has been brought to light, that any vehicle for pigments has been kept back by the several writers of the MSS. If it then be asked what is the conclusion to be drawn—what the really valuable result of these commissions, and the indefatigable research of such able persons as Mr Eastlake, Mr Hendrie, and Mrs Merrifield—it may be answered that they all conclude in one and the same view—that the practice of the best masters of the best time consisted in the use of olio-resinous varnishes. We should have said *an* olio-resinous varnish, and that amber—were it not for the proof that sandarac and amber were chiefly the *two* substances—that they were frequently synonymous the one for the other, and that they were not unfrequently both used together. Nor can it be denied that there were occasionally other additions. Mr Eastlake places great confidence in the *olio d'abezzo*, which, not without a fair show of evidence, he concludes (and we think in this Mrs Merrifield agrees with him) to have been the varnish used by Correggio, according to Armenini. But we are nowhere as yet assured that it was used by Correggio as a vehicle.

If we remember rightly, there is a passage in Mr Eastlake's book which has a tendency to alarm our modern painters, and perhaps make some abstain from the use of the old olio-resinous medium. He speaks somewhere of its liability to crack, to come away in pieces, but after a long lapse of time. We could have wished he had been more explicit on this point: it would have been well to have shown the difference, if there be any, as we feel somewhat confident there must be, between the effect of olio-resinous varnishes used over the surface of a picture, and as mixed with the colours in the painting. If we are not mistaken, he refers to some of the old tempera paintings before Van Eyck's time, covered with the varnish, and particularly to those of the old Byzantine school. We do not ourselves remember to have ever seen on old pictures such changes, though we have seen them to a lamentable and obliterative degree on pictures painted within the last fifty years in oil and mastic varnish. We throw out these observations because it may attract the notice of Mr Eastlake, before his long-expected volume on the Italian practice comes from the 444

press. It may be doubtful if Van Eyck had himself, at first, that entire confidence in his materials which time has shown they deserved—for parts of his most elaborate and famous picture were put in in distemper and varnished over—yet we are led to believe that the peculiar effect of his medium was the preservation of colours in their original purity. It should be mentioned, also, that one improvement supposed to have been introduced by Van Eyck, or rather the Van Eycks, was the dryer—the substitution of white copperas for lead: and this appears to have been adopted from chemical knowledge, it having been shown that, whereas oils take up the lead, no portion of the copperas becomes incorporated with the oils, that substance only facilitating the absorption of oxygen.

Although these MS. treatises do not go farther back than the twelfth century, assuming that to be the date of the one by Eraclius, yet there is reason to suppose that the earliest treatises are compilations of the recipes, the *secreti*, of still earlier ages. They become thus more interesting as links which, though broken here and there, indicate the character of the chain in the history of arts, which may be still left to complete without any material deviation from the original pattern. That character was undoubtedly religious, but it is not true that every other show of art was held in contempt, as some maintain. The goldsmith, the jeweller, the workers in glass and all kinds of metal, whose recipes may be found in these volumes of Mrs Merrifield, showed as much skill, (and a far better taste in design) somewhat out of the line of religious ornament, as any of the last two centuries. Even in the ninth century, among the gifts of the King of Mercia to a monastery, we find a golden curtain, on which is wrought the taking of Troy, and a gilded cup which is chased over all the outside with savage vine-dressers, fighting with serpents. We can imagine it a work of which a Benvenuto Cellini need not have been ashamed.

A woodcut in page xxx. of the introduction, and which Mrs Merrifield has adopted to ornament the cover, represents "a writer of the fifteenth century." It is taken from a manuscript in the Bibliothèque at Paris. It is not only curious as showing what an important and laborious art writing was in those days, and what machinery it required, but for the religious mark which designates the character of the writing—in the corner is a painting of the crucifixion. Mrs Merrifield had told us, that, in a catalogue of the sale of "furniture of Contarini, the rich Venetian trader, who resided at St Botolph's in London in 1481, or in that of a nobleman in 1572," neither looking-glasses nor chairs are mentioned! Yet in this woodcut there is not only a chair, but exactly the one which has been recently reintroduced in modern furnishing. Surely the date 1572 would throw some excuse upon that of 1481—and offer a fair conjecture that there must have been some peculiar cause for the omission. We must have sufficient proof of chairs at the later date. Does the writer in this cut sit alone?—the room is not even indicated—or was he one of many sitting together in the Scriptorium? Mr Maitland thinks that, in later times, the Scriptorium was a small cell, that would only hold one person—not so in earlier times. We quote a passage from his book upon the subject: "But the Scriptorium of earlier times was obviously an apartment capable of containing many persons; and in which many persons did, in fact, work together in a very business-like manner, at the transcription of books. The first of these points is implied in a very curious document, which is one of the very few extant specimens of French Visigothic MS. in uncial characters, and belongs to the eighth century. It is a short form of consecration, or benediction, barbarously entitled '*Orationem in Scripturis*,' and is to the following effect, 'Vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless this Scriptorium of thy servants, and all that dwell therein, that, whatsoever sacred writings shall be here read or written by them, they may receive with understanding, and bring the same to good effect, through our Lord,'" &c. We can imagine that we see the impress of this prayer in the representation, in the corner of the woodcut of which we have been speaking. Mrs Merrifield enumerates to a large extent the works of such writers: many of them must have been extremely beautiful. "The choral books belonging to the cathedral of Ferrara are thirty in number, twenty-two of which are twenty-six inches long, by eighteen in breadth, and the remaining eight smaller. They were begun in 1477, and completed in 1533. The most interesting of these books, for the beauty of the characters, as well as for the miniatures, were executed by Jacopo Filippo d'Argenta, Frate Evangelista da Reggio, a Franciscan, Andrea delle Veze, Giovanni Vendramin of Padua, and Martino di Georgio da Modena. The parchment on which these books are written is in excellent preservation. It is worthy of remark, that great part of the parchment or vellum for these books was brought from Germany, or at least was manufactured by Germans. There is an entry in the records of the cathedral, for the year 1477, of a sum of money paid to M. Alberto da Lamagna, for 265 skins of vellum; of another sum paid in 1501, for 60 skins, to Piero Iberno, also a German; and to Creste, another German, for 50 skins, furnished by them on account of these books." Caligraphy and miniature-painting were sister arts: so highly were both esteemed, that the right hands of the writer and miniature-painters, who completed the choral books of Ferrara, and those of the monastery degli Angeli in Florence, are preserved in a casket with the utmost veneration. "The best miniature-painter of the tenth century was Godemann, who was chaplain of the Bishop of Winchester, from A.D. 963 to 984, and afterwards Abbot of Thornley. His Benedictional, ornamented with thirty beautiful miniatures, is in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. In the eleventh century, schools of painting were formed at Hildesheim and Paderborn, and the art was exercised by ecclesiastics of the higher rank." Francesco dai Libri, so called from his constant employment in illuminating MS., was one of the most eminent *miniatori* of the fifteenth century. What Vasari says of him is quite delightful, whether it conveys the sentiment of Vasari himself or of Francesco—that, having lived to a great age, "he died contented and happy, because, in addition to the peace of mind which he derived from his own virtues, he left a son who was a better painter than himself." We doubt if this total absence of jealousy is a very general parental virtue. The passage reminds us of the noble-hearted Achilles, whose ghost in the shades below anxiously inquired respecting his son if he

excelled in glory, and being answered in the affirmative, stalked away rejoicing greatly. It may not be universally known, that the word miniature is derived from minium, red lead, with which the initial letters were written, or perhaps more commonly painted: hence our Rubrics.

Mosaic painting was for some time the rival of oil-painting. It was much esteemed at Venice, where the damp affected other kinds of painting. It was introduced unquestionably by the Greeks. It afforded work for several centuries in the decoration of the church of St Mark, commencing from the eleventh century.

This department of art was not without its jealousies. The Zuccati were charged by their rivals with having filled up deficiencies in their work with other painting, and though Titian vindicated them, and is supposed to have assisted them in designs, the Venetian government decreed that they should re-execute the work at their own cost, which nevertheless was not done. Mosaic workers did not always work from the designs of others; some, and these not inconsiderable, painters applied themselves to this art. There were great "secreti" in the working in mosaic, which even now may be useful. The most important of these of working in mosaic was that of Agnolo, the son of Taddeo Gaddi, who, in 1346, repaired some of the mosaics executed by Andrea Tafi in the roof of St Giovanni at Florence. He fixed the cubes of the glass so firmly into the ground, with a stucco composed of wax and mastic melted together, that neither the roof nor the vaulting had received any injury from water from the period of its completion until the time of Vasari. May not our slate and mortar system be happily superseded? Mrs Merrifield takes occasion to redeem from his prison, to which, in her preface to the translation of Cennino Cennini, she had condemned, that earnest old man, upon the authority of the subscription from 446
the prison of the Stinche—showing that it was the domicile of the transcriber, not the author. Vasari asserts that Cennino Cennini, to whom the secret of mosaic work was transmitted from Agnolo Gaddi, left a treatise on the subject. No such work has been yet found; but as there are other MSS. of the author, the treatise may be yet forthcoming. There is an anecdote which shows there may be better gold than comes from the mint. Alesso Baldovinetto, who spared no pains to learn the best methods of working in mosaic, learned much of the art from a German traveller to whom he had given a lodging. Thus, having been well informed, he worked with great success. At eighty years of age, feeling the natural infirmities fast approaching, he sought a retreat in the hospital of St Paul. "It is related that, in order to insure himself a better reception, he took with him to his apartments in the hospital a large chest, which was thought to contain money; and, in this belief, the officers of the hospital treated him with the greatest respect and attention. But their disappointment may be imagined, when, on opening the chest, after the decease of the aged artist, they found nothing but drawings on paper, and a small book which taught the art of making the mosaics, (*Pietre del Musaico*) the stucco, and the method of working. At the present time, we should have considered this little book a greater treasure than the money which was so much desired." We here have another delightful passage from Vasari, which will readily be accepted as the old man's excuse. "It was no wonder that they did not find money, for Alesso was so bountiful, that everything he possessed was as much at the service of his friends as if it had been their own." The introductory remarks on mosaic may be well worth the builder's and architect's attention, now that great improvements have been made in the making of glass, and that it is rendered so cheap; whilst duty was according to weight, the great art was to make it as thin as possible, hence the greater nicety and expense in the manufacture. To make thick, strong, or, in the language of mosaic art, cubes of glass for ornamental purposes, and as a preservative from weather, is a desideratum of the present day.

Few people will interest themselves about Tarsia work, of which Vasari speaks slightingly, that it was fittest for those persons who have more patience than skill in design. An art, however, of some antiquity may yet be very commonly seen in the inlaid work of various woods in our Tunbridge ware. Indeed, the art is even now becoming more important in its application to furniture: our fashionable tables are a kind of Tarsia work.

The history of painting on glass is extremely interesting, and has engaged the attention of many writers. France and Germany have taken the lead in this art, particularly the former; less attention has perhaps been paid to its rise in Italy than the subject deserves. The art itself is so exquisitely beautiful, and its application as a religious ornament so impressive, that we rejoice to see its revival. Mrs Merrifield enlarges much upon the subject, and very happily, though her commission to Italy did not send her to a country where the best materials may be collected. Specimens of painted glass in our own country, both as to design and colour, are so admirable—some, indeed, may vie with painting in oil of the best time, with regard to drawing and effect—that we could wish a commission to collect and publish the coloured specimens that are now unknown, excepting to the curious in the art. Glass painting had attained great perfection in France in the eleventh century. It was likewise much cultivated in our own country; the windows of Lincoln cathedral show early specimens of great beauty. Glass windows were introduced into England as early as A.D. 674, by ecclesiastics, for decoration of their churches. In private houses, glass was extremely rare in the middle ages; it was not in common use till the reign of Henry VIII. It was the custom to remove windows as furniture. Before the introduction of glass, thin parchment stretched on frames, and varnished, and not unfrequently painted, protected the interior of the houses from the weather. We have always understood that, for the great 447
improvement in glass-painting, and that which rendered the cinque-cento style so beautiful, we are indebted to John Van Eyck: before his time every variation in colour required a separate piece. The painting on glass, as on canvass, and burning in different tints and on colours on one surface, has been generally considered the discovery of the inventor of oil-painting. Mrs

Merrifield rather thinks that at least a portion of this improvement is to be ascribed to Fra Giacomo da Ulmo, who found out that a transparent yellow might be given to the glass by silver—the origin of the invention being the letting fall from his sleeve a silver button into the furnace, which being closed, and the silver fused, a yellow stain had been imparted to the glass. Pottery and glass-making are nearly allied; it would be curious, if there be a fair ground for the supposition that the manufacture of glass was brought from Tyre to Venice. "In the fourteenth century the Venetians had still a colony at Tyre." The Venetian glass, however, was deficient in transparency; hence probably the Venetian practice of using black glass, which, by juxtaposition in small pieces, would certainly tend to give the appearance of greater transparency to the coloured.

We know not if there has been any great advance in the art of gilding, from early times to the present, though that of gold-beating has been brought to far greater perfection. Gold was extensively used at a very early period in all kinds of decoration, and in the fifteenth century was lavishly employed on pictures. Seven thousand leaves of gold were used on the chapel of S. Jacopo de Pistoia. The gold, as well as some of the expensive colours, was commonly provided by the parties for whom pictures were painted. On mural paintings, leaves of tinfoil, covered with a yellow varnish, were substituted for gold. It would be curious to seek how some modern uses are indebted to the publication of old recipes. "In order to economise gold, the old masters had another invention, called 'porporino,' a composition made of quicksilver, tin, and sulphur, which produced a yellow metallic powder, that was employed instead of gold. The Bolognese MS. devotes a whole chapter to this subject. A substance of a similar nature is now in use in England, and is employed as a substitute for gold in coloured woodcuts and chromo-lithographs." Wax was used as a mordant in gilding. Its use as a vehicle in painting has been much discussed; it was known to the ancients as encaustic, and, in another form, has been strongly recommended by a modern painter of great ability, whose works are fair tests of its efficiency; and if we may believe the assertions with regard to the ancient practice of Greek and mediæval painters, there may be little reason to doubt its durability. But as it was certainly known and discarded by the old masters, even before the invention of Van Eyck in oil painting, we should reasonably conclude that it was inferior to other vehicles. There is a picture by Andrea Mantegna at Milan, painted in wax, on which Mrs Merrifield makes the following remarks:—"The picture is very perfect, the colours bright, and the touches sharp. The darks are laid on very thick, but the paint appears to have run into spots or streaks, as if it had been touched with something which had touched the surface. It is said, however, that it has never been repaired, and its authenticity is stated to be undoubted. It is evident that the wax has been used liquid, for if the colours had been fused by the application of heat, the sharpness and precision of touch for which this picture, in common with other paintings of this period, is remarkable, would have been lost and melted down. The vehicle, whatever it was, appeared to me to have been as manageable as that of Van Eyck." Mrs Merrifield refers to Mr Eastlake's *Materials* for the fullest account of all that pertains to wax-painting. We would refer also to his *Reports* of the Commission on the Fine Arts for further detail.[10]

After some interesting accounts of statue-painting, the propriety of which has been so ably discussed by Mr Eastlake, and a few words on implements used in painting, Mrs Merrifield treats of leather, niello, and dyeing. The first of these leads her to lament the practice of the monks "during the dark ages;" who, to the supposed loss of many classic works, found out that, according to the old proverb, there is "nothing like leather." We would recommend her to become a little more acquainted with the real history of the monks during "the dark ages," their actual habits and manners, rather than trust, as we fear has been the case, to authors who have only misrepresented them. She will find matter even as interesting as the documents discovered respecting their arts and inventions. However there may be cause for lamenting the misuse of parchments which had been written on, and their conversion into waistcoats for warriors, and sandals for monks, there was no need to fit the said sandals on "the sleek and well-fed monks;" for certainly, if they were as described, they would have worn out the fewer, as "sleek and well-fed" means but fat and lazy. It would be hard to find any now who, equally with them, were given to fasting and prayer. Indeed, the very arts which they practised, into which Mrs Merrifield has made research, should, we think, rescue them from the common ill report.



Leather was used for hangings, at first only behind the seats of the owner of the house, subsequently round the room, and stamped and gilt, and ornamented with tinfoil. We doubt if our modern papers, even the "artistic," are an improvement. The old principle in furniture was richness of effect, a depth, a home-warmth both in substance and colour; the modern inferior taste is, or has been recently, for all that is light, gaudy, and flimsy. We should not be sorry to see the revival of leather hangings, as, in point of richness and look of comfort—a great thing in a room—far superior to paper. There is perhaps no very great beauty in niello, nor much cause for regret that it has fallen into disuse; yet, unimportant as it is in itself, it is the parent of the most delightful, the most useful invention—engraving. Nigellum or niello was known to the ancients, and practised during the middle ages: it is only known now by specimens in museums. Yet we think there has been an attempt to revive it in Russia. We have seen a specimen, but it was very coarsely executed.

Dyeing appears, during the middle ages, to have been the trade of the Jews. It is not ascertained at what period it was introduced into England. It is said that, in the reign of Henry III., woollen cloth was worn white, for lack of the art of dyeing—though this is doubted, as, woad having been imported in the time of John, it might be implied that dyeing was known. Before the

introduction of printing-blocks, the practice of painting linen cloth intended for wearing-apparel, with devices, flowers, and various ornaments, in imitation of embroidery, was common in England. To what great results has this little dress-vanity led! How much of our commercial prosperity has its very origin in a taste condemned by the serious as frivolous! The love of ornament is an instinct, and they are slanderers of Nature in all her works, and in man's inventive mind, who would insert it in the calendar of deadly sins. There is perhaps another love, the love of profit, of a more ambiguous character: we believe there are not a few who would have made a "drab creation" of this beautiful world, now from their cotton-printing mills sending forth, by millions upon millions of yards, this "frivolous vanity" to the ends of the earth. It may be questioned if Penn's merchandise, as the bales were unpacked, would have passed the custom-house of a white conscience. Have poor Indians been as unscrupulously corrupted as cheated? 449

By far the greater portion of the introduction takes up the subject of oil-painting, which was the chief object of the commission. We have already spoken of the result, as well as of the little reliance to be placed upon the experience of modern painters and restorers in the country of the old masters. They flatly contradict each other. Even as to method, did Titian paint first with cold colours? One affirms, another denies. There is much evidence that the Venetian painters were more sparing than others in the use of ultramarine. Their principal blue, it appears, was azzurro della Magna, (German blue.) The receipts for making azures are numerous. Blue is the most important of our colours; it is well, therefore, that the attention of our colour-makers should be particularly directed to it. We have often felt sure, on looking at Venetian pictures, that the blues generally were not ultramarine—the beauty of which colour, great as it is, does not bear the mixture with *a body* of white lead with impunity—it must be used thin. One of the artists consulted said, "The Venetians never used ultramarine, which inclined too much to the violet." Though he is wrong in "*never*," for there is proof to the contrary, in reference to their general practice he may be right, as also for their cause of setting it aside. The very glowing, warm, general tones of the Venetians—of Titian and Giorgione especially—required a *warmer* blue, if we may be allowed to apply such an epithet—for we are aware that most classifiers of colours say that it is always cold; and we remember the old controversy on the subject, which Gainsborough endeavoured not unsuccessfully to decide, by painting his now celebrated picture, called the "Blue Boy." Contrary to the opinion of many artists, we are inclined to agree with Mr Field, whose chemical knowledge and experience should have great weight, that the modern colour "Prussian blue," if well prepared, is one of much value. It is certainly the most powerful—not, however, to be recommended for the clear azure of a sky. We should be glad to know the opinion of Mr Eastlake with regard to the modern ultramarine, said to be made after an analysis of the real substance. Though it belongs not to his investigation of the old practice, a note upon the subject would be very acceptable. If our blues and our chromes are permanent colours, we have little to regret in the (supposed) loss of many used by the old masters.

It is curious that even colours were purchased of the "speziali,"—the apothecaries. It is well known how much we are indebted to medical science for many of the recipes in art, including those for the purification of oils and the manufacture of varnishes. "Sig. A. told me that, when he was at Venice, he made a point of going to the Piazza San Salvatore, where Titian used to purchase his colours, to see whether there were any "speziali" there still. He found one, and inquired of him if he had any old colours, such as were used by the old painters, and he was shown an orange-coloured pigment, which resembled a colour frequently found on Venetian pictures." We have before us a document of payments so late as 1699, by which it appears that, with us also, the apothecary was the vender of painters' materials. "1699—Rob. Bayley, apothecary—for oil, gold, and colours, £61." This was for painting a high cross. Blackness has sometimes been objected to in the colouring of the greatest of landscape painters, Gaspar Poussin. If the following statement may be relied upon, the cause of this occasional blemish, if it be one, may be conjectured. Sig. A. showed a black mirror, which he said had been used in painting by Bamboccio, (Peter Van Laer,) and that it had been "bequeathed by Bamboccio to Gaspar Poussin; by the latter to some other painter, until it ultimately came into the hands of Sig. A." In pictures of an early time the darks are thick and substantial, the lights thin. This was reversed afterwards, excepting with regard to some dark blue, and other draperies, of which examples may be seen in Correggio. There is a peculiar impasto, however, of the Bolognese school, which seems to have escaped the notice of Mr Eastlake and Mrs Merrifield: it is mostly observable in Guercino. The paint on the flesh, in heads, arms, &c., is frequently greatly raised, as if modelled. We are curious to know something respecting this method—in what way the manipulation is managed. 450

We cannot credit the accounts given by all whom Mrs Merrifield consulted, that it was Titian's practice to lay by his pictures, after each painting, for months, and even years. This slow process implies a forbearance which can noways be reconciled with the fervour and usual impatience of genius. Without fastening him down to so systematic a necessity, we can easily believe that his pictures were long under his hand, from the repeated glazings so remarkable in his works. Exposure to the sun and air seems to have been universal. It is well known that, a short time after painting, a portion, probably a deleterious portion, of the oil rises to the surface. The atmosphere certainly takes up this, but the exposure must be frequent, for this greasiness will return. We strongly suspect that it is this deleterious exudation which destroys the purity of colours; and would recommend, from a long experience, the washing the surface of pictures, (we have used common sand for the purpose,) as often as any greasiness returns. A time will be ascertained when none recurs; and we think the picture is then pretty secure from any farther change. In this case, a kind of abrasion does what time would in the end do; but, not waiting for

time, we often varnish, and leave this deleterious part of the oil to do its mischief. Much stress has been laid on the grinding of colours. The Venetians were not very careful in this matter, excepting in their glazing colours. It is very evident that, for some purposes of effect, they purposely laid on their colours very coarsely ground, and scraped down for granulation. White lead, however, it is admitted, cannot be too finely ground, or too carefully made. It is *the* pigment that Titian was most solicitous about. There is a letter of his extant, in which he laments the death of the person who manufactured it for him. "The Italians, and especially the Venetians," says Mrs Merrifield, "were extremely careful in the preparation of their white lead, which was generally purified by washing." A recipe of Fra Fortunato of Rovigo, recommends the grinding it with vinegar and washing it, repeating the operation: "You will then have a white lead, which will be as excellent for miniature painting as for painting in oil." With regard to the glazings of Titian, an almost incredible story is told by an artist, Sig. E. "He says that glazings are never permanent, and that nothing can make them so; and, as a proof, he told me there were in a certain palace several pictures by Titian, which had always been covered with glasses: that he was present when the glasses were removed for the time; when, to the surprise of every one present, the glazings were found to have evaporated from the pictures, and to have adhered to the inside of the glass. I considered this incredible, and it certainly appears to require proof, although it must be recollected that Lionardo da Vinci says, 'Il verde fatto dal rame, ancorchè tal color sia messo a olio, se ne va in fumo,'" &c. If the colour evaporated from the picture, it would certainly be retained by the glass; and this artist distinctly said, that all the glazings were fixed on the inside of the glass, exactly above the painting, and that the effect of the different colours on the glass was very singular. From that time, he added, he had left off glazing his pictures. This is the more strange, because painters of the Flemish school may be said to have commenced their pictures with glazing, and to have continued it throughout; yet we never heard of such a fact, though many of their pictures have been under glass.

We have elsewhere recommended, without knowing that it was an old practice, the use of white chalk and such substances with the colours, and are therefore pleased to find the following notice,—"White chalk, marble dust, gesso, the bone of cuttle-fish, alumen, and travertine, were occasionally used in white pigments. They were frequently mixed with transparent vegetable colours, to give them body:" it might be added to give them, by a semi-transparency, and that even to colours in their own nature opaque, a luminous quality.

Does "grana in grano," the Spanish term for the scarlet pigment, show the origin of the expression, "a rogue in grain." "Pierce Plowman, whose *Vision* is supposed to have been written 451
in 1350, in describing the dress of a lady richly clad, says, that her robe was of 'scarlet in grain;' that is, scarlet dyed with grana, the best and most durable red dye. The import of the words 'in grain,' was afterwards changed, and the term was applied generally to all colours with which cloths were dyed, which were considered to be permanent."

"Biadetto," the artificial carbonate of copper, is said to be the blue most resembling that found in Venetian pictures. Mrs Merrifield erroneously places coal among the black pigments. It is a brown, and we know of none so useful; it is deep, but not the hot brown, such as Vandyke brown, resembling that of Teniers: Mr Eastlake has shown that it was used by the Flemish and Dutch painters. We had long used it, before we were acquainted with so authoritative a recommendation.

We find many very useful observations on oils, as to their purification, and the methods of rendering them drying. As Mrs Merrifield offers in a note a new dryer, certainly a desideratum, we quote the passage, that trials of it may be made:—

> "The most powerful of all dryers is perhaps chloride of lime in a dry state: a small quantity of this, added to clarified oil, will convert it into a solid. For this reason it must be employed very cautiously: if too much be used, it may burn the brushes, and injure the colours. It has the advantage of not darkening the oil, and its drying property appears to arise from its absorbing the watery particles of the oil. Chloride of calcium is equally efficacious as a dryer, but the small quantity of iron which it contains dissolves in the oil, and darkens it. It seems probable that, if the chloride of lime were judiciously employed, it might prove serviceable as a dryer; but as I am not aware that it has been tried as such by any person but myself, the utmost caution would be required, and some experiments would be necessary, in order to ascertain the smallest possible quantity which would answer the purpose intended."

We are surprised to find, in the Bolognese MS., olive oil mentioned as mixed with linseed oil in equal proportions, because we never yet heard of any successful experiment to render it drying. As it is the property of olive oil to turn lighter, not, as other oils, darker, a proof of successful experiment would be valuable. Pacheco mentions "salad oil" with honey, in a mixture of flour paste for grounds; but this may have been nut-oil. Besides the passages in Vasari and Lomazzo, which attribute to Lionardo the use of distilled oil, there is the recipe in the *Secreti* of Alessio, which is conclusive as to the fact that linseed-oil was distilled and used to dilute amber varnish. We are aware that Mr Hendrie, in his valuable translation of Theophilus, strongly insists upon the superiority of distilled over other oil, but it does not appear ever to have been in general use.

The recommendation of amber varnish being the chief result of the commission, numerous authorities as well as recipes are given. "It appears to be mentioned in the Marciana MS., under the term 'carbone,' which has undoubtedly been written instead of 'caribe,' the Arabic and

Persian term for amber." We would suggest the possibility that "carbone" may still be the right word, and mean amber, if it has been before mentioned in the MS.,—for one mode of making the varnish was to burn the amber to a "carbone," and then to grind it, as recommended in the recipe. In speaking of amber varnish as the result of Mrs Merrifield's research, we should be wrong in ascribing it to that alone; nor should we be doing justice to her own liberal and full acknowledgment of the prior recommendation of it by Mr Sheldrake in 1801, whose authority she quotes at much length, with detail of his experiments. "The use of amber varnish as a vehicle for painting, was revived and recommended so long ago as 1801, by Mr Sheldrake, in a paper published in the 19th volume of the *Transactions of the Society of Arts*. In these papers, Mr Sheldrake endeavours to prove that this varnish was used by the Italian painters; and as his opinion has been in a great measure confirmed by documentary evidence, his papers acquire additional interest from his having recorded the experiments made by himself in painting with this varnish."

The authority of Gerard Lairesse, given in a note, we think little of; for the work bearing his name was not written by him, but after his death, by some who professed to give an account of his instructions. There is an amusing anecdote, which is introduced for the purpose of showing that varnish was in use; we insert it for its pleasantry:— 452

> "As an indirect proof, but not the less valuable on that account, is the following anecdote, related by Luigi Crespi of his father, Guiseppe Maria Crespi, called Lo Spagnuolo. 'One day, Cardinal Lambertini was in our house, sitting for his portrait, which my father was painting, when one of my brothers entered the room, bringing a letter, just arrived by post, from another brother who was at Modena on business. The Cardinal took the letter, and, on opening it, said to my father, 'Go on painting, and I will read it.' Having opened the letter, he began to read quickly, inventing an imaginary letter, in which the absent son, with the greatest expressions of shame and humiliation, prostrated himself at the feet of his father, begging his pardon, and saying that he had found it impossible to disengage himself from a stringent promise of marrying a certain Signora Apollonia, whence.... But he had hardly proceeded thus far, when my father leaped on to his feet, knocking over palette, pencils, and chair; *and upsetting oil, varnish, and everything else which was on the little bench*; and uttering all kinds of exclamations. The Cardinal jumped at the same time, to quiet and pacify him, telling him, as well as he could for laughing, that it was all nonsense, and entirely an invention of his own. Meanwhile, my father was running round the room in despair, the Cardinal following him, and thus pleasantly ended the morning's work. After this time, whenever his eminence came to see my father, before getting out of the carriage, he would whisper, That he had no doubt Signora Apollonia was at home, and with him.'"

We refer the artist-reader to the work itself, for valuable matter on the subject of grounds; we have already trespassed too far to allow of our here entering minutely into the subject. Mr Eastlake and Mrs Merrifield, however, think a knowledge of grounds of the first importance. The evidence is in favour of white grounds, of size and gesso. De Piles thinks them, however, liable to crack. And in this place Mrs Merrifield narrates, on the authority of the French painter, M. Camille Rogier, to Sig. Cigogna, who inserted it in his *Inscrizeoni Veneziane*, a circumstance which strongly savours of the astute exchange of armour in the *Iliad*—brass for gold. Owing to the gesso or white tempera ground, it is said that the celebrated Nozze di Cana, by Paolo Veronese, was in such a condition as to render it necessary to line it very carefully, to prevent the paint scaling from the canvass. "But when, in 1815, the picture was about to be restored to Venice, according to the treaty, it was perceived that the colours crumbled off and fell into dust at the slightest movement. To continue the operation, therefore, was to expose one of the finest works of the Venetian school to certain destruction; and the committee decided that the picture of Paolo should remain at Paris, and that a painting of Lebrun's should be sent to Venice in its stead." "Credat Judæus!" If this were so—if the picture was really in that condition, how could it have been lined? and if it could, by any care, bear the necessary rough usage and removals of lining, would it not have borne careful conveyance? The French are able diplomatists. We think Mr Peel, and much less experienced liners, must laugh at the simplicity of the committee. Were they a committee on the Fine Arts? We have heard of valuable pictures having been smuggled into this country, with other pictures painted over them—if the proof which satisfied the committee, (if the story have any real foundation of truth,) had been a free pass through the custom-house, we have not the slightest doubt our picture-dealers would have readily supplied it, and have skilfully so attached dry colours as to peel off on the slightest shaking. We should rather give credence to the glazings of Titian flying off to the glass, than to this supposed danger of removal from the cause ascribed.

In now taking leave of Mrs Merrifield, we express our hope that, having so ably and so faithfully done the work confided to her by the Commission on the Fine Arts, she will not think her labours at an end; for we are quite sure that her judicious mind and clear style may be most profitably employed in the service of art, to whose practical advancement she has contributed so much. 453

# TENNYSON'S POEMS.[11]

There is no living poet who more justly demands of the critic a calm and accurate estimate of his claims than Alfred Tennyson; neither is there one whom it is more difficult accurately and dispassionately to estimate. Other living and poetical reputations seem tolerably well settled. The older bards belong already to the past. Wordsworth all the world consents to honour. Living, he already ranks with the greatest of our ancestors. His faults even are no longer canvassed; they are frankly admitted, and have ceased to disturb us. Every man of original genius has his mannerism more or less disagreeable; once thoroughly understood, it becomes our only care to forget it. No one now thinks of discovering that Wordsworth is occasionally, and especially when ecclesiastical themes overtake him, sadly prosaic; no one is now more annoyed by this than he is at the school divinity of Milton, or the tangled, elliptical, helter-skelter sentences into which the impetuous imagination of Shakspeare sometimes hurries him. Moore, another survivor of the magnates of the last generation, has judgment passed upon him with equal certainty and universality. He, with a somewhat different fate, has seen his fame collapse. He no longer stalks a giant in the land, but he has dwindled down to the most delightful of minstrel-pages that ever brought song and music into a lady's chamber. So exquisite are his songs, men willingly forget he ever attempted anything higher. We have no other remembrance of his *Lalla Rookh* than that he has embedded in it some of those gems of song—some of those charming lyrics which scarcely needed to be set to music; they are melody and verse in one. They sing themselves. If his fame has diminished, it has not tarnished. It has shrunk to a little point, but that little point is bright as the diamond, and as imperishable. Of the poets more decidedly of our own age and generation, there are but few whom it would be thought worth while to estimate according to a high standard of excellence. The crowd we in general consent to praise with indulgence, because we do not look upon them as candidates for immortality, but merely for the honours of the day—a social renown, the applause of their contemporaries, the palm won in the race with living rivals.

Poetry of the very highest order, coupled with much affectation, much defective writing, many wilful blunders, renders Alfred Tennyson a very worthy and a very difficult subject for the critic. The extreme diversity and unequal merit of his compositions, make it a very perplexing business to form any general estimate of his writings. The conclusion the critic comes to at one moment he discards the next. He finds it impossible to satisfy himself, nor can ever quite determine in what measure praise and censure should be mixed. At one time he is so thoroughly charmed, so completely delighted with the poet's verse, that he is disposed to extol his author to the skies; he is as little inclined to any captious and disparaging criticism as lovers are, when they look, however closely, into the fair face which has enchanted them. At other times, the page before him will call up nothing but vexation and annoyance. Even the gleams of genuine poetry, amongst the confusion and elaborate triviality that afflict him, will only add to his displeasure. A heap of rubbish never looks so vile, or so disagreeable, as when a fresh flower is seen thrown upon it. Were Tennyson to be estimated by some half-dozen of his best pieces, he would be the compeer of Coleridge and of Wordsworth—if by a like number of his worst performances, he would be raised very little above that nameless and unnumbered crowd of dilettanti versifiers, whose utmost ambition seems to be to see themselves in print, and then, as quickly as possible, to disappear—



"One moment *black*, then gone for ever."

This diversity of merit is not to be accounted for by the diverse nature of the subject-matter which the poet has at different times treated; for Mr Tennyson has given us the happiest specimens of the most different styles of composition, employed on a singular variety of topics. He has been grave and graceful, playful and even broadly comic, with complete success. As a finished portraiture of a peculiar state of mind—conceived with philosophic truth, and embellished with all the fascinating associations which it is the province of poetry to call around us—nothing could surpass the poem of the *Lotos Eaters*. For playfulness, and tender, amorous fancy—warm, but not too warm—spiritual, but not too spiritual—we shall go far before we find a rival to the *Talking Oak*, or to the *Day Dream*: what better ballad can heart desire than the *Lord of Burleigh*? And how well does a natural indignation speak out in the clear ringing verse of *Lady Clara Vere de Vere*! Specimens of the richly comic, as we have hinted, may here and there be found: we have one in our eye which we shall seek an opportunity for quoting. In harmonising metaphysic thought with poetic imagery and expression, he does not always succeed; on the contrary, some of his saddest failures arise from the abortive attempt; yet there are some admirable passages even of this description of writing.

It is not, therefore, the difference of style aimed at, or subject-matter adopted, which determines whether Tennyson shall be successful or not. Perhaps it will be said that the marked inequality in his compositions is sufficiently accounted for by the simple fact, that some were written at an earlier age than others; that some are the productions of his youth, and others of his maturity—that, in short, it is a mere question of dates. There is indeed a very striking difference between those poems which commence the volume, and bear the date of 1830, and the other and greater number, which bear the date of 1832: the difference is so great, that we question whether, upon the whole, the fame of Mr Tennyson would not have been advanced by the omission altogether from his collected works of this first portion of his poems; for though

much beauty would be lost, far more blemish would be got rid of. Still, however, as the same inequality pursues us in his later writings, and is evident even in his last production—*The Princess*—there remains something more to be explained than can be quite accounted for by the mere comparison of dates. This something more we find explained in *a bad school of taste*, under the influence of which Mr Tennyson commenced his poetic authorship. Above this influence he often rises, but he has never quite liberated himself from it. To this source we trace the affectations of many kinds which deface his writings—affectation of a super-refinement of meaning, ending in mere obscurity, or in sheer nonsense; affectation of antique simplicity ending in the most jejune triviality; experimental metres putting the ear to torture; or an utter disregard of all metre, of all the harmonies of verse, together with an incessant toil after originality of phrase; as if no new idea could be expressed unless each separate word bore also an aspect of novelty.

At the time when Tennyson commenced his career, poetry and poets were in a somewhat singular position. Never had there been so great a thirst for poetry—never had there existed so large a reading public with so decided a predilection for this species of literature; and rarely, if ever, has there arisen—at once the cause and effect of this public taste—so noble a band of contemporary poets as those who were just then retiring from the stage. The success which attended metrical composition was quite intoxicating. Poems, now gradually waning from the sight of all mankind, were rapturously welcomed as masterpieces. It seemed that the poet might dare anything. Meanwhile, the novelty to which he was emboldened was rendered urgent and 455
necessary; for, in addition to the old rivals of times long past, there was this band of poets, whose echoes were still ringing in the theatre, to be competed with. Was it any wonder that at such an epoch we should have Keats writing his *Endymion*, or Tennyson elaborating his incomprehensible ode *To Memory*, or inditing his foolish songs *To the Owl*, or torturing himself to unite old *balladry* with modern sentiment in his *Lady of Shalott*, for ever rhyming with that detested town of *Camelot*; or that he should have been stringing together fulsome, self-adulatory nonsense about *The Poet and the Poet's Mind*—or, in short, committing any conceivable extravagance in violation of sense, metre, and the English language? The young poet of this time was evidently carried off his feet. He had drank so deep of those springs about Parnassus, that he had lost his footing on the solid ground. It did not follow that he and his compeers always soared above us because they could no longer walk on a level with us. Men, in a dream, think they are flying when they are only falling. They reeled much, these intellectual revellers. It is true that sober men discountenanced them, rebuked them, reminded them that liberty was not license, nor imagination another name for insanity; but there was still a considerable crowd of indiscriminate admirers to cheer and encourage them in their wildest freaks.

One tendency, gathered from these times, seems, all along and throughout his whole progress, to have beset our author—the reluctance to subside for a moment to the easy natural level of cultivated minds. He has a morbid horror of commonplace. He will be grotesque, if you will; absurd, infantine—anything but truly simple: when he girds himself for serious effort, he would give you the very essence of poetry, and nothing else. This wish to have it all blossoms, no stem or leaves, has perhaps been one cause why he has written no long work. It is a tendency which is, in some measure, honourable to him. Though it has assisted in betraying him into the errors we have already noticed, it must be allowed that we are never in danger of being wearied with the monotony of commonplace.

It may be worth while to consider for a moment this characteristic—the wish to seize upon the essence, and the essence only, of poetry.

In our high intellectual industry, there goes on a certain division and subdivision of labour analogous to that which marks the progress of our commercial and manufacturing industry. The first men of genius were historians, poets, philosophers, all in one. If they wrote verse, they found a place in it for whatever could in any manner interest their contemporaries, whether it was matter of knowledge, or matter of passion. The theology of a people, and the agriculture of a people—chaos and night, and how to sow the fields—the progeny of gods, and the breeding of bulls—were alike materials for the poem. A Hesiod or a Gower chant all they know—science, or religion, or morality. The first epic is the first history. But the narrative here becomes too engrossing to admit of large admixtures of didactic matter. This is relegated to some other form of composition, and handed over to some other master of the art. The dramatic form carries on this division still further. The representation of the narrative relieves the poem of its historic character, and a dialogue which is to accompany action becomes necessarily devoted to the passions of life, or such strains of reflection as result from, and harmonise with, those passions. The lyric minstrel seizes upon these eliminated elements of passion and reflection, and adds thereto a greater liberty of imagination. At length comes that mere intellectual luxury Of imaginative thought—that gathering in of beauty and emotion from all sources—that subtle blending of a thousand pleasing allusions and flitting images—exquisite for their own sake, and constituting what is considered as pre-eminently the poetical description of natural scenery, or the poetical delineation of human feeling.

But it is possible that this intellectual division of labour may be carried too far. This luxury of imaginative thought may be found supporting itself on the slenderest base imaginable of either 456
incident or reflection, may be almost divorced from those first natural sources of interest which affect all mankind. Now, although this may be the most poetical element of the poem—though this subtle play of imagination may constitute, more than anything else, the difference between

poetry and prose, it does not follow that a good poem can be constructed wholly of such materials. It does not even follow that, in a good poem, this is really the most essential part; for that which constitutes the specific distinction between prose and poetry may not be an ingredient so important as others which both prose and poetry have in common. It is the *hilt*, and its peculiar formation, which more particularly distinguishes the sword from any other cutting instrument; but the blade—the faculty of cutting which it shares in common with the most domestic knife—is, after all, the most important part, the most requisite property of the sword. A peculiar play of imagination is pre-eminently poetic, but thought, reflection, the genuine passions of man—these must still constitute the greater elements of the composition, whether it be prose or poem.

If, therefore, we carry this division of labour too far, we shall be in danger of carving elegant and elaborate hilts that have no blades, or but a sham one. We ask no one to write didactic or philosophic poems—we should entreat of them to abstain; we call on no man to describe again the culture of the sugarcane, (though it bids fair to become amongst us one of the lost arts,) or the breeding of sheep, in numerous verse; we hope no one will again fall into that singular error of imagining that the "art of poetry" must be a peculiarly appropriate subject for a poem, and the very topic that the spirit of a poetic reader was thirsting for. Art of poetry! what poetic nutriment will you extract from that? As well think to dine a man upon the art of cookery! It is quite right that what is best said in prose should be confined to prose; but neither must we divorce substantial thought, the broad passions of mankind, or a deep reflection, from the poetic form. This would be to build nothing but steeples, and minarets, and all the filigree of architecture. We should have pillars and porticoes enough, but not a temple of any kind to enter into.

We often hear it asserted, on the one hand, that the taste for poetry has declined. We hear this, on the other hand, vigorously contested and denied. No, says the indignant champion of the muse, *verse* may have sunk much in estimation, and the ingenious labours of the rhymist may be put on a par, if you will, with the tricks of the juggler or the caprices of art. Difficulties conquered! Nonsense. We want good things executed. It is your folly if you do not choose the best means. The man who plays on his fiddle with one string only, shall have thanks if he plays well, but not because he plays on one string; if he could have played better, using the four, his thanks shall be diminished by so much. Yes, verse may be depreciated, but *poetry*—which grows perennial from the very heart of humanity—you may plough over the soil deep as you please, you will only make it grow the faster, and strike the deeper root. The answer is well, and yet there may be something left unexplained. If poetry has been deserting the highroads of human thought—if it has grown more limited as it has grown more subtle—there may be some ground for suspecting that the public will desert it. Without wishing to detract anything from the high merit of his best performances, we should refer to a great portion of the poetry of *Shelley* as an illustration of these remarks, and also to a considerable part of the poetry of *Keats*.

It is especially in the class of descriptive poetry, that we moderns have carried the over-refinement we are speaking of, to so remarkable an extent. The poets of Greece and Rome, it has been often observed, rarely, if ever, described natural scenery simply for its own sake. It was with their verse as with their paintings—the landscape was always a mere accessory, the main interest lying with the human or superhuman beings who inhabited it. The truth seems to be, that the pagan imagination was so full of its goddesses and nymphs, that these obscured the genuine impression, which the scene itself would have produced. Not but that the ancient poet must have 457
felt the charm of a beautiful or sublime scene; but instead of dwelling upon this natural charm, he turned immediately to what seemed a more worthy subject—to the supernatural beings with which superstition had peopled the scene. Scarcely could he see the wood for the dryads, or the river for those smooth naiads that were surely living in its lucid depths. And even if we suppose that these pagan faiths had lost their hold both of writer and of reader, it is still very easy to understand that simple nature—trees, and hills, and water—however pleasing to the beholder, might not be thought an appropriate subject, or one sufficiently important for an exclusive description. What is open to every one's eye, and familiar to every man's thought, is not the first, but the last topic to which literature resorts. Not till all others are exhausted does it betake itself to this. Just as the heroic in human existence would be sung and resung, long before a Fielding portrays the common life that is lying about him; so portents and prodigies, gods and satyrs, and Ovidian fables of metamorphosed damsels, would precede the description of groves and bays, verdure and water, and the light of heaven seen shining every day upon them.

Even the sacred poets and prophets amongst the Hebrews, who gave such sublime views of nature, always associated her with the presence of God. This, indeed, was the secret of their sublimity. With them nature was never seen alone. The clouds rolled about His else invisible path; the thunder was His, the hills were His; nature was the perpetual vesture of the Deity.

It is only in modern times that the scenery of nature has been allowed to speak for itself, to make its own impression, as the great representative of the Beautiful here below. But now, as this scenery is to be described, not by admeasurements, or the items of a catalogue, as so much land, so much water, so much timber, but by the deep, and varied, and often shadowy sentiments it calls forth, it is manifest that it must become a theme inexhaustible to the poet, and a theme also somewhat dangerous to him, as tempting him more and more towards those refined, and vague, and evanescent feelings which are not found on the highways of human thought, and are known only to the experience of a few.

But to return more immediately to Mr Tennyson. We have said that, at the time when he

commenced writing, poetry was in a certain feverish condition. The young poet had been spoilt—had grown over-confident. He was like Spencer's Knight in the Palace of Love, who sees written over every door, "Be bold! Be bold!" Only over one door does he read the salutary caution, "Be not too bold!" Public opinion, or the opinion of a large and powerful coterie, favoured his wildest excesses. That language was strained and distorted, was a sure sign of the original power of thought that was struggling through the imperfect medium. Obscurity was always honoured. People strained their eyes to watch their favourite as he careered amongst the clouds: if they lost sight of him, the fault was presumed to be in their own vision; they were not likely, therefore, to confess any inability to follow him. The young aspirants of the day even learnt to despise the trammels of their own art. The measure and melody of their verse was sacrificed to the irresistible afflatus which bore them onward. Metre was put to the torture,—at least our ears were tortured—in order that no iota of the heaven-breathed strain should be lost. They still wrote in verse, because verse alone could disguise the empty, meaningless phraseology they had enlisted in their service; but it was often a jingling rhythm, harsher to the ear than the most crabbed prose, which was retained as an excuse or concealment for that resplendent gibberish they had imported so largely into the English language. From a super-refinement of thought, altogether transcendental, they delighted to descend to an imitation of childish or antique simplicity. The natural level of cultivated thought was by all means to be avoided. If you were not in the clouds, you must be seen sitting amongst the buttercups.

Turn now to the opening and earlier poems in Mr Tennyson's volume; they are considerably altered from the state in which they made their first appearance, but they still leave traces enough of the unfortunate influence we have attempted to describe. The best amongst them is a sort of gallery of portraits of fair ladies—Claribel, and Lilian, and Isabel, and Adeline, and Madeline, and others. From these might be extracted some few very beautiful lines, but none of them pleases as a whole. There is an air of effort and elaboration, coupled with much studied negligence, which prevents us from surrendering ourselves to the charms of any of these portraitures. The *Claribel*, with which the volume commences, might be a woman or a child for anything that the poem tells us; we only gather from the expression "low lieth," that she is dead, and over her grave there rings a chime of words, which leave as little impression on the living ear as they would on the sleeper beneath. It was a pity—since alterations have been permitted—that the volume was still allowed to open with this mere monotonous chant. And why were these two absurd songs *To the Owl* still preserved? Was it to display a sort of moral courage, and as they were first written out of bravado to common sense, was it held a point of honour to persist in their republication? I, Tennyson, have written good things; therefore this, my nonsense, shall hold its ground in spite of the murmurs of gentle reader, or the anger of malignant critic! But we must not commence an inquisition of this kind, nor ask why this or that has been permitted to remain, for we should carry on such an inquiry to no little extent. We should make wide clearance in this first part of his volume. Here is a long *Ode to Memory*, which craves to be extinguished, which ought in charity to be forgotten. An utter failure throughout. We cannot read it again, to enable us to speak quite positively, but we do not think there is a single redeeming line in the whole of it. A dreary, shapeless, metaphysical mist lies over it; there is no object seen, and not a ray of beauty even colours the cloud. Then comes an odious piece of pedantry in the shape of "A Song." What metre, Greek or Roman, Russian or Chinese, it was intended to imitate, we have no care to inquire: the man was writing English, and had no justifiable pretence for torturing our ear with verse like this:— 

SONG.

"A spirit haunts the year's last hours,
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers:
  To himself he talks;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh,
  In the walks.
  Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks
Of the mouldering flowers."

Of the *Lady of Shalott* we have already hinted our opinion. They must be far gone in dilettantism who can make an especial favourite of such a caprice as this—with its intolerable vagueness, and its irritating repetition, every verse ending with the "Lady of Sha*lott*," which must always rhyme with "Came*lot*." We cannot conceive what charm Mr Tennyson could find in this species of odious iteration, which he nevertheless repeatedly inflicts upon us. It matters not what precedent he may insist upon—whether he quotes the authority of Theocritus, or the worthy example of old English ballad-makers—the annoyance is none the less. In a poem called *The Sisters*, we have the verse framed after this fashion:—

"We were two daughters of one race;
She was the fairest in the face:
  *The wind is blowing in turret and tree.*
They were together, and she fell;
Therefore revenge became me well.
  *O the earl was fair to see!*"

And so we go on to the end of the chapter, with "The wind is blowing in turret and tree," and "The earl was fair to see," brought in, no matter how, but always in the same place. The rest of the verse is not so abundantly clear as to be well able to afford this intervenient jingle, which is indeed no better than the *fal lal la!* or *tol de rol!* of facetious drinking-songs. These have their purpose, being framed expressly for people in that condition when they want noise, and noise only, when the absence of all sense is rather a merit; but what earthly use, or beauty, or purpose there can be in the melancholy iterations of Mr Tennyson, we cannot understand. Certainly we agree here with Hotspur—we would rather hear "a kitten cry Mew, than one of these same metre ballad-mongers." 

*Oriana* is fashioned on the same plan:—

"My heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.
There is no rest for me below,
Oriana."

As if some miserable dog were baying the moon with the name of *Oriana*.

*Mariana in the Moated Grange* is not by any means improved by this habit of repetition, every stanza ending with the same lines, and those not too skilfully constructed:—

"She only *said*, 'My life is dreary;
He cometh not,' she *said*!
She *said*, 'I am aweary, aweary;
I would that I were dead!'"

This piece of *Mariana* has been very much extolled; the praise we should allot to it would seem cold after the applause it has frequently received. The descriptive powers of Tennyson are, in his happiest moments, unrivalled; on these occasions there is no one of whom it may be said more accurately, that his words paint the scene; but the description here and in the subsequent piece, *Mariana in the South*, has always appeared to us too studied to be entirely pleasing. We have tried to *feel* it, but we could not.

For instances of graver faults of style, and in productions of higher aim, we should point, amongst others, to *The Palace of Art*, *The Vision of Sin*, *The Dream of Fair Women*. In all of these, verses of great merit may be found, but the larger part is very faulty. An obscurity, the result sometimes of too great condensation of style, and a jerking spasmodic movement, constantly mar the effect. From *The Palace of Art* we quote, almost at haphazard, the following lines. The soul has built her palace, has hung it with pictures, and placed therein certain great bells, (a sort of music we do not envy her,) that swing of themselves. It is then finely said of her—

"She took her throne,
She sat betwixt the shining oriels
To sing her songs alone."

After this the strain thus proceeds:—

"No nightingale delighteth to prolong
  Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echoed song
  *Throb through the ribbed stone*;

"Singing and murmuring in her feastful mirth,
  Trying to feel herself alive;
Lord over nature, lord of the visible earth,
  Lord of the senses five.

"Communing with herself: 'All these are mine;
  And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me.' She—when young night divine
  Crown'd dying day with stars,

"Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
  Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
  In hallow'd moons of gems,

"To mimic heaven; and clapt her hands, and cried,
  'I marvel if my still delight
In this great house, so royal, rich, and wide,
  Be flattered to the height.

"'From shape to shape at first within the womb,
  The brain is modell'd,' she began,
'And through all phases of all thought I come
  Into the perfect man.

"'All nature widens upward, evermore
  The simpler essence lower lies;
More complex is more perfect, owning more
  Discourse, more widely wise.'

"Then of the moral instinct would she prate,
  And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate;
  And at the last she said—"

Now this surely is not writing which can commend itself to the judgment of any impartial critic. One cannot possibly admire this medley of topics, moral and physiological, thrown pell-mell together, and mingled with descriptions which are themselves a puzzle to understand. To hear one's own voice "throbbing through the ribbed stone," is a startling novelty in acoustics, and the lighting up of the apartment is far from being a lucid affair. We can understand "the wreaths and anadems;" our experience of an illumination-night in the streets of London, where little lamps or jets of gas, assume these festive shapes, comes to our aid, but "moons of gems" would form such globes as even the purest quintessence of the most precious oil must fail to render very luminous.

*The Vision of Sin* commences after this fashion:—

"I had a vision when the night was late:
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate;
*He rode a horse with wings, that would have flown,*
*But that his heavy rider kept him down*.

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And from the palace came a child of sin,
*And took him by the curls, and led him in*,
Where sat a company with heated eyes,
Expecting when a fountain should arise."

Thus it commences, and thus it proceeds for some time, in the same very intelligible strain. It is our fault, perhaps, that we cannot interpret the vision; but we confess that we can make nothing of it till the measure suddenly changes, and we have a bitter, mocking, sardonic song, a sort of devil's drinking-song, through which some species of meaning becomes evident enough.

In a vision of sin we may count upon a little mystery; but we should expect to find all clear and beautiful in *A Dream of Fair Women*. But here, too, everything is singularly misty. Those who have witnessed that ingenious exhibition called The Dissolving Views, will recollect that gay and gaudy obscurity which intervenes at the change of each picture; they will remember that they passed half their time looking upon a canvass covered with indistinct forms, and strangely mingled colours. Just for a few minutes the picture stands out bright and well defined as need be, then it breaks up, and confuses its dim fragments with the colours of some other picture, which is now struggling to make itself visible. Half our time is spent amongst mingled shadows of the two, the eye in vain attempting to trace any perfect outline. Precisely such a sensation the perusal of this, and some other of the poems of Tennyson, produces on the reader. For a moment the scene brightens out into the most palpable distinctness, but for the greater part we are gazing on a glittering mist, where there is more colour than form, and where the colours themselves are flung one upon the other in lawless profusion. In the *Dream of Fair Women*, the form of Cleopatra

stands forth magnificently; it is almost the only portion of the poem that has the great charm of distinctness, or which fixes itself permanently on the memory.

We cannot bring ourselves to quote line after line, and verse after verse, of what we hold to be bad and unreadable: we have given some examples, and mentioned a considerable number of the pieces, on which we should found a certain vote of censure; the intelligent reader can easily check our judgment by his own,—confirm or dispute it. We turn to what is a more grateful task. Well known as these poems are, we must be permitted to give a few specimens of those happy efforts which have secured, we believe, to Tennyson, in spite of the defects we have pointed out, an enduring place amongst the poets of England. We shall make our selection so as to illustrate his success in very different styles, and on different topics. We shall make this selection from the volume of *The Poems*, and then dwell separately, and somewhat more at large, upon *The Princess*, which is comparatively a late publication.

We cannot pass by our especial favourite, *The Lotos-Eaters*. This is poetry of the very highest order—in every way charming—subject and treatment both. The state of mind described, is one which every cultivated mind will understand and enter into, and which a poet, in particular, must thoroughly sympathise with—that lassitude which is content to look upon the swift-flowing current of life, and let it flow, refusing to embark thereon—a lassitude which is not wholly torpor, which has mental energy enough to cull a justification for itself from all its stores of philosophy—a lassitude charming as the last thought, before sleep quite folds us in its safe and tried oblivion. No need to eat of the Lotos, or to be cast upon the enchanted island, to feel this gentle despondency, this resignation made up of resistless indolence and well-reasoned despair. Yet these are circumstances which add greatly to the poetry of our picture. To the band of weary navigators who had disembarked upon this land—

"Where all things always seemed the same—
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

## IV.

"Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each; but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave,
Far, far away, did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.



## V.

"They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon, upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, 'We will return no more;'
And all at once they sang, 'Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam.'"

## CHORIC SONG.

## I.

"There is sweet music here, that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leav'd flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

## II.

"Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone?
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,—
'There is no joy but calm!'
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

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## IV.

"Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life: ah! why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence,—ripen, fall, and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease!"

## VI.

"Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives,
And their warm tears: but all hath suffer'd change;
For surely now our household hearths are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The gods are hard to reconcile:
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath." . . .

## VIII.

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"We have had enough of action; and of motion, we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind."

As at once a companion and counterpart to this picture, we have a noble strain from *Ulysses*, who, having reached his island-home and kingdom, pants again for enterprise—for wider fields of thought and action.

"It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly.

I am become a name;
For, always roaming with a hungry heart,
Much have I seen and known; cities of men,
And manners, climates, councils, governments;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.

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"This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and through soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port: the vessel puffs his sail:
There gloom the dark-blue seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and, sitting well in order, smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die."



*St Simeon Stylites* is a poem strongly and justly conceived, and written throughout with sustained and equable power. Those who have objected to it, that it is not the portrait of any *Christian* even of that distant age and that Eastern clime, have perhaps not sufficiently consulted their ecclesiastical history, or sufficiently reflected how almost inevitably the practice of penances and self-inflictions leads to the idea that these are, in fact, a sort of present payment for the future joys of heaven. Such an idea most assuredly prevailed amongst the Eastern eremites, of whom our Simeon was a most noted example. But we cannot quote from this, or from *The Two Voices*, or from *Locksley Hall*, or from *Clara Vere de Vere*; for we wish now to select some specimen of the lighter, more playful, and graceful manner of our poet. We pause betwixt *The Day-Dream* and *The Talking Oak*; they are both admirable: we choose the latter—we rest under its friendly, sociable shade, and its most musical of boughs. The lover holds communion with the good old oak-tree, and finds him the most amiable as well as the most discreet of confidants. May every lover find his oak-tree talk as well, and as agreeably, and give a report as welcome of his absent fair one! On being questioned—

"If ever maid or spouse
As fair as my Olivia, came
To rest beneath thy boughs,"

The oak makes answer:—

"O Walter, I have sheltered here
  Whatever maiden grace
The good old summers, year by year,
  Made ripe in summer-chase:

"Old summers, when the monk was fat,
  And, issuing shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
  The girls upon the cheek;

"And I have shadow'd many a group
  Of beauties, that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
  Or while the patch was worn;

"And leg and arm, with love-knots gay,
  About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modish Cupid of the day,
  And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

"I swear (and else may insects prick
  Each leaf into a gall)
This girl for whom your heart is sick
  Is three times worth them all;

"I swear by leaf, and wind, and rain,
  (And hear me with thy ears,)
That though I circle in the grain
  Five hundred rings of years—

"Yet since I first could cast a shade
  Did never creature pass
So slightly, musically made,
  So light upon the grass:

"For as to fairies, that will flit
  To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
  But far too spare of flesh."

The lover proceeds to inquire when it was that Olivia last came to "sport beneath his boughs;" and the oak, who from his topmost branches could see over into Summer-place, and look, it seems, in at the windows, gives him full information. Yesterday her father had gone out—

"But as for her, she staid at home,
  And on the roof she went,
And down the way you use to come,
  She look'd with discontent.

"She left the novel, half uncut,
  Upon the rosewood shelf;
She left the new piano shut;
  She could not please herself.

"Then ran she, gamesome as a colt,
  And livelier than a lark;
She sent her voice through all the holt
  Before her, and the park.

"A light wind chased her on the wing,
  And in the chase grew wild;
As close as might be would he cling
  About the darling child.

"But light as any wind that blows,
  So fleetly did she stir,
The flower she touch'd on dipt and rose,
  And turn'd to look at her.



"And here she came, and round me play'd,
  And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
  About my 'giant bole;'

"And, in a fit of frolic mirth,
  She strove to span my waist;
Alas! I was so broad of girth
  I could not be embraced.

"I wish'd myself the fair young beech,
  That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
  She might have lock'd her hands."

It is all equally charming, but we can proceed no further. Of the comic, we have hinted that Mr Tennyson is not without some specimens, though, as will be easily imagined, it is not a vein in which he frequently indulges. *Will Waterproof's Lyrical Monologue* is not a piece much to our taste, yet that

"Head-waiter of the chophouse here,
To which I most resort,"

together with the scene in which he lives and moves, is very graphically brought before us in the following lines:—

"But thou wilt never move from hence,
The sphere thy fate allots:
Thy latter days, increased with pence,
Go down among the pots.
Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
In haunts of hungry sinners,
Old boxes, larded with the steam
Of thirty thousand dinners.

"*We* fret, *we* fume, would shift our skins,
Would quarrel with our lot;
*Thy* care is under-polish'd tins
To serve the hot-and-hot.
To come and go, and come again,
Returning like the pewit,
And watch'd by silent gentlemen
That trifle with the cruet."

But this is not the extract we promised our readers, nor the one we should select as the best illustration of our author's powers in this style. In a piece called *Walking to the Mail*, there occurs the following description of a certain college trick played on some miserly caitiff, who, no doubt, had richly deserved this application of *Lynch law*. It is not unlike the happiest manner of our old dramatists,—

"I was at school—a college in the south:
There lived a flay-flint near; we stole his fruit,
His hens, his eggs; but there was law for us;
We paid in person. He had a sow, sir: she
With meditative grunts of much content,
Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun and mud.
By night we dragg'd her to the college tower
From her warm bed, and up the cork-screw stair,
With hand and rope we haled the groaning sow,
And on the leads we kept her till she pigg'd.
Large range of prospect had the mother sow,
And but for daily loss of one she lov'd,
As one by one we took them—but for this,
As never sow was higher in this world,
Might have been happy: but what lot is pure?
We took them all, till she was left alone
Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,
And so returned unfarrow'd to her sty."

*The Princess; a Medley*, now claims our attention. This can no longer, perhaps, be regarded as a new publication, yet, being the latest of Mr Tennyson's, some account of it seems due from us. With what propriety he has entitled it "A Medley" is not fully seen till the whole of it has come before the reader; and it is at the close of the poem that the author, sympathising with that something of surprise which he is conscious of having excited, explains in part how he fell into that half-serious, half-bantering style, and that odd admixture of modern and mediæval times, of nineteenth century notions and chivalrous manners, which characterise it, and constitute it the medley that it is. Accident, it seems, must bear the blame, if blame there be. The poem grew, we are led to gather, from some chance sketch or momentary caprice. So we infer from the following lines,—

"Here closed our compound story, which at first,
Perhaps, but meant to banter little maids
With mock heroics and with parody;
But slipt in some strange way, cross'd with burlesque
From mock to earnest, even into tones
Of tragic."——

However it grew, it is a charming medley; and that purposed anachronism which runs throughout, blending new and old, new theory and old romance, lends to it a perpetual piquancy. Speaking more immediately and critically of its poetic merit, what struck us on its perusal was this, that the *pictures* it presents are the most vivid imaginable; that here there is an originality and brilliancy of diction which quite illuminates the page; that everything which addresses itself to the eye stands out in the brightest light before us; but that, where the author falls into *reflection* and *sentiment*, he is not equal to himself; that here a slow creeping mist seems occasionally to steal over the page; so that, although the poem is not long, there are yet many

passages which might be omitted with advantage. As to that peculiar abrupt style of narrative which the author adopts, it has, at all events, the merit of extreme brevity, and must find its full justification, we presume, in that half-burlesque character which is impressed upon the whole poem.

The subject is a pleasing one—a gentle banter of "the rights of woman," as sometimes proclaimed by certain fair revolutionists. The feminine republic is dissolved, as might be expected, by the entrance of Love. He is not exactly elected first president of the republic; he has a shorter way of his own of arriving at despotic power, and domineers and scatters at the same time. In vain the sex band themselves together in Amazonian clubs, sections, or communities; he no sooner appears than each one drops the hand of his neighbour, and every heart is solitary.

The poem opens, oddly enough, with the sketch of a baronet's park, which has been given up for the day to some mechanics' institute. They hold a scientific gala there. Rapidly, and with touches of sprightly fancy, is the whole scene brought before us—the holiday multitude, and the busy amateurs of experimental philosophy.

"Somewhat lower down,
A man with knobs and wires and vials fired
A cannon: Echo answered in her sleep
From hollow fields: and here were telescopes
For azure views; and there a group of girls
In circle waited, whom the electric shock
Dislinked with shrieks and laughter: round the lake
A little clock-work steamer paddling plied,
And shook the lilies: perched about the knolls,
A dozen angry models jetted steam;
A petty railway ran; a fire-balloon
Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves,
And dropt a parachute and pass'd:
And there, through twenty posts of telegraph,
They flash'd a saucy message to and fro
Between the mimic stations; so that sport
With science hand in hand went: otherwhere
Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamour bowl'd
And stump'd the wicket; *babies roll'd about*
*Like tumbled fruit in grass*; and men and maids
Arrang'd a country-dance, and flew through light
And shadow."——

Here we are introduced to Lilia, the baronet's young and pretty daughter. She, in a sprightly fashion that would, however, have daunted no admirer, rails at the sex masculine, and asserts, at all points, the equality of woman.

"Convention beats them down;
It is but bringing up; no more than that
You men have done it; how I hate you all!
O were I some great princess, I would build
Far off from men a college of my own,
And I would teach them all things; you would see.'
And one said, smiling, 'Pretty were the sight,
If our old halls could change their sex, and flaunt
With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
*And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair*.
. . . . Yet I fear,
If there were many Lilias in the brood,
However deep you might embower the nest,
Some boy would spy it.'
"At this upon the sward
She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:
'That's your light way; but I would make it death
For any male thing but to peep at us.'
Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laugh'd;
*A rosebud set with little wilful thorns*,
*And sweet as English air could make her, she*."

Hereupon the poet, who is one of the party, tells a tale of a princess who did what Lilia threatened—who founded a college of sweet girls, to be brought up in high contempt and stern equality of the now domineering sex. This royal and beautiful champion of the rights of woman had been betrothed to a certain neighbouring prince, and the poet, assuming the character of this prince, tells the tale in the first person.

Of course, the royal foundress of a college, where no men are permitted to make their appearance, scouts the idea of being bound by any such precontract. The prince, however, cannot so easily resign the lady. He sets forth, with two companions, Cyril and Florian. The three disguise themselves in feminine apparel, and thus gain admittance into this palace-college of fair damsels.

"There at a board, by tome and paper, sat,
With two tame leopards couch'd beside her throne,
All beauty compass'd in a female form,
The princess; liker to the inhabitant
Of some clear planet close upon the sun,
Than our man's earth. She rose her height and said:
'We give you welcome; not without redound
Of fame and profit unto yourselves ye come,
The first-fruits of the stranger; aftertime,
And that full voice which circles round the grave
Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.
What! are the ladies of your land so tall?'
'We of the court,' said Cyril. 'From the court!'
She answered; 'then ye know the prince?'
And he,
'The climax of his age: as tho' there were
One rose in all the world—your highness that—
He worships your ideal.' And she replied:
'We did not think in our own hall to hear
This barren verbiage, current among men—
Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment:
We think not of him. When we set our hand
To this great work, we purposed with ourselves
Never to wed. You likewise will do well,
Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling
The tricks which make us toys of men, that so,
Some future time, if so indeed you will,
You may with those self-styled our lords ally
Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale.'
At these high words, we, conscious of ourselves,
Perused the matting."

In this banter is not unfairly expressed a sort of reasoning we have sometimes heard gravely maintained. We women will not be "the toys of men." We renounce the toilette and all those charms which the mirror reflects and teaches; we will be the equal friends of men, not bound to them by the ties of a silly fondness, or such as a passing imagination creates. Good. But as the natural attraction between the sexes must, under some shape, still exist, it may be worth while for these female theorists to consider, whether a little folly and love, is not a better combination, than much philosophy and a coarser passion; for such, they may depend upon it, is the alternative which life presents to us. Love and imagination are inextricably combined; in our old English the same word, *Fancy*, expressed them both.

Strange to say, the princess has selected two *widows*, (both of whom have children, and one an infant,)—Lady Blanche and Lady Psyche—for the chief assistants, or tutors, in her new establishment. Our hopeful pupils put themselves under the tuition of Lady Psyche, who proves to be a sister of one of them, Florian. This leads to their discovery. After Lady Psyche has delivered a somewhat tedious lecture, she recognises her brother.

"'My brother! O,' she said;
'What do you here? And in this dress? And these?
Why, who are these? a wolf within the fold!
A pack of wolves! the Lord be gracious to me!
A plot, a plot, a plot to ruin all!'"

All three appeal to Psyche's feelings. The appeal is effectual, though the reader will probably think it rather wearisome: it is one of those passages he will wish were abridged. The lady promises silence, on the condition that they will steal away, as soon as may be, from the forbidden ground on which they have entered.

The princess now rides out,—

"To take
The dip of certain strata in the north."

The new pupils are summoned to attend her.

"She stood
Among her maidens higher by the head,
Her back against a pillar, her foot on one
Of those tame leopards. Kitten-like it rolled,
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew near:
My heart beat thick with passion and with awe;
And from my breast the involuntary sigh
Brake, as she smote me with the light of eyes,
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and shook
My pulses, till to horse we climb, and so
Went forth in long retinue, following up
The river, as it narrow'd to the hills."

Here the disguised prince has an opportunity of furtively alluding to his suit, and to his precontract—even ventures to speak of the despair which her cruel resolution will inflict upon him.

"'Poor boy,' she said, 'can he not read—no books?
Quoit, tennis-ball—no games? nor deals in that
Which men delight in, martial exercises?
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,
Methinks he seems no better than a girl;
As girls were once, as we ourselves have been.
We had our dreams, perhaps he mixed with them;
We touch on our dead self, nor shun to do it,
Being other—since we learnt our meaning here,
To uplift the woman's fall'n divinity
Upon an even pedestal with man."

Well, after the geological survey, and much hammering and clinking, and "chattering of stony names," the party sit down to a sort of pic-nic. And here Cyril, flushed with the wine, and forgetful of his womanly part, breaks out into a merry stave "unmeet for ladies."

"'Forbear,' the princess cried, *'Forbear, Sir,' I*—
And, heated through and through with wrath and love,
I smote him on the breast; he started up;
There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd."



That "sir," that manly blow, had revealed all; there was a general flight. The princess, Ida, in the tumult is thrown, horse and rider, into a stream. The prince is, of course, there to save; but it avails him nothing. He is afterwards brought before her, she sitting in state, "eight mighty daughters of the plough" attending as her guard. She thus tauntingly dismisses him:—

"'You have done well, and like a gentleman,
And like a prince; you have our thanks for all:
And you look well too in your woman's dress;
Well have you done and like a gentleman.
You have saved our life; we owe you bitter thanks:
Better have died and spilt our bones in the flood;
Then men had said—but now—
You that have dared to break our bound, and gull'd
Our tutors, wrong'd, and lied, and thwarted, us—
*I* wed with thee! *I* bound by precontract,
Your bride, your bond-slave! *not tho' all the gold*
*That veins the world were packed to make your crown,*
And every spoken tongue should lord you.'"

Then those eight mighty daughters of the plough usher them out of the palace. We shall get into too long a story if we attempt to narrate all the events that follow. The king, the father of the prince, comes with an army to seek and liberate his son. Arac, brother of the princess, comes also with an army to her protection. The prince and Arac, with a certain number of champions on either side, enter the lists; and in the *mêlée*, the prince is dangerously wounded. Then compassion rises in the noble nature of Ida; she takes the wounded prince into her palace, tends upon him, restores him. She loves; and the college is for ever broken up—disbanded; and the "rights of woman" resolve into that greatest of all her rights—a heart-affection, a life-service, the devotion of one who is ever both her subject and her prince.

This account will be sufficient to render intelligible the few further extracts we wish to make. Lady Psyche, not having revealed to her chief these "wolves" whom she had detected, was in some measure a sharer in their guilt. She fled from the palace; but the Princess Ida retained her infant child. This incident is made the occasion of some very charming poetry, both when the mother laments the loss of her child, and when she regains possession of it.

"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah my child!
My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more;
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die for want of care,
Or sicken with ill usage, when they say
The child is hers; and they will beat my girl,
Remembering her mother. O my flower!
Or they will take her, they will make her hard;
And she will pass me by in after-life
With some cold reverence, worse than were she dead.
But I will go and sit beside the doors,
And make a wild petition night and day,
Until they hate to hear me, like a wind
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
And lay my little blossom at my feet,
My babe, my sweet Aglaïa, my one child:
And I will take her up and go my way,
And satisfy my soul with kissing her.'"

After the combat between Arac and the prince, when all parties had congregated on what had been the field of battle, this child is lying on the grass—

"Psyche ever stole
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
*Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede*,
*Lay like a new-fallen meteor on the grass*,
*Uncared for, spied its mother, and began*
*A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance*
*Its body, and reach its fatling innocent arms*,
*And lazy lingering fingers*. She the appeal
Brook'd not, but clamouring out, 'Mine—mine—not yours;
It is not yours, but mine: give me the child,'
Ceased all in tremble: piteous was the cry."

Cyril, wounded in the fight, raises himself on his knee, and implores of the princess to restore the child to her. She relents, but does not give it to the mother, to whom she is not yet reconciled —gives it, however, to Cyril.

"'Take it, sir,' and so
Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailèd hands,
Who turn'd half round to Psyche, as she sprang
To embrace it, with an eye that swam in thanks,
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hugg'd, and never hugg'd it close enough;
And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled it,
And hid her bosom with it; after that
Put on more calm."

The two kings are well sketched out—the father of Ida, and the father of our prince. Here is the first; a weak, indulgent, fidgetty old man, who is very much perplexed when the prince makes his appearance to demand fulfilment of the marriage contract.



"His name was Gama; crack'd and small in voice;
A little dry old man, without a star,
Not like a king! Three days he feasted us,
And on the fourth I spoke of why we came,
And my betroth'd. 'You do us, Prince,' he said,
Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,
'All honour. We remember love ourselves
In our sweet youth: there did a compact pass
Long summers back, a kind of ceremony—
I think the year in which our olives failed.
I would you had her, Prince, with all my heart;—
With my full heart! but there were widows here,
Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady Blanche;
They fed her theories, in and out of place,
Maintaining that with equal husbandry
The woman were an equal to the man.
They harp'd on this; with this our banquets rang;
Our dances broke and hugged in knots of talk;
Nothing but this: my very ears were hot
To hear them. Last my daughter begg'd a boon,
A certain summer-palace which I have
Hard by your father's frontier: I said No,
Yet, being an easy man, gave it.'"

The other royal personage is of another build, and talks in another tone—a rough old warrior king, who speaks through his beard. And he speaks with a rough sense too: very little respect has he for these novel "rights of women."

"Boy,
The bearing and the training of a child
Is woman's wisdom."

And when his son counsels peaceful modes of winning his bride, and deprecates war, the old king says:—

"'Tut, you know them not, the girls:
They prize hard knocks, and to be won by force.
Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear to them
As he that does the thing they dare not do,—
Breathing and sounding beauteous battle, comes
With the air of trumpets round him, and leaps in
Among the women, snares them by the score,
Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho', dash'd with death,
He reddens what he kisses: thus I won
Your mother, a good mother, a good wife,
Worth winning; but this firebrand—gentleness
To such as her! If Cyril spake her true,
To catch a dragon in a cherry net,
And trip a tigress with a gossamer,
Were wisdom to it.'"

With one charming picture we must close our extracts, or we shall go far to have it said that, with the exception of scattered single lines and phrases, we have pillaged the poem of every beautiful passage it contains. Here is a peep into the garden on the college-walks of our maiden university:

"There
One walked, reciting by herself, *and one*
*In this hand held a volume as to read,*
*And smooth'd a petted peacock down with that.*
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung, shadow'd from the heat."

It may be observed that we have quoted no passages from this poem, such as we might deem faulty, or vapid, or in any way transgressing the rules of good taste. It does not follow that it would have been impossible to do so. But on the chapter of his faults we had already said enough. Mr Tennyson is not a writer on whose uniform good taste we learn to have a full reliance; on the contrary, he makes us wince very often; but he is a writer who pleases much, where he does please, and we learn at length to blink the fault, in favour of that genius which soon after appears to redeem it.

Has this poet ceased from his labours, or may we yet expect from him some more prolonged strain, some work fully commensurate to the undoubted powers he possesses? It were in vain to prophesy. This last performance, *The Princess*, took, we believe, his admirers by surprise. It was not exactly what they had expected from him—not of so high an order. Judging by some intimations he himself has given us, we should not be disposed to anticipate any such effort from Mr Tennyson. Should he, however, contradict this anticipation, no one will welcome the future epic, or drama, or story, or whatever it may be, more cordially than ourselves. Meanwhile, if he rests here, he will have added one name more to that list of English poets, who have succeeded in establishing a permanent reputation on a few brief performances—a list which includes such names as Gray, and Collins, and Coleridge.



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# ARISTOCRATIC ANNALS.[12]

Here are three books analogous in subject, and nearly coincident in publication, but of diverse character and execution. We believe the vein to be rather a new one, and it is odd that three writers should simultaneously begin to work it. Mr Craik claims a slight precedence in date; his work differs more from the other two than they from each other, and is altogether of a higher class. He is very exact and erudite—at times almost too much so for the promise of amusement held out by his attractive title-page. In his preface he explains, that it is with facts alone he professes to deal, and that he "aspires in nowise to the airy splendours of fiction. The romance of the peerage which he undertakes to detail is only the romantic portion of the history of the peerage." He has adopted the right course; any other, by destroying the reality of his book, would

have deteriorated its value. And the events he deals with are too curious and remarkable to be improved by imaginative embellishment. He is occasionally over-liberal of genealogical and other details, which few persons, excepting those to whose ancestors they relate, will care much about; but as a whole, his book possesses powerful interest, and as he goes on—for he promises four or five more volumes—that interest is likely to rise. Of the two volumes already published, the second is more interesting than the first. Both will surely be eagerly read by the class to which they more particularly refer, but probably neither will be so generally popular as Mr Peter Burke's compilation of celebrated trials. Here we pass from historical to domestic romance. There is a peculiar and fascinating interest in records of criminal jurisprudence; an interest greatly enhanced when those records include names illustrious in our annals. Mr Peter Burke has done his work exceedingly well. He claims to have assembled, in one bulky volume, all the important trials connected with the aristocracy, not of a political nature, that have occurred during the last three centuries, "divested of forensic technicality and prolixity, and accompanied by brief historical and genealogical information as to the persons of note who figure in the cases." He has been so judicious as to preserve, in most instances, in the exact words in which they were reported, the evidence of witnesses, the pleadings of counsel, and the summing up of the judges; thus presenting us with much quaint and curious narrative as it fell from the lips of the noble persons concerned, and with many eloquent and admirable speeches from the bar and the bench. The volume, wherever it be opened, instantly rivets attention. We can hardly speak so laudatorily of the third book under notice. "Flag is a big word in a pilot's mouth," says Cooper's boatswain, when Paul Jones forgets his incognito—and Burke is an imposing name to stand in initialless dignity on the back of Mr Colburn's demy octavo. The Burke here in question is well known as the manufacturer of a Dictionary of Peers, of a Baronetage, and so forth. As a relief from such mechanical occupation, he now strays into "those verdant and seductive by-ways of history, where marvellous adventure and romantic incident spring up, as sparkling flowers, beneath our feet." The sparkle of the flowers in question is, as his readers will perceive, nothing to the sparkle of Mr Burke's style. *Ne sutor*, &c., means, we apprehend, in this instance, let not 469
Burke, whose prename is Bernard, go beyond his directories. Instead of wandering into picturesque cross-roads, he should have pursued the highway, where his industry had already proved useful to the public, and doubtless profitable both to himself and to his worthy publisher. Better far have stuck to Macadam, instead of rambling amongst the daisies, where he really does not seem at home, and makes but a so-so appearance. Not that his book is dull or unamusing; it would have been difficult to make it that, with a subject so rich and materials so abundant. But it certainly owes little to the style, which, although quite of the ambitious order, is eminently mawkish. Of the legends, anecdotes, tales, and trials, composing the volumes, some of the most interesting are unduly compressed and slurred over, whilst others, less attractive, are wearisomely extended by diluted dialogues and insipid reflections. People do not expect namby-pamby in a book of this kind. They look for striking and amusing incidents, plainly and unpretendingly told. They do not want, for instance, such inflated truisms and sheer nonsense as are found at pages 194 to 196 of Mr Burke's first volume. We cite this passage at random out of many we have marked. We abstain from dissecting it, out of consideration for its author, who, we daresay, has done his best, and whose chief fault is, that he has done rather too much. We have read his book carefully through with considerable entertainment. It is full of good stories badly told. Fortunately, being chiefly a compilation, it abounds in long extracts from better writers than himself. But every now and then we come to a bit that makes us exclaim with the old woman in the church, "that's his own!"

The first section of Mr Craik's book extends over nearly a century, "that most picturesque of our English centuries which lies between the Reformation and the Great Rebellion," and owes its priority to its length and importance, not to chronological precedence, which is due rather to some of the narratives in the second volume. The history of the Lady Lettice Knollys, her marriages and her descendants, occupies nearly the whole volume, including much interesting matter relative to various noble English families, as well as to Queen Elizabeth, Amy Robsart, Antonio Perez, and other characters well known in history or romance. Here there is temptation enough to linger; but we pass on to a most interesting chapter of the second volume, which illustrates, as well and more briefly, the merits of Mr Craik's book. It is entitled *The Old Percys*—a name than which none is more thoroughly English, none more suggestive of high and chivalrous qualities. Mr Craik begins by a tilt at Romeo's fallacy of there being nothing in a name, instead of which, he says, "names have been in all ages among the most potent things in the world. They have stirred and swayed mankind, and still do so, simply as names, without any meaning being attached to them. Of two sounds, designating or indicating the same thing, the one shall, by its associations, raise an emotion of the sublime, the other of the ridiculous. There can hardly be a stronger instance of this than we have in the two paternal names, the assumed and the genuine one, of the family at present possessing the Northumberland title. The former, Percy, is a name for poetry to conjure with; it is itself poetry of a high and epic tone, and may be said to move the English heart 'more than the sound of a trumpet,' as Sidney tells us his was moved whenever he heard the rude old ballad in which it is celebrated; but when Canning, or whoever else it was, in the *Anti-Jacobin* audaciously came out with—

'Duke Smithson of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,'

he set the town in a roar." The case is neatly made out, and the writer then investigates the etymology of the name of Percy. The popular version is, that a Scottish king, the great Malcolm Canmore, was slain in the latter part of the eleventh century whilst assaulting the castle of

Alnwick, whose lord ran his spear into the monarch's eye, and thence derived the surname of Pierce-eye. This is so pretty and romantic a derivation that one is loath to relinquish it, but unfortunately the Percys were Percys fully two centuries before Malcolm's death. Geoffrey, son of Mainfred the Danish chieftain, accompanied Rollo in his invasion of France, and became lord of the town of *Percy* or *Persy*, in Lower Normandy, and this became his *sur*-name—originally *sieur*-name or lord-name—an appellation derived from territorial property. Two of the *de Percys*, fifth in descent from Geoffrey, followed William the Conqueror to England, where the elder of them became one of the greatest lords in the country. "About a hundred and twenty lordships in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and other parts, are set down in Domesday Book as his property. He was, of course, a baron of the realm. His family name being probably reserved for occasions of form and ceremony, he was familiarly known in his own day as *Guillaume al gernons*—that is, Will with the Whiskers—which puts us in possession of at least one point in the personal appearance of this founder of the English house of Percy. Hence *Algernon* became a common baptismal name among his descendants.... Will with the Whiskers must have been a good fellow, if it be true, as we are told by an old writer, that his wife, Emma de Port, was the Saxon heiress of some of the lands bestowed upon him by the Conqueror, and that 'he wedded her in discharging of his conscience.'" We here observe a variance between Mr Craik and Mr Bernard Burke, who devotes more than one chapter to anecdotes of the house of Percy, which he states to have enjoyed an uninterrupted male descent from the date of the Conquest to the death of Jocelyn Percy, the eleventh earl, in 1670. Mr Craik, on the other hand, whilst noticing that the line has thrice ended in a female, and been revived through the marriage of the heiress, fixes the date of the first of these extinctions and revivals in 1168, or rather later, about a century after the Conquest, when the death, without male heirs, of the third Lord Percy, left the wealth and honours of the house to his two daughters. Maud, the eldest, died without issue; Agnes, the younger, married Jocelyn of Loraine, whose house was one of the most illustrious in Europe, boasting relationship with the dukes of Hainault, and collateral descent from the emperor Charlemagne, but whom she took for her husband only on condition of his assuming her ancestral name. Mr Craik gives Collins' *Peerage* as his authority; Mr Burke would probably refer us to his own: but we do not feel enough interest in the subject to attempt to decide where doctors of this eminence differ. Amongst his celebrated "Peerage Causes," Mr Burke gives some curious particulars of the claim made by a Dublin trunkmaker to the titles and estates of the Percys, on the extinction of the male line in 1670. This man, whether the blood of the Percys flowed in his veins or not, showed no small share of the pluck and boldness for which that family was so long distinguished, by upholding his pretensions for fifteen years—at first against the dowager Countess of Northumberland, and afterwards against the proud and powerful Duke of Somerset, who had married the heiress, Lady Elizabeth Percy. When it is remembered that this occurred in the reign of Charles II., whose tribunals were not renowned for their equity, (and when a long purse was often better than the clearest right,) and that the influence and position of the countess and duke gave them incalculable advantages, it may be thought that the box-builder from Ireland was almost as bold a man as the Hotspur he claimed for an ancestor. He got hard measure from the House of Lords, and was rebuked for presuming to trouble it. He tried the courts of law, suing persons for scandal who had stated him to be an impostor—an indirect way of establishing his descent. After one of these trials, Lord Hailes, dissatisfied with the decision of the court, which was unfavourable to the plaintiff, is stated to have said to Lord Shaftesbury, when entering his coach—"I verily believe he (James Percy) hath as much right to the earldom of Northumberland as I have to this coach and horses, which I have bought and paid for." In the reign of James II., Percy again petitioned the Lords, but ineffectually. His final effort was in the first year of William and Mary, when his petition was read and referred to a Committee of Privileges, whose report declared him insolent; and ultimately he was condemned to be brought "before the four courts in Westminster Hall, wearing a paper upon his breast, on which these words shall be written: THE FALSE AND IMPUDENT PRETENDER TO THE EARLDOM OF NORTHUMBERLAND." This was accordingly done, and, thus disgraced and branded as a cheat, the unfortunate trunkmaker was heard of no more.

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Connected with the early years of the heiress whose rights were thus disputed, are some singularly romantic incidents, of which a long account is given by both Burkes. Before the Lady Elizabeth Percy attained the age of sixteen, she was thrice a wife, and twice a widow. She was not yet thirteen when the ceremony of marriage was performed between her and the Earl of Ogle, a boy of the same age, who died within the year, leaving the heiress of Northumberland to be competed for by new suitors. Amongst these was Thomas Thynne, Esq., of Longleat in Wiltshire, known, from his great wealth, as Tom of Ten Thousand, member of parliament for his county, a man of weight in the country, and living in a style of great magnificence. He had been an intimate friend of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., but, having quarrelled with that prince, he turned Whig, and courted the Duke of Monmouth, who frequently visited him at his sumptuous mansion of Longleat, and to whom he made a present of a team of Oldenburg carriage—horses of remarkable beauty. Thynne was soon the accepted suitor of Lady Elizabeth Percy, and they were married in 1681, but separated immediately after the ceremony on account of the youth of the bride, who went abroad for a tour on the Continent.

> "It was then, as some say, that she first met Count Konigsmark at the court of Hanover; but in this notion there is a confusion both of dates and persons. The count, in fact, appears to have seen her in England, and to have paid his addresses to her before she gave her hand, or had it given for her, to Thynne. On his rejection, he left the country; but that they met on the Continent there is no evidence or likelihood. Charles John von Konigsmark was a Swede by birth, but was sprung from a German family, long settled in the district called the Mark of Brandenburg, on the coast of the Baltic. The

name of Konigsmark is one of the most distinguished in the military annals of Sweden throughout a great part of the seventeenth century."—(*Celebrated Trials*, p. 41.)

Count Charles John did honour, at a very early age, to the warlike reputation of his family, upon whose scutcheon he was subsequently to cast the shadow of a foul suspicion. When eighteen years old, he greatly distinguished himself in a cruise against the Turks, undertaken in company with the Knights of Malta. Early in 1681, he returned to England, and the probabilities are that it was then, during Lady Elizabeth's widowhood, that he became an aspirant for her hand. Her second marriage apparently destroyed the chance of the desperate Swede, but without extinguishing his hopes. In the month of February 1682, the position of the three personages of the drama was as follows: Lady Elizabeth, or Lady Ogle, as she was styled, was abroad; Konigsmark had been lost sight of, having gone none knew whither; Tom Thynne, with the heiress of Northumberland his own by legal title, if not in actual possession, was at the zenith of his personal and political prosperity. His friend Monmouth was the idol of the mob, the Duke of York had gone to Scotland to avoid the storm raised by the absurd popish plot, and by the murder of Sir Emondbury Godfrey; Shaftesbury had been released from the Tower, amidst acclamations and illuminations: party-spirit, in short, ran so high, and Thynne was so prominent a figure at the moment, that the crime to which he presently fell a victim has been thought by many to have been instigated by political enemies, at least as much as by a disappointed rival for the hand of the heiress of the Percys. Be that as it may, (and at this distance of time it were a hopeless undertaking to elucidate a deed which the tribunals and annalists of the day failed to clear up,) "on the night of Sunday, 12th February 1682, all the court end of London was startled by the news that Thynne had been shot passing along the public streets in his coach. The spot was 472
towards the eastern extremity of Pall-Mall, directly opposite to St Alban's Street,—no longer to be found, but which occupied nearly the same site with the covered passage now called the Opera Arcade. St Alban's Place, which was at its northern extremity, still preserves the memory of the old name. King Charles, at Whitehall, might almost have heard the report of the assassin's blunderbuss; and so might Dryden, sitting in his favourite front-room on the ground-floor of his house, on the south side of Gerrard Street, also hard by, more than a couple of furlongs distant." Sir John Reresby, the magistrate and memoir-writer, took an active share in the arrests and examinations that followed, and gives the details of the affair. He was at court that evening, and declares the king to have been greatly shocked at news of the murder—"not only for horror of the action itself, (which was shocking to his natural disposition,) but also for fear of the turn the anti-court party might give thereto." Three persons were arrested—a Pole, a German, and a Swedish lieutenant; and Borosky, the Pole, declared that he came to England by the desire of Count Konigsmark, signified to him through his Hamburg agent, and that on his arrival the count informed him what he had to do, supplied him with weapons, and put him under the orders of a German captain, by whose command he fired into Mr Thynne's carriage. The murderers were determined their enterprise should not miscarry for want of arms, and got together an arsenal. "There were a blunderbuss, two swords, two pair of pistols, three pocket-pistols, &c., tied up together in a sort of sea-bed, and delivered to Dr Dubartin, a German doctor, who received them at his own house." Active search was made for Konigsmark, who had arrived in England *incognito* some days before the murder, and after a while he was discovered in hiding at Gravesend. The Duke of Monmouth and Lord Cavendish were particularly active in the affair, and a reward of £200 was offered for the count's apprehension. He was carried before the king. "I happened," says Reresby, "to be present upon this occasion, and observed that he appeared before his majesty with all the assurance imaginable. He was a fine person of a man, and I think his hair was the longest I ever saw." Nothing was elicited at this examination, which was very superficial, but on the 27th February the four accused persons were put on their trial at Hick's Hall. Konigsmark was acquitted for want of evidence (that of his three accomplices and servants not being receivable against him,) and by reason also, says Mr Peter Burke, of the more than ordinarily artful and favourable summing up of Chief-Justice Pemberton, who seemed determined to save him. The others were hanged in Pall-Mall, and Borosky, who fired the blunderbuss, was suspended in chains at Mile End. Although Konigsmark slipped through the fingers of justice, the moral conviction of his guilt was so strong, and the popular feeling so violent against him, that he was glad to leave England in all haste. "The high-spirited Lord Cavendish," says Mr Bernard Burke, "the friend and companion of the murdered Thynne, indignant at what he deemed a shameful evasion of justice, offered to meet Konigsmark in any part of the world, charge the guilt of blood upon him, and prove it with his sword. Granger records that the challenge was accepted, and that the parties agreed to fight on the sands of Calais, but before the appointed time arrived, Konigsmark declined the encounter." Such backwardness is rather inconsistent with the count's high reputation for bravery—somewhat inexplicable in the leader of the Maltese boarders, and in the man who subsequently greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Cambray and Gerona, at Navarin and Modon, and at the battle of Argoo, where he was either killed in fight, or died of a pleurisy brought on by over-exertion. On this last point authorities differ. It is not improbable, however, notwithstanding his approved valour, that conscience may have made a coward of him in the instance referred to by Granger, and that the man who never flinched before the Turk's scimitar or the Spaniard's toledo, may have shunned crossing his sword with the vengeful blade of Cavendish. 473

If, as may be supposed, it was Konigsmark's intention, by the assassination of Mr Thynne, to clear the way for his own pretensions to the hand of Lady Elizabeth, that part of his scheme was frustrated by the discovery of his complicity in the crime. There could be no hope of a renewal of the favour with which the lady has been said to have regarded the handsome Swede previously to her contract with Thynne—the work apparently of her restless matchmaking grandmother and

guardian, rather than the result of any inclination of her own. Twice married, and still a maid, the Lady Ogle returned to England, immediately after the execution of her second husband's murderers, and soon (only two months afterward, we are told) she was led to the altar, for the third time, by Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, commonly known as the Proud Duke of Somerset, by reason of his inordinate arrogance and self-esteem. He outlived her, and married Lady Charlotte Finch, daughter of the Earl of Winchelsea. "Madam," he is reported to have said, with infinite indignation, to this lady, when she once ventured to tap him familiarly on the shoulder with her fan—"Madam, my first wife was a Percy, and she never would have dared to take such liberty." The Proud Duke, who not infrequently made himself a laughingstock by his fantastical assumption, attended the funerals of three sovereigns, and the coronation of five. On all such state occasions the precedence was his, the first peer of the realm (Duke of Norfolk) being a Roman Catholic. His only surviving son, out of seven borne him by his first duchess, left but one daughter, married to Sir Hugh Smithson, to whom the earldom of Northumberland descended, and who, in 1776, became the first duke of Northumberland.

Opposite the title-page of Mr Craik's second volume smiles the sweet face of Mary Tudor, the daughter, sister, and widow of kings, the wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, the grandmother of the hapless Lady Jane Grey. No English princess, so little remarkable for high mental qualities, occupies so conspicuous a place in our annals. Her life was a romance; and the portion of it passed in France, as the bride of the infirm Louis XII., has been more than once availed of by the novelist. But the truth is here far too picturesque for embellishment. The utmost efforts of fiction could scarcely enhance singularity of the chain of circumstances entwined with Mary's girlhood, in the course of which she was near becoming an empress, as she afterwards became Queen. In January 1506 Mary was eight years old, Philip, Archduke of Austria, and, in right of his wife, King of Castile, was compelled by stress of weather to put in at Falmouth, during a voyage from the Netherlands to Spain, whereupon Henry VII. detained him at his court, and would not let him go, till he had extorted his consent to a marriage between the infant princess and Prince Charles of Castile, afterwards the Emperor Charles V. Philip died in the autumn of the same year, but the marriage was not the less solemnised by proxy in London early in 1508, to the great contentment of Henry, to whose felicity, Bacon says, there was then nothing to be added. "Nevertheless, the marriage of Mary of England with the Spanish prince, though it had gone so far, went no farther; nor does her father seem to have counted upon the arrangement being carried out with absolute reliance. When he died, in 1509 he was found to have directed in his will that the sum of £50,000 should bestowed as a dower with Mary, whenever she should be married either to Charles, King of Castile, or to any other foreign prince. In October 1513, after the capture of Tournay by Henry VIII., it was stipulated by a new treaty, concluded at Lisle, between him and Maximilian Emperor of Austria, that Charles should marry the Princess Mary at Calais before the 15th May next." The match, however, hung fire on the part of the Austrian, who had been tempted by the offer for his grandson of the French princess Renée, and although nothing came of this project, it enabled the King of France to connect himself as closely with the royal family of England, as he had been desirous of doing with that of Castile, but in another manner. His queen, Anne of Bretagne, died just about that time, and a few months afterwards the decrepid valetudinarian of fifty-three proposed marriage with the blooming sister of Henry VIII., then in her seventeenth year. Mary, attaching apparently little importance to the contract with the Prince of Castile, had fixed her affections on the handsome and chivalrous Charles Brandon, her brother's favourite, and the best lance of his day.



"Le premier des rois fut un soldat heureux,"

says the French ballad; and Brandon, whose pedigree was a blank previously to his father's father, may be said to have had almost equal fortune. For if not a king himself, he was a queen's husband, and a king's brother-in-law. He must have been some years older than Mary, for he had already been twice married, and had been talked of as the proposed husband of various illustrious ladies, and amongst others, of the Archduchess Margaret of Austria, whose heart he is said to have won by his prowess in a tournament. At last Mary Tudor cast her eyes upon him, apparently with the full approval of her brother, whose most intimate friend Brandon long had been, and who now created him Duke of Suffolk, in anticipation of his marriage with his sister. Just then came Louis XII.'s offer. "The temptation of seeing his sister queen of France," says Mr Craik, "was not to be resisted by Henry; and the prospect of such an elevation may not perhaps have been without its seductions for the princess herself:" an illiberal supposition, refuted, if there be aught in physiognomy, by Mr Craik's own artist. The owner of those frank, fair features can never have preferred ambition to love, a decrepid French king to a gallant English duke. She consented, however, to the alliance; and if there were tears and overruling in the matter, they are certainly not upon the record. Old Louis—who, although not much past what is generally the full vigour of life, had already a foot in the grave—had planned the marriage as a matter of policy, but soon became exceedingly excited by the accounts he got of Mary's great beauty. A letter from the Earl of Worcester, sent to Paris as her proxy at the ceremony of marriage, to Cardinal Wolsey, exhibits the French monarch in a fever of expectation, "devising new collars and goodly gear" for his bride. "He showed me," says the earl, "the goodliest and the richest sight of jewels that ever I saw. I assure you, all that I ever have seen is not to compare to fifty-six great pieces that I saw of diamonds and rubies, and seven of the greatest pearls that I have seen, besides a great number of other goodly diamonds, rubies, balais, and great pearls; and the worst of the second sort of stones to be priced, and cost two thousand ducats. There is ten or twelve of the principal stones that there hath been refused for one of them one hundred thousand ducats." It seemed as if Louis, diffident of his own powers of captivation, had resolved to buy his wife's

affection with trinkets; and Lord Worcester, duly appreciating the glittering store, and overrating, perhaps, its power of conferring happiness, doubts not "but she will have a good life with him, with the grace of God." The respectable and uxorious old sovereign was too wise to hand over the entire treasure at once, and planned, as he told Worcester, to have "at many and divers times kisses and thanks for them." He accordingly doled them out in daily morsels, which, although minute enough when compared with the coffers' full of which Lord Worcester speaks, were yet sufficiently considerable to satisfy an ordinary appetite. On the day of their marriage, which took place at Abbéville, he gave her "a marvellous great pointed diamond, with a ruby almost two inches long, without fail." And the following day he bestowed upon her "a ruby two inches and a half long, and as big as a man's finger, hanging by two chains of gold at every end, without any foil; the value whereof few men could esteem." At the same time he packed off her English attendants, which at first greatly discomposed her, but after a time she appears to have become reconciled to it, when a new cause of embarrassment arose in the arrival at Paris of the Duke of Suffolk in the character of English ambassador. "The attachment understood to have so recently existed between her majesty and Suffolk was of course well-known in France. The story of the English chroniclers is, that Suffolk was on this account regarded with general jealousy and 475
dislike by the French; and the Duke of Bretagne, in particular, is charged with having actually sought his life."—(*Romance of the Peerage*, vol. ii. p. 245.) The Duke of Bretagne, also called the Dauphin, was son-in-law of Louis, and afterwards Francis I. One feels unwilling to credit the imputation cast on so chivalrous a king. Mr Burke generalises the matter, making no mention of Francis, and attributing the foul play to "the French, envious of the success of Brandon." But Mr Burke, who will gossip by the hour about an apocryphal legend, huddles over the romantic career of Charles Brandon in half-a-dozen pages, and can hardly be looked upon as a serious authority. The alleged unfair attempt on Suffolk's life occurred on the occasion of a tournament, which began at Paris, on Sunday 12th November, "before the king and queen, who were on a goodly stage; and the queen stood so that all men might see her, and wondered at her beauty, and the king was feeble, and lay upon a couch for weakness." In this tourney, the Duke of Suffolk and Marquis of Dorset and other Englishmen bore a gallant part, doing, says a chronicler, "as well as the best of any other." And a trifle better, too, judging from results; but old Hall, in his quaintness, is a friend to anything but exaggeration. And Suffolk himself, in a letter to Wolsey, after the tournament, merely says, with praiseworthy modesty, "blessed be God, all our Englishmen sped well, as I am sure ye shall hear by other." He himself was the hero of the jousts. It was no bloodless contest, with bated weapons, but a right stern encounter, with sharp spears. "Divers," says the cool chronicler, in a parenthesis, "were slain, and not spoken of." The felony charged on Francis was, that on the second day of the tourney, when he himself, by reason of a hurt in the hand, was compelled to leave the lists, he "secretly had a certain German, who was the tallest and strongest man in all the court of France, brought and put in the place of another person, in the hope of giving Suffolk a check." The bulky champion met his match, and more. After several fierce encounters, "Suffolk, by pure strength, took his antagonist round the neck, and pummelled him so about the head that the blood issued out of his nose." This "coventry" practice, then adopted, we believe, for the first time, settled the German, who was conveyed away in lamentable plight—by the dauphin, Hall affirms, and secretly, lest he should be known. The supposed motive of Francis, in seeking Suffolk's life, was his passion for his father-in-law's bride, which Brantome and other French writers have asserted to have been reciprocated by Mary—a base lying statement, there can be little doubt. There is every reason to believe the French queen's conduct to have been irreproachable. At any rate, her husband found no fault with her, declaring, on the contrary, in a letter to Harry the Eighth, how greatly pleased and contented he was with her, and lauding at the same time, in the highest terms, his excellent cousin of Suffolk. Four days after writing this letter, and twelve weeks after his marriage, Louis, who was much troubled with gout, and who, for the sake of his young queen, had completely changed his habits, dining at the extravagantly late hour of noon, and remaining out of bed sometimes until nearly midnight, departed this life. Upon which event Mr Craik strikes another splinter out of the romantic lens through which we have always loved to contemplate Mary Tudor, by insinuating she may have been not quite pleased to lose the dazzling position of queen-consort of France; and that it would have been equally satisfactory to her if Suffolk and Louis had lingered a little longer—the one in the pangs of disappointed love, the other in those of the gout. But if a diadem had such charms for Mary, that of Spain was at her command, by Mr Craik's own confession. "Both the Emperor Maximilian and Ferdinand of Spain would now have been glad to secure her hand for her old suitor the Prince of Castile." Now, as ever, her behaviour was correct, proving both good sense and good feeling. She remained several weeks in Paris without giving the least indication of an intention to marry again, although Wolsey had no sooner heard of 476
her being a widow than he wrote to her on the subject of a second union. Of course, nobody expected she would allow the usual term of mourning to expire before bestowing her hand on Suffolk, for their mutual and long-standing attachment was well known. Exactly three months after the death of Louis, they were privately married. At the last moment Suffolk hesitated, through fear of offending Henry VIII.; and although Francis himself advised him to marry the queen, he still demurred, with a degree of irresolution hardly to have been expected in one of his adventurous character, until Mary herself took energetic measures, giving him four days, and no more, to make up his mind. Thus urged, he ran the risk, and had no cause to repent. Henry was easily reconciled to the marriage, which he had doubtless foreseen as inevitable; and Mary, the French queen, as she continued to sign herself, was happy with the husband of her choice until her early death at the age of thirty-five.

The nobility of Great Britain need no advocate to vaunt their virtues and exalt their fame. Ever foremost in the field and at the council-board, they long since achieved, and still maintain, the

first place amongst the world's aristocracy. Their illustrious deeds are blazoned upon the page of history. Ready alike with purse and blade, they have never flinched from shedding their blood and expending their treasure in the cause of loyalty and patriotism. Measure them with the nobility of other countries, and they gain in grandeur by the comparison. Whilst in nearly every other European land the aristocracy is fallen, as in France, by its vices and heartlessness; degenerate and incapable, as in Spain; or, as in Russia, but lately emerged from barbarism, and with its reputation yet to make, the nobles of Great Britain proudly maintain their eminent position, not by factitious advantages alone, but because none more than they deserve it—because they are not more conspicuous for high rank and illustrious descent, than for dignified conduct and distinguished talents. We have heard of self-styled liberals scowling down from the gallery of the House of Lords upon the distinguished assembly, and with an envious grimace pledging their utmost exertions to its extinction. Fortunately the renown of such gentlemen is not equal to their spite, or the British constitution, there can be little doubt, would soon be abrogated in favour of some hopeful scheme, coined in a Brummagem mint. Fortunately there is still enough right feeling and good sense in the country to guard our institutions against Manchester machinations.

Accustomed as we have been of late years to meet all manner of radicalism and mischievous trash, in the disguise of polite literature, in weekly parts and monthly numbers, in half-guinea volumes and twopenny tracts, tricked out, gilt, and illustrated, just as a cunning quack coats his destructive pills in a morsel of shining tinsel, we took up Mr Peter Burke's book with a slight mistrust, which did not, however, survive the perusal of his preface. Therein he disclaims all intention of depreciating the character of the British aristocracy. Had such been his view, he says, it had been signally defeated by the statistics contained in his book, which proves to be a most triumphant vindication of the class referred to. "The volume embraces a period of three hundred years, and during the whole of that time we find but three peers convicted of murder: the very charge against them, if we except Lord Ferrers' crime—the act of a madman—and some cases of duelling, is unknown for more than two hundred years back. Moreover, setting aside these murders, and also the night-broils peculiar to the beginning of the last century, the aristocratic classes of society have scarcely a single instance on record against them of a base or degrading nature, beyond the misdemeanour of Lord Grey of Werke, and the misdeeds of two baronets.... The judgments pronounced against them are the judgments, not of felony, but of treason. Crimes they may have committed, but they are almost invariably the crimes, not of villany, but of misapplied honour and misguided devotion." Mr Burke steers clear of politics, and limits his investigations to the offences against society. The first trial he records took place in 1541—the last occurred in 1846. Besides treasonable offences, he has excluded such cases as  could not be given, even in outline, without manifest offence to his reader's delicacy. With these exceptions, he intimates that he has noticed all the trials connected with the aristocracy that have occurred during the last three centuries. We cannot contradict him, without more minute reference to authorities than we at this moment have opportunity to make; but we thought the criminal records of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been richer in this respect; and indeed his brother Bernard's book of anecdotes reminds us of two or three cases—that of the Countess of Strathmore, and of Mure of Auchindrane—which, it seems to us, would have been in their place in his collection. The trials given by Mr Peter Burke are thirty-three in number, and it is not uninteresting to sort them according to the offences. In many instances, it is to be observed, the members of the aristocracy concerned were sinned against, not sinning, as in the murder of Lord William Russell, the singular attempt to extort money from the second Duke of Marlborough, the recent action for breach of promise against Earl Ferrers. There are nine cases of murder, most of them of ancient date; five duel cases, beginning with Lord Mohun and terminating with the Earl of Cardigan; two trials for bigamy, (Beau Fielding and the Duchess of Kingston;) two parricides, and sundry brawls. First in the list is the trial of Sir Edmond Kneves, knight, of Norfolk, arraigned before the king's justices "for striking of one Master Clerc, of Norfolk, servant with the Earle of Surrey, within the king's house in the Tenice-court." Sir Edmond was found guilty, and condemned to lose his right hand. In cases of decapitation, a headsman and his aid, or two aids at most, have generally been found sufficient. The cutting off of a hand involved much more ceremony, and a far greater staff of officials. A curious list is given, from the state trials, of the persons in attendance to assist in Sir Edmond's mutilation. "First, the serjeant chirurgion, with his instruments appertaining to his office; the serjeant of the woodyard, with the mallet and a blocke, whereupon the hand should lie; the master cooke for the king, with the knife; the serjeant of the larder, to set the knife right on the joynt; the serjeant farrier, with his searing-yrons to seare the veines; the serjeant of the poultry, with a cocke, which cocke should have his head smitten off upon the same blocke, and with the same knife; the yeoman of the chandry, with seare-clothes; the yeomen of the scullery, with a pan of fire to heat the yrons, a chafer of water to cool the ends of the yrons, and two fourmes for all officers to set their stuffe on; the serjeant of the seller, with wine, ale, and beere; the yeoman of the ewry, in the serjeant's steed, who was absent, with bason, ewre, and towels." A dozen persons or more to assist at poor Sir Edmond's *manumission*. Everybody remembers Sir Mungo Malagrowther's charitable visit to Lord Glenvarloch, when he had incurred a like penalty, and his description of the "pretty pageant" when one Tubbs or Stubbes lost his right hand for a "pasquinadoe" on Queen Elizabeth. Sir Edmond Kneves was more fortunate. When condemned, he prayed that the king, (Henry VIII.,) "of his benigne grace, would pardon him of his right hand, and take the left; for, (quoth he,) if my right hand be spared, I may hereafter doe such good service to his grace, as shall please him to appoint." A request which his majesty, "considering the gentle heart of the said Edmond, and the good report of lords and ladies," was graciously pleased to meet with a free pardon. Sir Edmond was a man of high rank and consideration, and his descendants obtained a

peerage and a baronetcy, both now extinct.

Fifteen years later, under the reign of Queen Mary, happened the trial and execution of Lord Stourton and four of his servants, for the murder of William and John Hartgill. The motive was a private grudge. Lord Stourton was a zealous Catholic, and great interest was made with Mary to save his life, but in vain: she would only grant him the favour to be hung with a silken rope. Next comes "The great case of the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury," concerning which much has been written; and then the investigation of a base and disgraceful conspiracy got up by Sir John 478
Croke of Chilton, Baronet, to accuse the Reverend Robert Hawkins of felony. We pass on to the case of Lord Mohun—twice tried for homicide, and finally slain in a duel, in which his antagonist also perished. Cases of brawling—not the offence to which the word is now generally applied, and of which Doctors' Commons takes cognisance, but bloody brawls, with sword-thrusts and mortal wounds—were of frequent occurrence towards the close of the seventeenth century, and several of the more important trials they gave rise to are related by Mr Peter Burke. Lord Mohun was one of the most turbulent spirits of a period when gentlemen carried swords, frequented taverns, drank deep, and swore high, and when a fray, with bare steel and bloodshed, was as common an occurrence in London streets as is now the detection of a pickpocket or the breaking-down of a hackney cab; when hot-headed young men—the worthy descendants of the Wildrakes of a previous reign—met on tavern stairs, primed with good liquor, quarrelled about nothing, rushed into the street, and slew each other incontinently. After this fashion did Sir Charles Pym of Brymmore, Somersetshire, lose his life, after a dinner at the Swan, upon Fish Street Hill; his decease extinguishing the baronetcy, and terminating the male line of an ancient and honourable house. The cause of quarrel was trivial in the extreme—a very dog's quarrel, it may be called, for the whole ground of dispute was a plate of meat. However fashionable a house of entertainment the Swan upon Fish Street Hill may in those days have been deemed, its larder seems to have been conducted upon a most economical scale; for on the trial, a Mr Mirriday deposed that, upon going there to dine in company with Sir Charles and other gentlemen, and asking for meat, they were told they might have fish, but there was no meat save what was bespoke by Mr Rowland Walters, a person of station and family, who was dining with some friends in another room. The evidence on this trial, which is given at length, is curious as a quaint illustration of the manners of the time. "He desired him (the tavern-keeper) to help us to a plate of it, if it might be got, which we had brought up stairs: after dinner we drank the gentlemen's health that sent it, and returned them thanks for it. A little while after, Sir Thomas Middleton went away, and about an hour after that, or thereabouts, Sir Charles Pym and the rest of us came down to go away; and when we were in the entry, Mr Cave met us, and asked Sir Charles how he liked the beef that was sent up—who answered, we did not know you sent it, for we have paid for it: then the boy that kept the bar told us that he did not reckon it in the bill; upon which Mr Cave seemed to take it ill; but, my lord, I cannot be positive whether Mr Bradshaw and Mr Palms were at any words. Then I took Mr Cave to one side into the entry, and he thought that I had a mind to fight him, but I did what I could to make an end of the quarrel. [Upon which the court highly commended. Mr Mirriday.]" The quarrel continued, however, and Sir Charles Pym was run through the body by Mr Walters, "and fell down crinkling (writhing) immediately," deposed a Mr Fletcher, who saw the fight. It was urged in extenuation, that Sir Charles had previously run Walters eight inches into the thigh. "'Pray, my lord,' said Walters, 'let Sir Charles' sword be seen, all blood.' [But that gave no satisfaction on either side.]" So much malice was shown, that the jury would fain have returned a verdict of wilful murder; but Justice Allibone overruled their wish, and laid down the law, and they brought it in manslaughter. The sentence is not given; but such offences were then very leniently looked upon, and it is not likely to have been severe. Lord Mohun's two trials were of a different nature from this one; for in the first—for the murder of Mountford, the actor, which has been often told, and which arose out of an attempt to carry off Congreve's friend, Mrs Bracegirdle, the beautiful actress—the blow was struck by Captain Hill, who escaped, and Mohun was indicted for aiding and abetting. "My Lord Mohun," the murdered man deposed, "offered me no violence; but while I was talking with my Lord Mohun, Hill struck me with his left hand, and 479
with his right hand ran me through before I could put my hand to my sword." Not only in street squabbles, but in encounters of a more regular character, foul play appears to have been not unfrequent. There was strong suspicion of it in the duel in which Lord Mohun met his death. After he had received his mortal wound, his second, Major-General Macartney, is said to have basely stabbed the Duke of Hamilton, already grievously hurt. Colonel Hamilton, the Duke's second, "declared upon oath, before the Privy Council, that when the principals engaged, he and Macartney followed their example; that Macartney was immediately disarmed; but the colonel, seeing the duke fall upon his antagonist, threw away the swords, and ran to lift him up; that while he was employed in raising the Duke, Macartney, having taken up one of the swords, stabbed his grace over Hamilton's shoulder, and retired immediately." This was one of the accounts given of the affair. "According to some," says the author of *Anecdotes of the Aristocracy*, "Lord Mohun shortened his sword, and stabbed the wounded man to the heart while leaning on his shoulder, and unable to stand without support; others said that a servant of Lord Mohun's played the part attributed by the more credible accounts to Macartney." Some years later, Macartney stood his trial at the King's Bench; and as the jury found him guilty only of manslaughter, it is presumable they discredited Colonel Hamilton's evidence. The truth is now difficult to be ascertained, for the whole affair is mixed up with the fierce party-politics of the time. The Whigs are said to have instigated Mohun, "who had long laboured under the repute of being at once the tool and bully of the party," to provoke the duke, and force him into a quarrel. Mohun primed himself with wine, and took a public opportunity of insulting his grace, in order to make him the challenger: then, as the duke seemed disposed to stand upon his own high character, and treat the disreputable brawler with contempt, Mohun sent him a cartel by the

hands of the above-named Macartney, a fire-eater and scamp of his own kidney. The motive of Whig hatred of the duke was his recent appointment as ambassador extraordinary to the court of France, and their fear that he would favour the Pretender. During Macartney's absence in Holland, £800 were offered for his apprehension—£500 by the government of the day, and £300 by the Duchess of Hamilton; and Swift tells an anecdote of a gentleman who, being attacked by highwaymen, told them he was Macartney, "upon which they brought him to a justice of peace in hopes of a reward, and the rogues were sent to gaol."

But the most wanton and persevering brawler of that quarrelsome period was no less a person than Philip, seventh Earl of Pembroke, and fourth of Montgomery. Head-breaking and rib-piercing were his daily diversions: for in those days, when all gentlemen wore swords, the superabundant pugnacity of bloods about town did not exhale itself on such easy terms as in the present pacific age. Now, the utmost excesses of "fast" youths—whether right honourables or linen-shopmen—when, after a superabundance of claret or gin twist, a supper at an opera-dancer's, or a Newgate song at a night-tavern, they patrol the streets, on rollicking intent, never exceed a "round" with a cabman, the abstraction of a few knockers, or a "mill" with the police; and are sufficiently expiated by a night in the station-house, and a lecture and fine from Mr Jardine the next morning. But with the Pembrokes, and Mohuns, and Walters, when the liquor got uppermost, it was out bilbo directly, and a thrust at their neighbours' vitals. And, doubtless, the lenity of the judges encouraged such rapier-practice; for unless malice aforethought was proved beyond possibility of a doubt, the summing-up was usually very merciful for the prisoner, as in the trial of Walters for Sir Charles Pym's death, when Mr Baron Jenner told the jury that "he rather thought there was a little heat of wine amongst them," (the evidence said that nine or ten bottles had been drunk amongst six of them, which, in the case of seasoned topers, as they doubtless were, might hardly be considered an exculpatory dose;) "and this whole action was carried on by nothing else but by a hot and sudden frolic; and he was very sorry that it should fall upon such a worthy gentleman." Between merciful judges and privilege of peerage, Lord Pembroke got scot-free, or nearly so, out of various scrapes which would have been very serious matters a century and a half later. The first note taken of his eccentricities is an entry in the Lords' journals, dated the 28th January 1678, recording that the house was that day informed by the Lord Chancellor, in the name of his majesty, of "the commitment of the Earl of Pembroke to the Tower of London, for uttering such horrid and blasphemous words, and other actions proved upon oath, as are not fit to be repeated in any Christian assembly." After four weeks' imprisonment, his lordship was set free upon his humble petition, in which he asked pardon of God, the King, and the House of Peers, and declared his health "much impaired by the long restraint." His convalescence was rather boisterous, for exactly one week after his release, a complaint was made to the house by Philip Rycaut, Esq., to the effect that, on the evening of the preceding Saturday, "he being to visit a friend in the Strand, whilst he was at the door taking his leave, the Earl of Pembroke, coming by, came up to the door, and with his fist, without any provocation, struck the said Philip Rycaut such a blow upon the eye as almost knocked it out; and afterwards knocked him down, and then fell upon him with such violence that he almost stifled him with his gripes, in the dirt; and likewise his lordship drew his sword, and was in danger of killing him, had he not slipped into the house, and the door been shut upon him." One cannot but admire the sort of ascending scale observable in this assault. The considerate Pembroke evidently shunned proceeding at once to extreme measures; so he first knocked the man's eye out, then punched his head, then tried a little gentle strangulation, and finally drew his sword to put the poor wretch out of his misery. A mere assault and battery, however, was quite insufficient to dispel the steam accumulated during the month passed in the Tower. Twenty-four hours after the attack on Rycaut, and before that ill-used person had time to lodge his complaint, the furious earl had got involved in an affair of a much more serious nature, for which he was brought to trial before the Peers, in Westminster Hall. The Lord High Steward appointed on the occasion was the Lord Chancellor, Lord Finch, afterwards Earl of Nottingham, for whose address to the prisoner we would gladly make room here, for it is a masterpiece, of terse and dignified eloquence, and one of the most striking pages of Mr Peter Burke's compilation. The crime imputed to Lord Pembroke was the murder of one Nathaniel Cony, by striking, kicking, and stamping upon him; and the evidence for the prosecution was so strong that a verdict of guilty was inevitable. But it was brought in manslaughter, not murder; and the earl, claiming his privilege of peerage, was discharged. It is difficult to say what was considered murder at that time; nothing, apparently, short of homicide committed fasting, and after long and clearly established premeditation. A decanter of wine on the table, or the exchange of a few angry words, reduced the capital crime to a slight offence, got over by privilege of peerage or benefit of clergy. The death of Cony was the result of most brutal and unprovoked ill-treatment. "It was on Sunday the 3d of February," said the Attorney-General, Sir William Jones, in his quaint but able address to the peers, "that my Lord of Pembroke and his company were drinking at the house of one Long, in the Haymarket, (I am sorry to hear the day was no better employed by them,) and it was the misfortune of this poor gentleman, together with one Mr Goring, to come into this house to drink a bottle of wine." The said Goring was one of the chief witnesses for the prosecution, but his evidence was not very clear, for he had been excessively drunk at the time of the scuffle, and indeed poor Cony seems to have been the same; and it was his maudlin anxiety to see his friend home, and to take a parting-glass at Long's, "which it *seems*," said Goring, "was on the way," (he, the said Goring, being anything but confident of what had been *on* or *off* the way on the night in question)—that brought him into the dangerous society of Lord Pembroke. Goring got into dispute with the earl, received a glass of wine in his face, had his sword broken, lost his hat and periwig, and was hustled out of the room. "Whilst I was thrusting him out of doors," deponed Mr Richard Savage, one of Lord Pembroke's companions, "I saw my Lord of Pembroke strike Cony

with his right hand, who immediately fell down, and then gave him a kick; and so upon that, finding him not stir, I took Mr Cony, being on the ground, (I and my lord together, for I was not strong enough to do it myself,) and laid him on the chairs, and covered him up warm, and so left him." The tender attention of covering him up warm, did not suffice to save the life of Cony, who had evidently, from his account and that of the medical men, received a vast deal more ill-usage than Savage chose to acknowledge. The earl got off, however, as already shown, and was in trouble again before the end of the same year—this time with a man of his own rank, Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the wit and poet, who received a message late one night, to the effect that Lord Pembroke was desirous to speak with him at Locket's tavern. After inquiring whether Pembroke were sober, and receiving an affirmative reply, Dorset went as requested, but only to be insulted by his very drunken lordship of Pembroke, who insisted on his fighting him forthwith for some imaginary affront. The matter came before the House of Peers, and the disputants were put under arrest in their respective dwellings, until Lord Pembroke, declaring himself unconscious of all that had passed on the night in question, tendered apologies, and craved to be allowed to retire to his house at Wilton, whither he accordingly was permitted to go, and where he may possibly have remained—as no other frolics are related of him—until his death, which occurred three or four years afterwards.

Few of the remarkable trials given in the *Anecdotes of the Aristocracy* will obtain much attention from persons who have read Mr Peter Burke's book, whence most of them are borrowed and condensed, with here and there a slight alteration or addition. In a note towards the close of his second volume, Mr Bernard Burke somewhat tardily acknowledges his obligations to his brother. Considering the recent publication of the *Celebrated Trials, &c.*, it would perhaps have been judicious of him to have altogether omitted the criminal cases in question. As told by him, they do not constitute the best portion of his book, whose most interesting chapters, to our mind, are those including such wild old fragments as *A Curious Tradition*, *The Mysterious Story of Littlecot*, *An Irish Waterfiend*, and others of a similar kind. The short anecdotes are generally better than those that have been worked up into a sort of tale. Many of the stories have of course been already thrice told; but by persons who have not met with them, and who are not likely to take the trouble of hunting them up in old memoirs and magazines, they will be read with pleasure, and duly prized. And whilst Mr Craik's book may fairly claim to rank as history, and Mr Peter Burke's as a well-arranged and interesting compilation, it were hardly fair to refuse brother Bernard the modicum of praise usually awarded to a painstaking and amusing gossip.



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# THE LIFE OF THE SEA.

## BY B. SIMMONS.

"A very intelligent young lady, born and bred in the Orkney islands, who lately came to spend a season in this neighbourhood, told me nothing in the mainland scenery had so much disappointed her as woods and trees. She found them so dead and lifeless, that she never could help pining after the eternal motion and variety of the ocean. And so back she has gone; and I believe nothing will ever tempt her from the wind-swept Orcades again."—Sir Walter Scott. *Lockhart's Life*, vol. ii.—[Although it is of a female this striking anecdote is related, it has been thought more suitable to give the amplified expression of the sentiment in the stanzas a masculine application.]

### I.

These grassy vales are warm and deep,
Where apple-orchards wave and glow;
Upon soft uplands whitening sheep
Drift in long wreaths.—Below,
Sun-fronting beds of garden-thyme, alive
With the small humming merchants of the hive,
And cottage-homes in every shady nook
Where willows dip and kiss the dimples of the brook.

### II.

But all too close against my face
My thick breath feels these crowding trees,
They crush me in their green embrace.—
I miss the Life of Seas;
The wild free life that round the flinty shores
Of my bleak isles expanded Ocean pours—
So free, so far, that, in the lull of even,
Naught but the rising moon stands on your path to heaven.

## III.

In summer's smile, in winter's strife,
Unstirr'd, those hills are walls to me;
I want the vast, all-various life
Of the broad, circling Sea,—
Each hour in morn, or noon, or midnight's range,
That heaves or slumbers with exhaustless change,
Dash'd to the skies—steep'd in blue morning's rays—
Or back resparkling far Orion's lovely blaze.

## IV.

I miss the madd'ning Life of Seas,
When the red, angry sunset dies,
And to the storm-lash'd Orcades
Resound the Seaman's cries:
Mid thick'ning night and fresh'ning gale, upon
The stretch'd ear bursts Despair's appealing gun,
O'er the low Reef that on the lee-beam raves
With its down-crashing hills of wild, devouring waves.

## V.

How then, at dim, exciting morn,
Suspense will question—as the Dark
Is clearing seaward—"Has she worn
The tempest through, that Bark?"
And, 'mid the Breakers, bulwarks parting fast,
And wretches clinging to a shiver'd mast,
Give funeral answer. Quick with ropes and yawl!
Launch! and for life stretch out! they shall not perish all!



## VI.

These inland love-bowers sweetly bloom,
White with the hawthorn's summer snows;
Along soft turf a purple gloom
The elm at sunset throws:
There the fond lover, listening for the sweet
Half-soundless coming of his Maiden's feet,
Thrills if the linnet's rustling pinions pass,
Or some light leaf is blown rippling along the grass.

## VII.

But Love his pain as sweetly tells
Beneath some cavern beetling hoar,
Where silver sands and rosy shells
Pave the smooth glistening shore—
When all the winds are low, and to thy tender
Accents, the wavelets, stealing in, make slender
And tinkling cadence, wafting, every one,
A golden smile to thee from the fast-sinking sun.

## VIII.

Calm through the heavenly sea on high
Comes out each white and quiet star—
So calm up Ocean's floating sky
Come, one by one, afar,
White quiet sails from the grim icy coasts
That hear the battles of the Whaleing hosts,
Whose homeward crews with feet and flutes in tune
And spirits roughly blithe, make music to the moon.

## IX.

Or if (like some) thou'st loved in vain,
Or madly wooed the already Won,
—Go when the Passion and the Pain
Their havoc have begun,
And dare the Thunder, rolling up behind
The Deep, to match that hurricane of mind:
Or to the sea-winds, raging on thy pale
Grief-wasted cheek, pour forth as bitter-keen a tale.

## X.

For in that sleepless, tumbling tide—
When most thy fever'd spirits reel,
Sick with desires unsatisfied,
—Dwell life and balm to heal.
Raise thy free Sail, and seek o'er ocean's breast
—It boots not what—those rose-clouds in the West,
And deem that thus thy spirit freed shall be,
Ploughing the stars through seas of blue Eternity.

## XI.

This mainland life I could not live,
Nor die beneath a rookery's leaves,—
But I my parting breath would give
Where chainless Ocean heaves;
In some gray turret, where my fading sight
Could see the Lighthouse flame into the night,
Emblem of guidance and of hope, to save;
Type of the Rescuer bright who walked the howling wave.



## XII.

Nor, dead, amid the charnel's breath
Shall rise my tomb with lies befool'd,
But, like the Greek who faced in death
The sea in life he ruled,[13]
High on some peak, wave-girded, will I sleep,
My dirge sung ever by the choral deep;
There, sullen mourner! oft at midnight lone
Shall my familiar friend, the Thunder, come to groan.

## XIII.

Soft Vales and sunny hills, farewell!
Long shall the friendship of your bowers
Be sweet to me as is the smell
Of their strange lovely flowers;
And each kind face, like every pleasant star
Be bright to me though ever bright afar:
True as the sea-bird's wing, I seek my home,
And its glad Life, once more, by boundless Ocean's foam!

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# LONDON CRIES.

## BY B. SIMMONS.

### I.

What trifles mere are more than treasure,
To curious, eager-hearted boys!
I yet can single out the pleasure,
From memory's store of childish joys,
That thrill'd me when some gracious guest
First spread before my dazzled eyes,
In covers, crimson as the West,
A glorious book of *London Cries*.

## II.

For days that gift was not resign'd,
As stumbling on I spelt and read;
It shared my cushion while I dined,—
I took it up at night to bed;
At noon I conn'd it half-awake,
Nor thought, while poring o'er the prize,
How oft my head and heart should ache
In listening yet to London Cries.

## III.

Imprinted was the precious book
By great John Harris, of St Paul's,
(The Aldus of the nursery-nook;)
I still revere the shop's gray walls,
Whose wealth of story-books had power
To wake my longing boyhood's sighs:—
But Fairy-land lost every flower
Beneath your tempests-London Cries!

## IV.

I learn'd by rote each bawling word—
And with a rapture turn'd the broad,
Great staring woodcuts, dark and blurr'd,
I never since derived from Claude.
—That Cherry-seller's balanced scale,
Poised nicely o'er his wares' rich dyes,
Gave useful hints, of slight avail,
To riper years 'mid London Cries.

## V.

The Newsman wound his noisy horn,
And told how slaughter'd friends and foes
Lay heap'd, five thousand men, one morn,
In thy red trenches, Badajoz.
'Twas Fame, and had its fond abettors;
Though some folk now would think it wise
To change that F for other letters,
And hear no more such London Cries.

## VI.

Here chimed the tiny Sweep;—since then
I've loved to drop that trifling balm,
Prescribed, lost Elia, by thy pen,
Within his small half-perish'd palm.[14]
And there the Milkmaid tripp'd and splash'd,
—All milks that pump or pail supplies,
(Save that with human kindness dash'd,)
'Twas mine to quaff 'mid London Cries.

## VII.

That Dustman—how he rang his bell,
And yawn'd, and bellow'd "dust below!"
I knew the very fellow's yell
When first I heard it years ago.
What fruits of toil, and tears, and trust,
Of cunning hands, and studious eyes,
Like Death, he daily sacks to dust,
(Here goes *my* mite) 'mid London Cries!

## VIII.

The most vociferous of the prints
Was He who chaunted Savoys sweet,
The same who stunn'd, a century since,
That proud, poor room in Rider Street:
When morning now awakes his note,
Like bitter Swift, I often rise,
And wish his wares were in that throat
To stop at least *his* London Cries.[15]



## IX.

That Orange-girl—far different powers
Were hers from those that once could win
His worthless heart whose arid hours
Were fed with dew and light by Gwynn;
The dew of feelings fresh as day—
The light of those surpassing eyes—
The darkest raindrop has a ray,
And Nell had hers 'mid London Cries.[16]

## X.

Here sued the Violet-vender bland—
It fills me now-a-days with gloom
To meet, amid the swarming Strand,
Her basket's magical perfume:
—The close street spreads to woodland dells,
Where early lost Affection's ties
Are round me gathering violet-bells,
—I'll rhyme no more of London Cries.

## XI.

Yet ere I shut from Memory's sight
That cherish'd book, those pictures rare—
Be it recorded with delight
The ORGAN-fiend was wanting there.
Not till the Peace had closed our quarrels
Could slaughter that machine devise
(Made from his useless musket-barrels)
To slay us 'mid our London Cries.

## XII.

Why did not Martin in his Act
Insert some punishment to suit
This crime of being hourly rack'd
To death by some melodious Brute?
From ten at morn to twelve at night
His instrument the Savage plies,
From him alone there's no respite,
Since *'tis the Victim, here, that cries*.

## XIII.

Macaulay! Talfourd! Smythe! Lord John!
If ever yet your studies brown
This pest has broken in upon,
Arise and put the Monster down.
By all distracted students feel
When sense crash'd into nonsense dies
Beneath that ruthless ORGAN'S wheel,
We call! O hear our London Cries!

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# CLAUDIA AND PUDENS.[17]

We gladly welcome this essay from the hand of an old friend, to whom Scotland is under great obligations. To Archdeacon Williams, so many years the esteemed and efficient head of our Edinburgh Academy, we are indebted for a large part of that increased energy and success with which our countrymen have latterly prosecuted the study of the classics; and he is more especially entitled to share with Professor Sandford, and a few others, the high praise of having awakened, in our native schools, an ardent love, and an accurate knowledge, of the higher Greek literature. We do not grudge to see, as the first fruits of Mr Williams's dignified retirement and well-earned leisure, a book devoted to an interesting passage in the antiquities of his own land.

The students of British history, particularly in its ecclesiastical branch, have long been familiar with the conjecture that Claudia, who is mentioned by St Paul, in his Second Epistle to Timothy, in the same verse with Pudens, and along with other Christian friends and brethren, may be identified in the epigrams of Martial as a lady of British birth or descent. The coincidences, even on the surface of the documents, are strong enough to justify the supposition. Claudia and Pudens are mentioned together by St Paul. Martial lived at Rome at the same time with the apostle; and Martial mentions first the marriage of a Pudens to Claudia, a foreigner, and next the amiable character of a matron Claudia, whom he describes as of British blood, and as the worthy wife of a holy husband. These obvious resemblances, with some other scattered rays of illustration, had been early observed by historians, and may be met with in all the common books on the subject, such as Thackeray and Giles. But the Archdeacon has entered deeper into the matter, and with the aid of local discoveries long ago made, but hitherto not fully used, and his own critical comparison of circumstances lying far apart, but mutually bearing on each other, he has brought the case, as we think, to a satisfactory and successful result; and has, at the same time, thrown important light on the position and character of the British people of that early period.

It seems remarkable that neither Thackeray nor Giles has noticed the argument derived from the singular lapidary inscription found at Chichester in 1723, and described in Horsley's *Britannia Romana*. According to the probable reading of that monument it was erected by Pudens, the son of Pudentinus, under the authority of Cogidunus, a British king, who seems, according to a known custom, to have assumed the name of Claudius when admitted to participate in the rights of Roman citizenship, and who may be fairly identified with the Cogidunus of Tacitus, who received the command of some states in Britain, as part of a province of the empire, and whom the historian states that he remembered "as a most faithful ally of the Romans." The inscription is to be found in Dr Giles's appendix, but he seems ignorant of the inference which Dr Stukeley drew from it when it was first brought to light. From Dr Giles's plan, perhaps, we were wrong in expecting anything else than a compilation of the materials which were readiest at hand; but, even with our experience of his occasional love of paradox, we were not prepared for his attempt to cushion the question as to the conversion of the early Britons, by assuming the improbability "that the first teachers and the first converts to Christianity adopted the preposterous conduct of our modern missionaries, who, neglecting vice and misery of the deepest dye at home, expend their own overflowing feelings, and exhaust the treasures of the benevolent, in carrying their deeds of charity to the Negro and the Hindoo." Differences of opinion may be entertained as to the mode in which some modern missions have been conducted; and those who think there should be no missions at all, are at liberty to say so. But, as a matter of fact, it seems strange that any one should be found to lay it down that either St Paul or his brethren, or their disciples, could confine themselves merely to vice and misery *at home*, or could have reconciled their consciences to so narrow a sphere of exertion, while the last words of their Master were still echoing in their ears, "Go ye, therefore, and teach ALL nations." The argument seems peculiarly absurd in the mouth of one who has edited, and with some success, the works of the venerable Bede—the worthy historian of those great changes which flowed from the Roman pontiff's resolution to look beyond vice and misery at home, and convey Christianity to the British shores; and who has also edited, we will not say so well, the remains of the excellent Boniface, whose undying fame rests on his self-devotion, in leaving his native land to seek the conversion of the German pagans.



If the only objection to the Britannic nativity of the Christian Claudia rested on the supposed indisposition of the apostles and their converts to diffuse the gospel over the remoter parts of the Roman empire, the case would be a clear one. But, even taking all difficulties into view, the

probabilities in its favour are of a very decided character. The connexion between a Claudia and Pudens in Britain and a Pudens and Claudia in Rome, with the improbability that these names should be brought together in Paul's epistle in reference to other parties, goes far to support the conclusion; and it is aided by the collateral fact, that the name of Rufus—the friend of Martial's married Pair—has a connexion with the suspected Christianity of Pomponia, the wife of one of the Roman governors of Britain. But, without ourselves entering into details, we shall submit the summary which Mr Williams has made of the argument. The latter part of it relates to traditions or conjectures as to other parties, and as to ulterior consequences from the preceding theory, in reference to the early conversion of the Britons, which are deserving of serious attention, but in the accuracy of which we do not place equal confidence, though we think there is a general probability that a Christian matron of high rank and British birth would not forget the religious interests of her countrymen.

> "We know, on certain evidence, that, in the year A.D. 67, there were at Rome two Christians named Claudia and Pudens. That a Roman, illustrious by birth and position, married a Claudia, a "stranger" or "foreigner," who was also a British maiden; that an inscription was found in the year 1723, at Chichester, testifying that the supreme ruler of that place was a Tib. Claud. Cogidunus; that a Roman, by name "Pudens, the son of Pudentinus, was a landholder under this ruler;" that it is impossible to account for such facts, without supposing a very close connexion between this British chief and his Roman subject; that the supposition that the Claudia of Martial, a British maiden, married to a Roman Pudens, was a daughter of this British chief, would clear all difficulties; that there was a British chief to whom, about the year A.D. 52, some states, either in or closely adjacent to the Roman Province, were given to be held by him in subjection to the Roman authority; that these states occupied, partly at least, the ground covered by the counties of Surrey and Sussex; that the capital of these states was "Regnum," the modern Chichester; that it is very probable that the Emperor Claudius, in accordance with his known practice and principles, gave also his own name to this British chief, called by Tacitus, Cogidunus; that, after the termination of the Claudian dynasty, it was impossible that any British chief adopted into the Roman community could have received the names "Tib. Claudius;" that during the same period there, lived at Rome a Pomponia, a matron of high family, the wife of Aulus Plautius, who was the Roman governor of Britain, from the year A.D. 43 until the year 52; that this lady was accused of being a votary of a foreign superstition; that this foreign superstition was supposed by all the commentators of Tacitus, both British and Continental, to be the Christian religion; that a flourishing branch of the Gens Pomponia, bore in that age the cognomen of Rufus; that the Christianity of Pomponia being once allowed, taken in connexion with the fact that she was the wife of A. Plautius, renders it highly probable that the daughter of Tib. Claudius Cogidunus, the friend of A. Plautius, if she went to Rome, would be placed under the protection of this Pomponia, would be educated like a Roman lady, and be thus made an eligible match for a Roman senator; and that, when fully adopted into the social system of Rome, she should take the cognomen Rufina, in honour of the cognomen of her patroness; and that, as her patroness was a Christian, she also, from the privileges annexed to her location in such a family, would herself become a Christian; that the British Claudia, married to the Roman Pudens, had a family, three sons and daughters certainly, perhaps six according to some commentators; that there are traditions in the Roman Church, that a Timotheus, a presbyter, a holy man and saint, was a son of Pudens the Roman senator; that he was an important instrument in converting the Britons to the faith in Christ; that, intimately connected with the narrow circle of Christians then living at Rome, was an Aristobulus, to whom the Christian Claudia and Pudens of St Paul must have been well known; that the traditions of the Greek Church of the very earliest period record, that this Aristobulus was a successful preacher of Christianity in Britain; that there are British traditions that the return of the family of Caractacus into Britain was rendered famous by the fact that it brought with it into our island a band of Christian missionaries, of which an Aristobulus was a leader; that we may suppose that, upon Christian principles, the Christianised families of both Cogidunus and Caractacus should have forgotten, in their common faith, their provincial animosities, and have united in sending to their common countrymen the word of life, the gospel of love and peace."



We believe that the Archdeacon is perfectly correct in his assertion that the British were not then either so barbarous, or so lightly esteemed by the Romans, as has been sometimes supposed. The undoubted alliance between Pudens and Claudia, celebrated by Martial as a subject of joyous congratulation, and the analogous case of the kindred Gauls, who were cheerfully acknowledged to deserve all the privileges of imperial naturalisation, seem to leave no room for doubt upon this question. Britain, therefore, we may assume, was, in the first century, both worthy and well prepared to receive any valuable boon of spiritual illumination which her friends at Rome might be ready to communicate.

But, while we so far go along with Mr Williams in his historical conjectures, we are not so much inclined to sympathise with him in some of the uses to which he wishes to put them. We rejoice to think that Christianity was largely diffused through Britain before the Saxon invasion. But we know too little of the British Church, except in the time of Pelagius, to have much confidence in her doctrine or discipline, or to regret deeply that the *English* people—for such is undoubtedly

the fact—were for the most part Christianised, not by the British clergy, but by the missionaries of Rome. We question if the historians of the sister isle will admit, or if impartial critics will unhesitatingly adopt the Archdeacon's assertion, that "this British church sent forth her missionaries into Ireland, and conveyed into that most interesting island both the faith of Christ and the learning of ancient Rome." With every disposition to acknowledge the services of the Irish in the conversion of the Picts, and partially also of the Angles, we must have more evidence before we can allow to the British Church even the indirect merit of those exertions.

But the material point in this question is, whether it be true that the British clergy refused or declined to exert themselves in the conversion of their conquerors. That they did so, is indicated by the absence of any evidence of such an attempt; and it was expressly made a subject of reproach to them, in the conference with Augustine, that they would not preach "the way of life to the Angles." If this be the case,—and it is half admitted by Mr Williams, when he says, that "the Irish Church, *the members of which were less hostile to the Saxon invaders than were the Christian Britons*, sent back into Britain the true faith,"—then such a course, so directly at variance with the spirit of Christianity, however humanly excusable, was sufficient to seal the 490
doom of the church that practised it. It forms a remarkable contrast to the conduct of the Saxons themselves, who, when they in their turn were a prey to invasion, became the teachers of the very tyrants under whom they groaned, and even sent their missionaries into Scandinavia, to convert the countries which were the source of their sufferings. Nor were they in this respect without their reward. Their successful labours softened the oppression of their lot, and the sons of heathen and ruthless pirates became the beneficent and refined occupants of a Christian throne. If the British Church refused the opportunity afforded her, of at once converting and civilising her oppressors, she deserved her lot, and her advocates cannot now complain that the glory of founding Saxon Christianity must be awarded, not at all to her, but mainly to the Roman Gregory, who, whether from policy or piety, or both, entertained and perfected that missionary enterprise which influenced so beneficially the destiny of England and of Europe.

To us, and, we should think, to many men, it must be matter of little moment through what channel the stream of Christianity has been conveyed to us, if we possess it at our doors in purity and abundance. We would give the Pope his due, as well as others; but no antiquity of tradition, or dignity of authority, should restrain us from revising the doctrines transmitted to us, by a reference to the unerring standard of written truth. We adopt here the simple words and sound opinions of old Fuller: "We are indebted to God for his goodness in moving Gregory; Gregory's carefulness in sending Augustine; Augustine's forwardness in preaching here; but, above all, let us bless God's exceeding great favour that that doctrine which Augustine planted here but impure, and his successors made worse with watering, is since, by the happy Reformation, cleared and refined to the purity of the Scriptures."

This, however, is not an essential part of our present subject, and these feelings cannot interfere with our due appreciation of what Mr Williams has done to throw light on a most important subject of inquiry. If he gives us what he further promises,—a life of Julius Cæsar,—he will add a valuable contribution to the elucidation of British antiquities. The history and character of our Celtic fellow-countrymen, whether in the south, the north, or the west, have yet much need of illustration; and the task is well worthy of one who, with national predilections to stimulate his exertions, can bring to his aid the more refined taste and correcter reasoning which are cherished by a long familiarity with classical pursuits. 491

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# SIR ASTLEY COOPER.[18]

## PART I.

Sir Astley Cooper died in his seventy-third year, on the 12th of February 1841—that is, upwards of eight years ago—and with him was extinguished a great light of the age. He was a thorough Englishman: his character being pre-eminently distinguished by simplicity, courage, good nature, and generosity. He was very straightforward, and of wonderful determination. His name will always be mentioned with the respect due to signal personal merit, as that of a truly illustrious surgeon and anatomist, devoting the whole powers of his mind and body, with a constancy and enthusiasm which never once flagged, to the advancement of his noble and beneficent profession. His personal exertions and sacrifices in the pursuit of science, were almost unprecedented; but he knew that they were producing results permanently benefiting his fellow-creatures, at the same time that he must have felt a natural exultation at the pre-eminence which they were securing to himself over all his rivals and contemporaries, both at home and abroad, and the prospect of his name being transmitted with honour to posterity. What an amount of relief from suffering he secured to others in his lifetime! not merely by his own masterly personal exertions, but by skilfully training many thousands of others[19] to—*go, and do likewise*, furnished by him with the principles of sound and enlightened surgical, anatomical, and physiological knowledge! And these principles he has embodied in his admirable writings, to train succeeding generations of surgeons, so as to assuage agony, and avert the sacrifice of life and limb. Let any one turn from this aspect of his character, and look at him in a personal and social point of view, and Sir

Astley Cooper will be found, in all the varied relations of life—in its most difficult positions, in the face of every temptation—uniformly amiable, honourable, high-spirited, and of irreproachable morals. His manners fascinated all who came in contact with him; and his personal advantages were very great: tall, well-proportioned, of graceful carriage, of a presence unspeakably *assuring*[20]—with very handsome features, wearing ever a winning expression; of manners bland and courtly—without a tinge of sycophancy or affectation—the same to monarch, noble, peasant—in the hospital, the hovel, the castle, the palace. He was a patient, devoted teacher, during the time he was almost overpowered by the multiplicity of his harassing and lucrative professional engagements! Such was Sir Astley Cooper—a man whose memory is surely entitled to the best exertions of the ablest of biographers. Oh that a Southey could do by Astley Cooper as Southey did by Nelson!

"No one," observes Mr Cooper, the nephew of Sir Astley, and author of the work now before us, "has hitherto attempted to render the history of any surgeon a matter of interest or amusement to the general public."[21] We cannot deny the assertion, even after having perused the two volumes under consideration, which are the production of a gentleman who, after making the 492
remark just quoted, proceeds truly to observe, that "no author has had so favourable an opportunity"—*i. e.* of rendering the history of a surgeon a matter of general interest—as himself, "for few medical men in this country have ever held so remarkable a position in the eyes of their countrymen, for so long a period, or endeared themselves by so many acts of conduct, independent of their profession, as Sir Astley Cooper."[22]

Mr Bransby Cooper became the biographer of his uncle, at that uncle's own request,[23] who also left behind him rich materials for the purpose. We are reluctantly compelled to own that we cannot compliment Mr Cooper on the manner in which he has executed the task thus imposed upon him. He is an amiable and highly honourable man, every way worthy of the high estimation in which he was held by his distinguished kinsman, and whose glorious devotion to his profession he shares in no small degree. He is also an able man, and a surgeon of great reputation and eminence. He must, however, with the manliness which distinguishes his character, bear with us while we express our belief that he cannot himself be satisfied with the result of his labours, or the reception of them by the public. He evidently lacks the leading qualities of the biographer; who, at the same time that he has a true and hearty feeling for his subject, must not suffer it to overmaster him; who, conscious that he is writing for the public at large, instinctively perceives, as himself one of that public, what is likely to interest and instruct it—to hit the happy medium between personal and professional topics, and to make both subordinate to the development of THE MAN, so that we may not lose him among the incidents of his life. It is, again, extremely difficult for a man to be a good biographer of one who was of his own profession. He is apt to take too much, or too little, for granted; to regard that as generally interesting which is so only to a very limited circle, and, often halting between two opinions—whether to write for the general or the special reader—to dissatisfy both. From one or two passages in his "Introduction," Mr Cooper seems to have felt some such embarrassment,[24] and also to have experienced another difficulty—whether to write for those who had personally known Sir Astley or for strangers.[25] Mr Cooper, again, though it may seem paradoxical to say so, knows really *too much* of Sir Astley—that is, has so identified himself with Sir Astley, his habits, feelings, character, and doings—as boy and man, as the affectionate admiring pupil, companion, and kinsman—that he has lost the power of removing himself, as it were, to such a distance from his subject as would enable him to view it in its true colours and just proportions. These disadvantages should have occasioned him to reflect very gravely on the responsibility which he was about to undertake, in committing to the press a memoir of Sir Astley Cooper. He did so sadly too precipitately. Within sixteen months' time he had completed his labours, and they were printed, ready for distribution to the public. This was an interval by no means too short for a master of his craft—a ready and experienced biographer, but ten times too short for one who was not such. A picture for posterity cannot be painted at a moment's notice, and in five minutes' time: which might perhaps suffice for a gaudy daub, which is glanced at for a moment, and forgotten for ever, or remembered only with feelings of displeasure and regret. Mr Cooper felt it necessary to put forward some excuses, which we must frankly tell him are insufficient. "Professional duties, engagements, and other circumstances of a more private nature," *cannot* "be accepted as an apology for the many defects to be found in these volumes."[26] A memoir of Sir Astley Cooper, by Mr Bransby Cooper, ought never to have stood in need of such apologies. If he had not sufficient time at his command, he should have considerably delayed the preparation of the Memoir, or committed his materials to 493
other hands, or subjected his performance to competent revision. As it is, we look in vain for discrimination, and subordination, and method. Topics are introduced which should have been discarded, or handled very, very differently. Innumerable communications from friends and associates of Sir Astley are incorporated into the work, in their writers' *ipsissima verba*; and this is positively treated by Mr Cooper as a matter of congratulation![27] Again, the progress of the Memoir is continually interrupted by subsidiary memoirs of persons who had been casually or professionally connected with Sir Astley, but of whom the public at large knows nothing, nor cares for them one straw. We modify our complaint, on this score, as far as concerns the sketches of his contemporaries by Sir Astley himself, which are generally interesting and faithful, and occasionally very striking.—It grieves us to speak thus plainly of a gentleman so estimable and eminent as Mr Bransby Cooper, and justly enjoying so much influence and reputation; but, alas! *Maga* knows not friend from foe, the moment that she has seated herself in her critical chair. Unworthy would she be to sit there, as she has for now four hundred moons, were it otherwise.

The work before us came under our notice at the time when it was published—early in the year

1843; and the very first passage which attracted our attention was the following, lying on the threshold—in the first page of the Preface. It appeared to us to indicate a writer who had formed strange notions of the objects and uses of biography. Speaking of the "*moral benefit*" to be derived from perusing memoirs of those whose exertions had raised them to eminence, Mr Cooper proceeds to make these edifying and philosophical observations:—"Those who are in the meridian of their career, *endeavour to discover a gratifying parallel* in themselves; whilst the aged may still be reconciled to the result of their pilgrimage, if less successful, by adopting the *comfortable (!) self-assurance* that the *frowns of fortune*, or *some unlooked-for fatality*, have alone prevented them from enjoying a similar distinction, or becoming equally useful members of society."[28] Indeed! if *these* be the uses of biography,—thus to pander to a complacent overweening vanity, or "minister" poison to minds diseased, embittered, and darkened by disappointment and despair, let us have no more of it. No, no, Mr Cooper, such are not the uses of biography, which are to entertain, to interest, to instruct; and its "moral benefit" is to be found in teaching the successful in life humility, moderation, gratitude; and stimulating them to a more active discharge of their duties,—to higher attainments, and more beneficial uses of them on behalf of their fellow-creatures; and also to remind them that their sun, then glittering at its highest, is thenceforward to descend the horizon! And as for those who have failed to attain the objects of their hopes and wishes, the contemplation of others' success should teach lessons of resignation and self-knowledge; set them upon tracing their *failure* to their *faults*—faults which have been avoided by him of whom they read; cause them to form a lower estimate of their own pretensions and capabilities; and if, after all, unable to account for failure, bow with cheerful resignation—*not* beneath the "frowns of fortune," or yielding to "fatality," but to the will of God, who gives or withholds honour as He pleaseth, and orders all the events of our lives with an infinite, an awful wisdom and equity. We regard this use of the words "frowns of fortune," and "unlooked-for fatality," as inconsiderate and objectionable, and capable of being misunderstood by younger readers. Mr Cooper is a gentleman of perfectly orthodox opinions and correct feeling, and all that we complain of, is his hasty use of unmeaning or objectionable phraseology. In the very next paragraph to that from which we have been quoting, he thus laudably expresses 494
himself upon the subject. "It will be a useful lesson to observe that such distinction is the reward of early assiduous application, determined self-denial, unwearied industry, and high principle, without which, talents, however brilliant, will be of slight avail, or prove to be only the *ignes fatui* which betray to danger and destruction." And let us here place conspicuously before our readers —would that we could write in letters of gold!—the following pregnant sentences with which Sir Astley Cooper was wont, as President of the College of Surgeons, to address those who had successfully passed their arduous examination, in announcing to them that happy event:—

> "Now, gentlemen, give me leave to tell you on what your success in life will depend.
>
> *Firstly*, upon a good and constantly increasing knowledge of your profession.
>
> *Secondly*, on an industrious discharge of its duties.
>
> *Thirdly*, upon the preservation of your moral character.
>
> Unless you possess the first, KNOWLEDGE, you ought not to succeed, and no honest man can wish you success.
>
> Without the second, INDUSTRY, no one will ever succeed.
>
> And unless you preserve your MORAL CHARACTER, even if it were possible that you could succeed, it would be impossible you could be happy."[29]

Peace to your ashes, good Sir Astley! honour to your memory, who from your high eminence addressed these words of warning and goodness to those who stood trembling and excited before you, and in whose memory those words were engraved for ever!

The passage which we have above first quoted from the preface of the work before us, was, we own, not without its weight in disinclining us to read that work with care, or notice it in Maga. Our attention, after so long an interval, was recalled to the work quite accidentally, and we have lately read it through, in an impartial spirit; rising from the perusal with a strong feeling of personal respect for Mr Cooper, and of regret that he had not given himself time to make more of his invaluable materials—thereby doing something like justice to the memory of his illustrious relative, and making a strong effort, at the same time, to "render the history of a surgeon a matter of interest and amusement to the general public." While, however, we thus censure freely, let us do justice. Mr Cooper writes in the spirit of a gentleman, with singular frankness and fidelity. His manly expressions of affection and reverence for the memory of Sir Astley, are worthy of both. When, too, Mr Cooper chooses to make the effort, he can express himself with vigour and propriety, and comment very shrewdly and ably on events and characters. One of the chief faults in his book is that of showing himself to be too much immersed in his subject: he writes as though he were colloquially addressing, in the world at large, a party of hospital surgeons and students. For this defect, however, he scarcely deserves to be blamed; the existence of it is simply a matter of regret, to the discriminating and critical reader.

The two volumes before us are rich in materials for the biographer. We can hardly imagine the life of a public man more varied, interesting, and instructive, than that of the great surgeon who is gone; and we have resolved, after much consideration, to endeavour to present to our

innumerable readers, (for are they not so?) as distinct and vivid a portraiture of Sir Astley Cooper as we are able, guided by Mr Bransby Cooper. If our readers aforesaid derive gratification from our labour of love, let them give their thanks to that gentleman alone, whose candour and fidelity are, we repeat it, above all praise. We are ourselves not of his craft, albeit not wholly ignorant thereof, knowing only so much of it as may perhaps enable us to select what will interest general readers. Many portions of these volumes we shall pass over altogether, as unsuitable for our purposes; and those with which we thus deal, we may indicate as we go along. And, finally, we shall present some of the results of our own limited personal knowledge and observation of the admirable deceased.

Astley Paston Cooper came of a good family, long established in Norfolk, and there is reason 495
for believing that there ran in his veins some of the blood of the immortal Sir Isaac Newton.[30] He was born on the 23d August 1768, at a manor-house called Brooke Hall, near Shottisham, in Norfolk. He was the sixth of ten children, and the fourth son. His father was the Rev. Samuel Cooper, D.D., (formerly a pensioner of Magdalen College, Cambridge,) then rector of Yelverton in that county, and afterwards perpetual curate of Great Yarmouth—a large cure of souls, numbering sixteen thousand, among whom he discharged his pastoral duties with exemplary faithfulness and vigilance, and was universally beloved and respected. He was also a magistrate, in which capacity he was conspicuous in suggesting and supporting schemes of public utility and benevolence. He was one of two sons of Mr Samuel Cooper, a surgeon at Norwich, a person of considerable professional reputation, and possessed of some literary pretensions. He left a handsome fortune to each of his sons, Samuel and William, and spent the evening of his life in the house of his elder son, at Yarmouth, but died at Dunston, in Norfolk, in 1785. The younger son became an eminent surgeon in London, and exercised, as will be presently seen, considerable influence on the fortunes of his celebrated nephew. Dr Cooper was the author of various works on the religious and political subjects principally discussed at that eventful period.[31] In the year 1761, while yet a curate, he married a lady of large fortune, Maria Susannah, the eldest daughter and heiress of James Bransby, Esq., of Shottisham, who was descended from an ancient Yorkshire family, the head of which was Geoffrey de Brandesbee. She appears to have been a lovely woman, equally in person, mind, and character, and possessed also of some literary reputation, as the author of several works of fiction, of a moral and religious character. She was an exemplary and devoted mother, and exercised a powerful and salutary influence over all her children, especially her son Astley, the dawn of whose eminence she lived to see, with just maternal pride and exultation; dying in the year 1807, when he was in his thirtieth year. Several of her letters to him are given in these volumes, and they breathe a sweet spirit of piety and love. Thus, on both sides, he was well born, and his parents were also in affluent circumstances, enabling them to educate and provide satisfactorily for their large family.

Astley took his Christian name from his godfather, Sir Edward Astley, then M.P. for the county of Norfolk, and the grandfather of the present Lord Hastings. His second name,
Paston, was the maiden name of his
maternal grandmother, who was related to the Earl of Yarmouth. As his mother's delicate health would not admit of her nursing him, as she had nursed all her other children, the little Astley was sent, for that purpose, to a Mrs Love, the wife of a respectable farmer, a parishioner of Dr Cooper's;[32] and on returning home he received the zealous and affectionate attentions of his 496
exemplary mother, who personally instructed him, as soon as he was able to profit by her exertions, in English grammar and history, for the latter of which he always evinced a partiality. He was initiated by his father into Greek and Latin; but his classical acquirements never enabled him to do more than read a little in Horace and the Greek Testament. As soon, in fact, as his boyish attention had ceased to be occupied with the classics, he seems to have bade them farewell, and never, at any period of his life, did he renew or increase his acquaintance with them. His only other preceptor, at this early period, was Mr Larke, the village schoolmaster, who taught writing, arithmetic, and mathematics to Dr Cooper's children, of all of whom Astley seems to have done him the least credit. Astley was about thirteen years old when he ceased to receive the instructions of Mr Larke, and was of a gay, volatile disposition, full of fun and frolic, and utterly reckless of danger. He had a charming deportment from his earliest youth; his manners were so winning, and his disposition was so amiable, that he was a universal favourite, even with those who were most frequently the victims of his frolicsome pranks. Wherever danger was to be found, there was Astley sure to be—the leader in every mischievous expedition which he and his companions could desire. His adventurous disposition frequently placed his limbs, and even his life, in danger. He would often, for instance, drive out the cows from a field, himself mounted on the back of the bull; and run along the eaves of lofty barns, from one of which he once fell, but luckily on some hay lying beneath. He once climbed to the roof of one of the aisles of the church, and, losing his hold, fell down, to the manifest danger of his life—escaping, however, with a few bruises only. Once he caught a horse grazing on a common, mounted him, and with his whip urged the animal to leap over a cow lying on the ground. Up jumped the cow at the moment of the startling transit, and overthrew both horse and rider; the latter breaking his collarbone in the fall. If vicious and high-mettled horses were within his reach, he would fearlessly mount them, without saddle or bridle, guiding them with a stick only. Was there a garden or orchard to be robbed, young Astley was the chieftain to plan the expedition, and divide the spoil. "Who can say," observes his biographer,[33] "that the admiration and applause which young Astley obtained from his fellows for his intrepidity in these youthful exploits, were not, in truth, the elements of that love of superiority, and thirst for fame, which prevented him over afterwards from being contented with any but the highest rank in every undertaking with which he associated himself?" There may be some truth in this remark; but let it also be borne in mind—(that youth may not be

led astray by false notions)—that this love of adventure and defiance of danger have often been exhibited in early years, by those who have turned out very differently from Astley Cooper, and proved themselves to be the silliest, most mischievous, and most degraded of mankind—the very curses of society.

One of the earliest incidents in young Astley's life, was one which exposed him to great danger. While playing with an elder brother, who happened to have an open knife in his hand, Astley ran heedlessly against it; the blade entering the lower part of his cheek, passing upwards, and being stopped only by the socket of the eye. The wound bled profusely, and the injury sustained was so great, as to keep him a close prisoner, and under surgical treatment, for a long time; and Sir Astley bore with him to the grave the scar which had been made by the wound. Two other incidents happening about the same time, when he was in his twelfth or thirteenth year, present young Astley in an interesting and striking point of view. Some of the scholars belonging to a boarding-school in the village, were playing together one day near a large pond, when the bell had summoned them to return to their duties. As they were going, one of them snatched off the hat of one of his companions, and flung it into the pond. The latter cried bitterly for the loss of his hat, and from fear of being punished for not returning with the others to school. At this moment came up a young gentleman dressed, according to the fashion of that day, in a scarlet coat, a three-cocked hat, a glazed black collar or stock, nankeen small-clothes, and white silk stockings, his hair hanging in ringlets down his back. This was no other than Astley Cooper, returning from a dancing-school held at a neighbouring inn, by a teacher of the art, who used to come from Norwich. Observing the trouble of the despoiled youngster, Astley inquired the cause; and having his attention directed to the hat in the water, he marched in with great deliberation, and succeeded in obtaining the hat, having waded above his knees, and presenting a somewhat droll object as he came out, his gay habiliments bedaubed with mud and water. The other circumstance alluded to is certainly very remarkable, when coupled with his subsequent career. One of his foster-brothers, while conducting a horse and cart conveying coals to some one in the village, unfortunately stumbled in front of the cart, the wheel of which passed over his thigh, and, among other severe injuries, lacerated the principal artery. The danger was of course imminent. The poor boy, sinking under the loss of blood, which the few bystanders ineffectually attempted to stop by applying handkerchiefs to the wound, was carried into his mother's house, whither young Astley, having heard of the accident, quickly followed. He alone, amidst the terror and confusion which prevailed, had his wits about him, and after a few moments' reflection took out his pocket handkerchief, encircled with it the thigh *above the wound*, and bound it round as tightly as possible, so as to form a ligature upon the wounded vessel. This stopped the bleeding, and kept the little sufferer alive till the arrival of a surgeon. The self-possession, decision, and sagacity displayed by little Astley Cooper on this occasion, are above all praise, and must have produced a deep impression on the minds of his parents, and indeed upon any one who had heard of the occurrence. It is barely possible that he might have originally caught the hint through overhearing such subjects mentioned by his grandfather or his uncle, the surgeons. This is hardly likely; but, even were it so, it leaves the self-possessed and courageous youth entitled to our highest admiration. In after years, Sir Astley Cooper frequently spoke of this circumstance as a very remarkable event in his life, and that which had first bent his thoughts towards the profession of surgery.[34] This is very probable. The inward delight which he must have experienced at having saved the life of his foster-brother, and receiving the grateful thanks and praises of his foster-mother and her family, must have contributed to fix the occurrence in his mind, and to surround it with pleasing associations.

In the year 1781, Dr Cooper and his family quitted Brooke for Yarmouth, on his being appointed to the perpetual curacy of the latter place. Astley was then in his thirteenth year. Sixty years afterwards, the great surgeon, who had a strong attachment to particular places, made a pilgrimage to the scene of his gay and happy boyhood at Brooke, at that time a pretty and retired village, and hallowed by every early and tender association. He found it, however, strangely altered, as he gazed at it, doubtless with a moistened eye and a throbbing heart. Let him speak for himself; for he has left on record his impressions. Having dined at the village inn, he says,—

> "I walked down the village, along an enclosed road, dull and shadowed by plantations on either side; instead of those commons and open spaces, ornamented here and there by clean cottages. The little *mere*[35] was so much smaller than in my imagination, that I could hardly believe my eyes; the great mere was half empty, and dwindled also to a paltry pond. On my right were the plantations of Mr Ketts, overshading the road, and for which numerous cottages had been sacrificed; on my left, cottages enclosed in gardens. Still proceeding to the scenes of my early years, on the right was a lodge leading to Mr Holmes's new house, and water with a boat on it—a fine mansion, but overlooking the lands of Mr Ketts. I then walked on to the vicar's, Mr Castell, but he was out. I looked for the church mere, and it was filled up, planted, and converted into a garden. I looked for the old Brooke Hall, the place of my nativity, and the seat of the happiness of my early years; for the road which led to it and its forecourt—its flower-gardens and kitchen-gardens, its stable-yard and coach-houses—and all were gone. The very place where they once were is forgotten. Here we had our boat, our swimming, our shooting—excellent partridge-shooting—in Brooke wood tolerable pheasant-shooting—woodcocks; in Seething Fen abundance of snipes—a good neighbourhood, seven miles from Norwich, almost another London, where my grandfather lived; we knew everybody, kept a carriage and chaise, saw much company, and were almost allowed to do as we liked; but the blank of all these gratifications now only remains.

"The once beautiful village is swallowed up by two parks—cottages cut down to make land for them—commons enclosed," &c.[36]

On the page opposite to that on which these remarks are written, Sir Astley has roughly sketched the village as it had stood in his childhood, and as he found it on the occasion of his revisiting it.

On reaching his new residence at Yarmouth, this apparently incorrigible Pickle betook himself with renewed energy to mischief and fun; "indulging more easily," says Mr Cooper, "and on a larger scale, in those levities, the offspring of a buoyant heart and thoughtless youth, which had already distinguished him in the more limited sphere which he had just quitted.... These irregularities, however, were never strictly opposed to the interests of virtue and honesty—nor, indeed, ever exhibited anything but repugnance to those mean, though less serious faults, which often intrude into schoolboy sports and occupations. They were, on the contrary, characterised by cheerfulness of temper, openness of character, sensibility of disposition, and every quality of an ingenuous mind."[37] Very soon after his arrival, his temerity led him into a most perilous adventure—one which might have been expected to cure his propensity to court danger.

"Soon after Dr Cooper's arrival in Yarmouth, the church underwent certain repairs, and Astley having constant access to the building from his influence with the sexton, used frequently to amuse himself by watching the progress of the improvements. Upon one occasion he ascended by a ladder to the ceiling of the chancel, (a, height of seventy feet,) and with foolish temerity walked along one of the joists—a position of danger to which few but the workmen, who were accustomed to walk at such an elevation, would have dared voluntarily to expose themselves. While thus employed, his foot suddenly slipped, and he fell between the rafters of the ceiling. One of his legs, however, fortunately remained bent over the joist on which he had been walking, while the foot was caught beneath the next adjoining rafter, and by this entanglement alone he was preserved from instant destruction. He remained for some time suspended with his head downwards, and it was not until after repeated and violent efforts, that he succeeded in jerking his body upwards, when, by catching hold of the rafter, he was enabled to recover his footing. I believe, from the manner in which Sir Astley used to refer to this adventure, that he always re-experienced to a great degree the horror which filled his mind at seeing the distance between him and the floor of the chancel, when he was thus suspended from its ceiling."—(Pp. 70-1.)



Very soon afterwards he nearly lost his life in an adventure on the sea, characterised by his usual semi-insane recklessness.[38] By-and-by he betook himself to pranks seriously annoying to his neighbours and towns-folk—breaking lamps and windows, ringing the church bells at all hours, slyly altering the town clock, and so forth—whereby "Master Astley Cooper" became, as lawyers would style it, the "common vouchee" whenever any mischief had been perpetrated. Mr Cooper gives an account of several whimsical exploits of young Astley at this period, one of which we shall quote; but all display an amusing sense of the humorous on the part of their perpetrator.

"Having taken two pillows from his mother's bed, he carried them up to the spire of Yarmouth church, at a time when the wind was blowing from the north-east, and as soon as he had ascended as high as he could, he ripped them open, and, shaking out their contents, dispersed them in the air. The feathers were carried away by the wind, and fell far and wide over the surface of the marketplace, to the great astonishment of a large number of persons assembled there. The timid looked upon it as a phenomenon predictive of some calamity—the inquisitive formed a thousand conjectures—while some, curious in natural history, actually accounted for it by a gale of wind in the north blowing wild-fowl feathers from the island of St Paul's! It was not long, however, before the difficulty was cleared up in the doctor's house, where it at first gave rise to anything but those expressions of amusement which the explanation, when circulated through the town, is reported to have excited. I think my uncle used to say that some extraordinary account of the affair, before the secret was discovered, found its way into the Norwich papers!"—(Pp. 73-4.)

On one occasion he was imprisoned in his own room by his father, as a punishment for a very thoughtless joke which had occasioned serious alarm to his mother. Shortly after locking the door upon the young scapegrace, his father, walking with a friend in his favourite walk near the house, was astonished at hearing, from above, a cry of "Sweep—sweep!" in the well-known voice of a neighbouring chimney-sweeper. On looking up, he beheld his hopeful *son* in the position of a sweep, who had reached the summit of the chimney! and was calling out to attract the attention of the passers-by in the street below. "Ah," quoth the good doctor to his friend, "there is my boy Astley, again! He is a sad rogue,—but, in spite of his roguery, I *have no doubt that he will yet be a shining character*!"[39]

Though thus partial to rough sports and adventures, he was, even at this early age, very susceptible of the effect of female beauty, and the charms of female society. A lad so handsome as he, and of such elegant and winning manners and address, could not fail to be a great favourite with the softer sex. So, indeed, he was. And as a proof of his attachment to *them*,—shortly after he had left Brooke for Yarmouth, being then only thirteen years old, he borrowed his father's horse, and rode a distance of forty-eight miles in one day, to pay, unknown to his parents, a visit to a girl of his own age, a Miss Wordsworth, the daughter of a clergyman residing in a

village near that which the Coopers had quitted for Yarmouth. In after life, he never mentioned this little circumstance without lively emotion; and Mr Cooper expresses himself as at a loss to explain how this early intimacy had failed of leading to the future union of the youthful couple. Such was young Astley Cooper in his early years: blessed with an exemplary mother, who sedulously instilled into his mind, as into those of all her children, the precepts of virtue and religion; equally blessed with an amiable and pious father, and happy in the society of his brothers and sisters; with cheerful, buoyant animal spirits, whose exuberance led him into the 500
pursuit of comparatively innocent adventure, untinged by mean or vicious characteristics; and exhibiting, under all his wild love of fun, an under-current of intellectual energy, warranting that prediction of future distinction which, as we have seen, was uttered by his father about the period of which we are speaking. It was not likely that a boy of this character should always remain satisfied with the position which he then occupied. He must have felt inward promptings to something worthy of the capabilities of which he was secretly conscious; and it is interesting and satisfactory to be able to point out the circumstances which determined him to enter that particular walk of life, and department in science, which he afterwards occupied with such transcendent distinction. The very interesting incident which first bent his thoughts in that direction has been already mentioned. It has been already stated that he had an uncle, Mr Samuel Cooper, an eminent surgeon in London, the senior surgeon of Guy's Hospital. This gentleman was in the habit of visiting his brother, Dr Cooper, at Yarmouth; and with his varied and animated conversation young Astley became more and more delighted, as he recounted the exciting incidents of London social and professional life. The uncle seems, in turn, to have been pleased with the vivacity and spirit of his nephew; and thus it was that Astley conceived an intense desire to repair to the great metropolitan scene of action, of which he was hearing so much, and could so easily imagine much more. It does not seem to have been any particular enthusiasm for surgery and anatomy that actuated him at this early period, but probably nothing more than a taste for pleasure and excitement,[40] which he felt could be gratified to an indefinite extent in London life. He had even committed himself to the adoption of his uncle's profession, without having indicated any desire to achieve excellence or eminence in it. The spark of ambition seems to have fallen into his ardent temperament, on witnessing the terrible operation for stone, performed by a Dr Donnee, of Norwich. This fact we have on his own authority.[41] In the year 1836, he payed a visit to Norwich, and on quitting it, wrote the following letter, enclosing £30 for the hospital, to Dr Yelloly.

> "My dear Sir.—It was at the Norfolk and Norwich hospital that I first saw Dr Donnee operate, in a, masterly manner; and it was this which inspired me with a strong impression of the utility of surgery, and led me to embark in it as my profession."

How mysterious the impulse which thus determines men to the adoption of particular pursuits! —some to music, others to poetry, to painting, to sculpture: some to the moral, others to the physical sciences: some to the art of war, others to divinity, law or physic; some to criticism and belles lettres, others to simple money-making. It is rarely that a man achieves real distinction in a pursuit which is forced upon him. He may follow it creditably, but eminence is generally out of the question: it is only where a man voluntarily adopts a walk in life, in accordance with inward promptings, that a likelihood of success and distinction is begotten. Dr Johnson observed that genius was great natural powers accidentally directed; but this can hardly be accepted as a true or sufficient definition. A man of wonderful musical or mathematical capabilities, may have his attention accidentally directed to a sphere of action where those capabilities will never have the opportunity of developing themselves. It would seem, in truth, as if Providence had implanted in many men great aptitudes and inclinations for particular pursuits, and given them special opportunities for gratifying such inclinations. Look, for instance, at a lad witnessing the operation to which we have alluded; nine out of ten would look on with dismay or disgust, and fly terrified from a scene which excites profound interest, and awakens all the mental powers of a youth standing beside him. And this was the case with Astley Cooper, whose enthusiasm for the profession of surgery was kindled on witnessing one of its most formidable and appalling 501
exhibitions.

Doubtless the two brothers—the parson and the surgeon—themselves sons of a surgeon of provincial celebrity, made short work of it as soon as they had ascertained young Astley's strong inclination for the profession of which his uncle was so eminent a member, and in which he possessed such facilities for advancing the interests of that nephew. It was therefore agreed that Astley, then in his sixteenth year, should become his uncle's articled pupil. As, however, it was inconvenient for Mr Cooper to receive pupils into his own house, he effected an arrangement with a very eminent brother surgeon, Mr Cline, one of the surgeons of the neighbouring hospital, (St Thomas',) by means of which young Astley became an inmate with the latter gentleman. This matter proved to have been, in one respect, managed very prudently. Mr Cooper intimates[42] that young Astley would have found his own mercurial disposition, and flighty habits, incompatible with those of his rough and imperious uncle, who was, moreover, a very severe disciplinarian. Mr Cline, on the other hand, was a man of easy and engaging manners, of amiable disposition, and perhaps the finest operating surgeon of the day. To these advantages, however, there were very dismal drawbacks, for he was both a Deist and a democrat of the wildest kind—associating, as might be expected, with those who entertained his own objectionable and dangerous opinions—with, amongst others, such notorious demagogues as Horne Tooke and Thelwall. It is probable[43] that Astley's worthy father and mother were ignorant of these unfavourable characteristics of Mr Cline, or they never would have consented to their son entering into such contaminating society. We shall here present our readers with a striking sketch, from the pencil of Sir Astley himself in

after life, of the gentleman to whom his uncle, Mr Cooper—who could not have been ignorant of Mr Cline's disfiguring peculiarities—had thought proper to intrust his nephew:—

> "Mr Cline was a man of excellent judgment, of great caution, of accurate knowledge; particularly taciturn abroad, yet open, friendly, and very conversationable at home.
>
> In surgery, cool, safe, judicious, and cautious; in anatomy, sufficiently informed for teaching and practice. He wanted industry and professional zeal, liking other things better than the study and practice of his profession.
>
> In politics a democrat, living in friendship with Horne Tooke.
>
> In morals, thoroughly honest; in religion, a Deist.
>
> A good husband, son, and father.
>
> As a friend, sincere, but not active; as an enemy, most inveterate.
>
> He was mild in his manners, gentle in his conduct, humane in his disposition, but withal brave as a lion.
>
> His temper was scarcely ever ruffled.
>
> Towards the close of life he caught an ague, which lessened his powers of mind and body."—(P. 98-99.)

The poisonous atmosphere which he breathed at Mr Cline's, produced effects upon young Astley's character which we shall witness by-and-by. They proved, happily, but temporary, owing to the strength of the wholesome principles which had been instilled into him by his revered parents. Mr Cooper gives us reason to believe that a mother's eye had been almost the earliest to detect traces of the deleterious influences to which her son had become subject in London; and perhaps the following little extract, from a letter of this good lady to her gay son, may bring tender recollections of similar warnings received by himself, into the mind of many a reader:—

> "'Remember, my dear child,' says Mrs Cooper to him, after one of his visits to Yarmouth, 'wherever you go, and whatever you do, that the happiness of your parents depends on the principles and conduct of their children. Remember, also, I entreat, and may your conversation be influenced by the remembrance, that there are subjects which ought always to be considered as sacred, and on no account to be treated with levity.'"—(P. 96.)

Astley took his departure from Yarmouth for London in the latter part of August 1784, being then in his sixteenth year. He experienced all the emotion to be expected in a warm-hearted boy leaving an affectionate home, for his first encounter with the cold rough world. His own grief gave way, however, before the novelty and excitement of the scenes in which he found himself, much sooner than the intense solicitude and apprehension on his account, which were felt by the parents whom he had quitted! Mr Cooper shall sketch the personal appearance of Astley at this period; no one who ever saw Sir Astley Cooper will think what follows overstrained:— 

> "His manners and appearance at this period were winning and agreeable. Although only sixteen years of age, his figure, which had advanced to nearly its full stature, was no less distinguished for the elegance of its proportions, than its healthy manliness of character; his handsome and expressive countenance was illumined by the generous disposition and active mind, equally characteristic of him then as in after life; his conversation was brisk and animated, his voice and manner of address were in the highest degree pleasing and gentlemanly; while a soft and graceful ease, attendant on every action, rendered his society no less agreeable than his appearance prepossessing."—(P. 90.)

The period of his arrival in London had been of course fixed with reference to the opening of the professional season—viz. in the month of October, when the lectures on medicine, surgery, anatomy, physiology, and their kindred sciences, commence at the hospitals, and, in some few instances, elsewhere. Mr Cline's house was in Jefferies' Square, St Mary Axe, in the eastern part of the metropolis; and in that house Mr Astley Cooper afterwards began himself to practise. His propensities for fun and frivolity burst out afresh the moment that he was established in his new quarters; and for some time he seemed on the point of being sucked into the vortex of dissipation, to perish in it. He quickly found himself in the midst of a host of young companions similarly disposed with himself, and began to indulge in those extravagances which had earned him notoriety in the country. One of his earliest adventures was the habiting himself in the uniform of an officer, and swaggering in it about town. One day, while thus masquerading, he lit upon his uncle in Bond Street; and, finding it too late to escape, resolved to brazen the matter out. Mr Cooper at once addressed him very sternly on his foolish conduct, but was thunderstruck at the reception which he met with.

> "Astley, regarding him with feigned astonishment, and changing his voice, replied, that he must be making some mistake, for he did not understand to whom or what he was alluding. 'Why,' said Mr Cooper, 'you don't mean to say that you are not my

nephew, Astley Cooper?' 'Really, sir, I have not the pleasure of knowing any such person. My name is —— of the —th,' replied the young scapegrace, naming, with unflinching boldness, the regiment of which he wore the uniform. Mr William Cooper apologised, although still unable to feel assured he was not being duped, and, bowing, passed on."—(P. 401.)

As soon as the lecture-rooms were opened, young Cooper made a show of attention, but without feeling any real interest in them. His uncle, at the same time, (2d Oct., 1784,) proposed him as a member of the Physical Society, into which, on the 16th of the same month, he was admitted. This was the oldest and most distinguished society of the kind in London, numbering among its supporters and frequenters nearly all the leading members of the profession, who communicated and discussed topics on professional subjects at its meetings. The rules were very strict: and we find our newly admitted friend infringing them on the very first meeting ensuing that on which he had been introduced, as appears by the following entry in the journal of the society,—"October 23d, 1784. Mr &c., in the chair. Messrs Astley Cooper, &c., &c., fined sixpence each, for leaving the room without permission of the president."[44]

It is hardly to be wondered at that so young and inexperienced a person should have found attendance at the meetings of the society very irksome; them matters discussed being necessarily beyond his comprehension. We find, therefore, that during the first session he was continually 503
fined for nonattendance. The first paper which he communicated was, singularly enough, on cancer in the breast—a subject to which, throughout his life, he paid great attention, and on which he was earnestly engaged when death terminated his labours.[45] Whether he had selected this subject himself, or any one else had suggested it, does not appear; but the coincidence is curious and interesting. A very few months after Astley's introduction to the profession, he found the yoke of his stern and rigid uncle too heavy for him; and, in compliance with his own request, he was transferred as a pupil to Mr Cline, at the ensuing Christmas, (1784.) From that moment his character and conduct underwent a signal change for the better. This was partly to be traced to the stimulus which he derived from the superior fame of his new teacher, and the engaging character of his instructions and professional example. Certain, however, it is, that Astley Cooper had become quite a new man. "After six months," says he himself,[46] "I was articled to Mr Cline; and now I began to go into the dissecting-room, and to acquire knowledge, though still in a desultory way." His biographer states that "Astley Cooper seems at once to have thrown away his idleness, and all those trifling pursuits which had seduced him from his studies; and at the same time to have devoted himself to the acquisition of professional knowledge, as well by diligent labour in the dissecting-room, as by serious attention to the lectures on anatomy, and other subjects of study in the hospitals."[47] He had, at this time, barely entered his seventeenth year; and such was the rapidity of his progress that, by the ensuing spring, (1785,) he had become as distinguished for industry as formerly he had been notorious for idleness, and had obtained a knowledge of anatomy far surpassing that of any fellow-student of his own standing.[48] His biographer institutes an interesting comparison between Astley Cooper and the great John Hunter, at the period of their respectively commencing their professional studies. Both of them threatened, by their idle and dissipated conduct, to ruin their prospects, and blight the hopes of their friends; both, however, quickly reformed, and became pre-eminent for their devotion to the acquisition of professional knowledge, exhibiting many points of similarity in their noble pursuit of science. Astley Cooper, however, never disgraced his superior birth and station, by the coarser species of dissipation in which it would seem that the illustrious Hunter had once indulged—for illustrious indeed, as a physiologist and anatomist, was John Hunter; a powerful and original thinker, and an indefatigable searcher after physical truth. Mr Cline had the merit of being one of the earliest to appreciate the views of this distinguished philosopher, whose doctrines were long in making their way;[49] and Mr Cline's sagacious opinion on this subject, exercised a marked and beneficial influence on the mind of his gifted pupil, Astley Cooper. During Astley Cooper's second year of professional study, (1785-6,) he continued to make extraordinarily rapid progress in the study of anatomy, to which he had devoted himself with increasing energy; and his efforts, and his progress, attracted the attention of all who came within his sphere of action. From a very early period he saw, either by his own sagacity, or through that of his skilful and experienced tutor, Mr Cline, that an exact and familiar knowledge of anatomy was the only solid foundation on which to rest the superstructure of surgical skill.

"We now find him," says his biographer, "devoting himself with the most earnest activity to the acquisition of a knowledge of anatomy,—one of the most valuable departments of study to which the younger student can devote himself, and without a thorough knowledge of which, professional practice, whether in the hands of the surgeon or physician, can be little better than mere empiricism. The intense application which Astley Cooper devoted to this pursuit, in the early years of his pupilage, was not only useful, inasmuch as it furnished him with a correct knowledge of the structure of the human frame,—the form and situation of its various parts, and the varieties in 504
position to which they are occasionally liable,—but it paved the way for those numerous discoveries made by him in 'pathological anatomy,' which have already been, and must continue to be, the sources of so many advantages in the practice of our profession."—(Pp. 117-118.)

He was chiefly stimulated to exertion in this department by the ambition to become a "demonstrator" of anatomy in the dissecting-room—an office greatly coveted, being "the first public professional capacity in which anatomical teachers of this country are engaged."[50] Mr

Cooper thus clearly indicates the duties of this important functionary:—

> "There is scarcely any science, in the early study of which constant advice is so much required as in the study of anatomy. The textures which it is the business of the young anatomist to unravel are so delicate and complicated,—the filaments composing them so fine, and yet so important, that in following them from their sources to their places of destination, and tracing their various connexions, he is constantly in danger of overlooking or destroying some, and becoming bewildered in the investigation and pursuit of others. To direct and render assistance to the inexperienced student under these difficulties, it is the custom for one or more accomplished anatomists, *Demonstrators* as they are styled, to be constantly at hand."—(Pp. 119-120.)

At the time of which we are speaking, a Mr Haighton, afterwards better known in the profession as Dr Haighton, was the demonstrator in the school presided over by Mr Cline; but he was extremely unpopular among the students, on account of his coarse repulsive manner and violent temper. Young Cooper's great affability and good nature, added to his known connexion with Mr Cline, his constant attendance in the dissecting-room, and his evident superiority in anatomical knowledge, caused him to be gradually more and more consulted by the students, instead of Mr Haighton, who was greatly his superior in years. Astley Cooper perfectly appreciated his position. "I was a great favourite," says he,[51] "with the students, because I was affable, and showed that I was desirous of communicating what information I could, while Mr Haighton was the reverse of this." Astley Cooper knew that, in the event of Mr Haighton's surrendering his post, he himself was already in a position to aspire to be his successor, from his personal qualifications, his popularity, his growing reputation, and the influence which he derived through his uncle Mr Cooper and Mr Cline. Yet was the ambitious young anatomist barely in his eighteenth year!

Feeling the ground pretty firm beneath him—that he had already "become an efficient anatomist," he began to attend Mr Cline in his visits to the patients in the hospital; exhibiting a watchful scrutiny on every such occasion, making notes of the cases, and seizing every opportunity which presented itself of testing the accuracy of Mr Cline's and his own conclusions, by means of *post-mortem* examinations. At the Physical Society, also, he had turned over quite a new leaf, being absent at only one meeting during the session, and taking so active a part in the business of the Society, that he was chosen one of the managing committee. At the close of his second session,—viz. in the summer of 1786—he went home as usual to Yarmouth, and was received by his exulting parents and friends with all the admiration which the rising young surgeon could have desired. His mother thus expresses herself in one of her letters to him at this time, in terms which the affectionate son must have cherished as precious indeed:—

> "I cannot express the delight you gave your father and me, my dearest Astley, by the tenderness of your attentions, and the variety of your attainments. You seem to have improved every moment of your time, and to have soared not only beyond our expectations, but to the utmost height of our wishes. How much did it gratify me to observe the very great resemblance in person and mind you bear to your angelic sister! —the same sweet smile of complacency and affection, the same ever wakeful attention to alleviate pain and to communicate pleasure! Heaven grant that you may as much resemble her in every Christian grace as you do in every moral virtue."—(P. 134.)

During his sojourn in the country, he seems to have devoted himself zealously to the acquisition of professional knowledge, and to have formed an acquaintance with an able fellow-student, Mr Holland, who in the ensuing year became his companion at Mr Cline's, at whose residence they prosecuted their anatomical studies with the utmost zeal and system. During this session, Astley Cooper found time, amidst all his harassing engagements, to attend a course of lectures delivered by John Hunter, near Leicester Square. It required no slight amount of previous training, and scientific acquisition, to follow the illustrious lecturer through his deep, novel, and comprehensive disquisitions, enhanced as the difficulty was by his imperfect and unsatisfactory mode of expression and delivery. Nothing, however, could withstand the determination of Astley Cooper, who devoted all the powers of his mind to mastering the doctrines enunciated by Hunter, and confirming their truth by his own dissections. The results were such as to afford satisfaction to the high-spirited student for the remainder of his life; but of these matters we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. During this session, he caught the gaol-fever from a capital convict whom he visited in Newgate, and, but for the affectionate attentions of Mr Cline and his family, would, in all probability, have sunk under the attack. As soon as he could be safely removed, he was carried to his native county, and in a month or two's time was restored to health.



It was during this session that he seems to have commenced his experiments on living animals, for the purpose of advancing anatomical and physiological knowledge. The following incident we shall give in the language of Mr Holland, the companion above alluded to, of Astley Cooper:—

> "I recollect one day being out with him, when a dog followed us, and accompanied us home, little foreseeing the fate that awaited him. He was confined for a few days, till we had ascertained that no owner would come to claim him, and then brought up to be the subject of various operations. The first of these was the tying one of the femoral arteries. When poor Chance, for so we appropriately named the dog, was sufficiently recovered from this, one of the humeral arteries was subjected to a similar process. After the lapse of a few weeks, the ill-fated animal was killed, the vessels injected, and

preparations were made from each of the limbs."—(P. 142.)

It is impossible to peruse this paragraph without feelings of pain, akin to disgust, and even horror. The poor animal, which had trusted to the mercy, as it were to the honour and humanity, of man—was dealt with as though it had been a mere mass of inanimate matter! One's feelings revolt from the whole procedure: but the question after all is, whether reason, and the necessity of the case, afford any justification for such an act. If not, then it will be difficult, as the reader will hereafter see, to vindicate the memory of Sir Astley Cooper from the charge of systematic barbarity. On this subject, however, we shall content ourselves, for the present, with giving two passages from the work under consideration—one expressing very forcibly and closely the opinions of Mr Bransby Cooper, the other those of an eminent physician and friend of Mr Cooper, Dr Blundell.

> "By this means only," says Mr Cooper, speaking of experiments on living animals, "are theories proved erroneous or correct, new facts brought to light, important discoveries made in physiology, and sounder doctrines and more scientific modes of treatment arrived at. Nor is this all; for the surgeon's hand becomes tutored to act with steadiness, while he is under the influence of the natural abhorrence of giving pain to the subject of experiment, and he himself is thus schooled for the severer ordeal of operating on the human frame. I may mention another peculiar advantage in proof of the necessity of such apparent cruelty—that no practising on the dead body can accustom the mind of the surgeon to the physical phenomena presented to his notice in operations on the living. The detail of the various differences which exist under the two circumstances need hardly be explained, as there are few minds to which they will not readily present themselves."—(P. 144.)

> "They who object," says Dr Blundell, "to the putting of animals to death for a scientific purpose, do not reflect that the death of an animal is a very different thing from that of man. To an animal, death is an eternal sleep; to man, it is the commencement of a new and untried state of existence.... Shall it be said that the objects of physiological science are not worth the sacrifice of a few animals? Men are constantly forming the most erroneous estimates of the comparative importance of objects in this world. Of what importance is it now to mankind whether Antony or Augustus filled the Imperial chair? And what will it matter, a few centuries hence, whether England or France swept the ocean with her fleets? But mankind will always be equally interested in the great truths deducible from science, and in the inferences derived from physiological experiments. I will ask, then, whether the infliction of pain on the lower animals in experiments is not justified by the object for which those experiments are instituted,—namely, the advancement of physiological knowledge? Is not the infliction of pain, or even of death, on man, often justified by the end for which it is inflicted? Does not the general lead his troops to slaughter, to preserve the liberties of his country? It is not the infliction of pain or death for justifiable objects, but it is the taking a savage pleasure in the infliction of pain or death, which is reprehensible.... Here, then, we take our stand; we defend the sacrifice of animals in so far as it is calculated to contribute to the improvement of science; and, in those parts of physiological science immediately applicable to medical practice, we maintain that such a sacrifice is not only justifiable, but a sacred duty."—(Pp. 145-6.)



We have ourselves thought much upon this painful and difficult subject, and are bound to say that we feel unable to answer the reasonings of these gentlemen. The animals have been placed within our power, by our common Maker, to take their labour, and their very lives, for our benefit —abstaining from the infliction of needless pain on those whom God has made susceptible of pain. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast*, (Proverbs, xii. 10,) that is to say, does not wantonly inflict pain upon it, or destroy it; but if a surgeon honestly believed that he could successfully perform an operation on a human being, so as to save life, if he first tried the operation upon a living animal, but could not without it, we apprehend, all sentimentality and prejudice apart, that he would be justified in making that experiment. *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.*—(Luke, xii. 6, 7.) The reader need not be reminded whose awful words these are; nor shall we dilate upon the inferences to be drawn from them, with reference to the point under consideration.

Availing himself of a clause in his articles of pupilage, entitling him to spend one session in Edinburgh, he resolved to do so in the winter of 1787,—taking his departure for the north in the month of October. Seldom has a young English medical student gone to the Scottish metropolis under better auspices than those under which Astley Cooper found himself established there at the commencement of the medical year. He had letters of introduction to the most eminent men, not only in his own profession, but in the sister sciences. He was little more than nineteen years of age, and even then an admirable anatomist, and bent upon extracting, during his brief sojourn, every possible addition to his professional knowledge. He instantly set about his work in earnest, hiring a room for six shillings a week at No. 5 Bristo Street, close to the principal scene of his studies, and dining for a shilling a-day at a neighbouring eating-house. This he did, not from compulsory economy, for he was amply supplied with money, and free in spending it, but from a determination to put himself out of the way of temptation of any kind, and to pursue his studies without the chance of disturbance. His untiring zeal and assiduity, with his frequent

manifestation of superior capacity and acquirements, very soon attracted the notice of his professors, and secured him their marked approbation. During the seven months which he spent there, he acquired a great addition to his knowledge and reputation. His acute and observant mind found peculiar pleasure in comparing English and Scottish methods of scientific procedure, and deriving thence new views and suggestions for future use. The chief professors whom he attended were, Dr Gregory, Dr Black, Dr Hamilton, and Dr Rutherford; and he always spoke of the advantages which their teaching and practice had conferred upon him with the highest 507
respect. Of Dr Gregory, Mr Cooper tells us several interesting anecdotes, illustrative of a rough but generous and noble character.[52] On the 1st December 1787, Astley Cooper was elected a member of the Royal Medical Society, the meetings of which he attended regularly; and so greatly distinguished himself in discussion, by his knowledge and ability, that on his departure he was offered the presidency if he would return. He always based his success, on these occasions, upon the novel and accurate doctrines and views which he had obtained from John Hunter and Mr Cline. His engaging manners made him a universal favourite at the college, as was evidenced by his fellow-students electing him the president of a society established to protect their rights against certain supposed usurpations of the professors. He was also elected a member of the Speculative Society, where he read a paper in support of Dr Berkeley's theory of the non-existence of matter. From the character of Sir Astley Cooper's mind and studies, we are not disposed to give him credit for being able to deal satisfactorily with such a subject, or, indeed, with anything metaphysical. Though a letter from Professor Alison[53] represents Astley Cooper as having "taken an interest in the metaphysical questions which then occupied much of the attention of the Edinburgh students," we suspect that for "metaphysical" should be substituted "political." He himself speaks thus frankly on the subject,—"Dugald Stewart was beyond my power of appreciation. *Metaphysics were foreign to my mind, which was never captivated by speculation.*"[54] Throughout his career he proved himself to have here taken a proper view of his capacity and tendency. He was pre-eminently a *practical* man, taught in that spirit, and enjoined the cultivation of it. "That is the way, sir," he would say, "to learn your profession—look for yourself; never mind what other people may say—no opinion or theories can interfere with information acquired from dissection."[55] Again, in his great work on *Dislocations and Fractures*, he speaks in the same strain:—

> "Young medical men find it so much easier a task to speculate than to observe, that they are too apt to be pleased with some sweeping theory, which saves them the trouble of observing the processes of nature; and they have afterwards, when they embark in their professional practice, not only everything still to learn, but also to abandon those false impressions which hypothesis is sure to create. Nothing is known in our profession by guess; and I do not believe that, from the first dawn of medical science to the present moment, a single correct idea has ever emanated from conjecture alone. It is right, therefore, that those who are studying their profession, should be aware that there is no short road to knowledge; that observations on the diseased living, examinations of the dead, and experiments upon living animals, are the only sources of true knowledge; and that deductions from these are the solid basis of legitimate theory."—(P. 53.)

In one respect, he excelled all his Scottish companions—in the quickness and accuracy with which he judged of the nature of cases brought into the Infirmary—a power which he gratefully referred to the teaching and example of his gifted tutor Mr Cline.[56] The young English student became, indeed, so conspicuous for his professional acquirements and capabilities, that he was constantly consulted, in difficult cases, by his fellow-students, and even by the house-surgeons. This circumstance had a natural tendency to sharpen his observation of all the cases coming under his notice, and to develop his power of ready discrimination. This, however, was by no means his only obligation to the Scottish medical school; he was indebted to the peculiar *method* of its scholastic arrangements, for the correction of a great fault, of which he had become conscious—viz., the want of any systematic disposition of his multifarious acquirements. "This order," says Mr Cooper, "was of the greatest importance to Sir Astley Cooper, and gave him not only a facility for acquiring fresh knowledge, but also stamped a value on the information he already possessed, but which, from its previous want of arrangement, was scarcely ever in a state to be applied to its full and appropriate use. The correction of this fault, which gave him 508
afterwards his well-known facility of using for each particular case that came before him, all his knowledge and experience that in any way could be brought to bear upon it, Sir Astley always attributed to the school of Edinburgh. If this advantage only had been gained, the seven months spent in that city were, indeed, well bestowed."[57]

At the close of the session, Astley Cooper determined, before quitting the country, to make the tour of the Highlands. He purchased, therefore, two horses, and hired a servant, and set off on his exhilarating and invigorating expedition without any companion. "I have heard him," says his biographer,[58] "describe the unalloyed delight with which he left the confinement of the capital to enter into the wild beauties of the mountain scenery. It seemed as if the whole world was before him, and that there were no limits to the extent of his range." He has left no record of the impressions which his tour had produced on his mind. On his return, while in the north of England, he suddenly found himself in a sad scrape: he had spent all his money, and was forced to dismiss his servant, sell one of his horses, and even to pawn his watch, to enable himself to return home![59] This dire dilemma had been occasioned, it seems, by a grand entertainment, inconsiderately expensive, which he had given to his friends and acquaintance on quitting Edinburgh. He himself said, that this entertainment made a deep impression on his mind, and

prevented him from ever falling into a similar difficulty.[60] To this little incident may doubtless be referred a considerable change in his disposition with regard to pecuniary matters. When young, he was liberal, even to extravagance, and utterly careless about preserving any ratio between his expenditure and his means. Many traits of his generosity are given in these volumes.

Astley Cooper always spoke of his sojourn in Scotland with satisfaction and gratitude: not only on account of the solid acquisition of professional knowledge which he had made there, and the generous cordiality and confidence with which he had been treated by both professors and students; but also of the social pleasures which he had enjoyed, in such few intervals of relaxation as his ravenous love of study permitted. He was, we repeat, formed for society. We have ourselves frequently seen him, and regard him as having been one of the handsomest and most fascinating men of our time. Not a trace was there in his symmetrical features, and their gay, frank expression, of the exhausting, repulsive labour of the dissecting-room and hospital. You would, in looking at him, have thought him a mere man of pleasure and fashion; so courtly and cheerful were his unaffected carriage, countenance, and manners. The instant that you were with him, you felt at your ease. How such a man must have enjoyed the social circles of Edinburgh! How many of its fair maidens' hearts must have fluttered when in proximity to their enchanting English visitor! Thus their views must have been darkened by regret at his departure. And let us place on record the impressions which the fair Athenians produced upon Astley Cooper. "He always spoke of the Edinburgh ladies with the highest encomiums; and used to maintain that they possessed an affability and simplicity of manners which he had not often found elsewhere, in conjunction with the superior intellectual attainments which at the same time generally distinguished them."[60] But, in justice to their southern sisters, we must hint, though in anticipation, that he twice selected a wife from among them.

*Printed by William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh.*

## FOOTNOTES:

1 *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, iii. 205, 206.

2 *Critical and Historical Essays*, iii. 446, 447.

3 *Ibid.*, iii. 144-146.

4 *Critical and Historical Essays*, iii. 141, 142.

5 *History*, i. 610, 611.

6 Vol. i. p. 127, 128.

7 *The Physical Atlas: A series of Maps and Notes on the Geographical Distribution of Natural Phenomena.* By Alexander Keith Johnston, Geographer in Ordinary to Her Majesty, &c. Folio.

8 These pages were sent to press before the author had seen Mr Wakefield's recent work on Colonisation, wherein the views here expressed are enforced with great earnestness and conspicuous sagacity. The author is not the less pleased at this coincidence of opinion, because he has the misfortune to dissent from certain other parts of Mr Wakefield's elaborate theory.

9 *Original Treatises on the Arts of Painting.* Preceded by a General Introduction, with Translations, Prefaces, and Notes. By Mrs Merrifield. 2 vols.

10 In the third Report a recipe is given by Mr Eastlake, as communicated by "Mr John King of Bristol," who is spoken of as a "chemist." The recipe itself, in the Report, is considered an improvement. We wish, however, to correct an error which somewhat disparages the scientific reputation of a deceased friend, whom we greatly esteemed for his many virtues, as well as for his enthusiasm, knowledge, and taste, in all that regarded art. Mr King was not a chemist, but an eminent surgeon of Clifton. Had he been a chemist, his recipe would have been drawn up with greater chemical correctness: it is certainly not *secundum artem chemicam*. We may here state that we have heard from him, that early in life he had received this recipe from an aged ecclesiastic, as the veritable recipe of ancient times.

11 *Poems.* By Alfred Tennyson. Fifth Edition.

*The Princess: a Medley.* By Alfred Tennyson.

12 *The Romance of the Peerage, or Curiosities of Family History.* By George Lillie Craik. Vols. I. and II. London: 1849.

*Celebrated Trials connected with the Aristocracy in the Relations of Private Life.* By Peter Burke, Esq., of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law. Pp. 505. London: 1849.

*Anecdotes of the Aristocracy, and Episodes in Ancestral Story.* By J. Bernard Burke, Esq. 2 Vols. London: 1849.

13 Themistocles;—his tomb was on the chore at Salamis.

14 "If thou meetest one of those small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny—it is better to give him twopence. If it be stormy weather," adds Lamb, in that tone of tender humour so

exclusively his own—"If it be stormy weather, and to the proper troubles of his occupation a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester."—ESSAYS BY ELIA—*The praise of Chimney Sweepers.*

15 "Morning"—[in bed.] "Here is a restless dog crying 'Cabbages and Savoys,' plagues me every morning about this time. He is now at it. I wish his largest cabbage were sticking in his throat!'—*Journal to Stella, 13th December 1712.* Swift at this period (he was then at the loftiest summit of his importance and expectations, the caressed and hourly companion of Harley and Bolingbroke, and a chief stay of their ministry) lodged "in a single room, up two pair of stairs," "over against the house in Little Rider Street, where D.D. [Stella] had lodged."

16 For several instances of the true untainted feeling displayed through life by this charming woman, see the pleasing memoirs of her, in Mrs Jamieson's *Beauties of the Court of King Charles II.*, 4to Edition, 1833.

17 *Claudia and Pudens. An Attempt to show that Claudia, mentioned in St Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, was a British Princess.* By JOHN WILLIAMS, A.M., Oxon, Archdeacon of Cardigan, F.R.S.E., &c. Llandovery: William Rees. London: 1848. Longman & Co.

18 *Life of Sir Astley Cooper, interspersed with Sketches from his Note-Books of Distinguished Contemporary Characters.* By BRANSBY LAKE COOPER, Esq., F.R.S. 2 vols. London: 1843.

19 "Sir Astley Cooper has, on one occasion, stated, in his memoranda, that he had educated *eight thousand surgeons*!"—*Memoirs*, vol. ii., p. 426.

20 "From the period of Astley's appointment to Guy's," says Dr Roots, in a communication to the author of this work, (vol. i., p. 315,) "until the moment of his latest breath, he was everything and all to the suffering and afflicted: his *name* was a host, but his *presence* brought confidence and comfort; and I have often observed, that on an operating day, should anything occur of an untoward character in the theatre, the moment Astley Cooper entered, and the instrument was in his hand, every difficulty was overcome, and safety generally ensued."

21 *Introd.* p. xi.

22 *Introd.* p. xi.

23 *Ib.* p. ix.

24 *Ib.* pp. x. xi.

25 *Ib.*

26 *Ib.* pp. xv. xvi.

27 *Introd.* pp. xiv. xv.

28 *Preface*, pp. v. vi.

29 Vol. ii. pp. 260, 261.

30 His great-grandfather, Samuel Cooper, married Henrietta Maria Newton, the daughter of Thomas Newton, Esq., of Norwich, a relation—it is believed the *nephew*—of the great philosopher.—Vol. i., p. 1.

31 His works are highly spoken of, and a list of them given, in the *$1*/cite>, vol. lxx., pp. 89, 177.

32 Sir Astley Cooper always strongly reprobated the practice of a mother's neglecting to suckle her child, when able to do so; and we thank his biographer for giving us the following convincing and instructive passage from one of the illustrious surgeon's latest publications. We commend it to the attention of every fine lady mother, who may stand in need of the reproof:—"If a woman be healthy, and she has milk in her breast, there can be no question of the propriety of her giving suck. If such a question be put, the answer should be, that all animals, even those of the most ferocious character, show affection for their young—do not forsake them, but yield them their milk—do not neglect, but nurse and watch over them; and shall woman, the loveliest of Nature's creatures, possessed of reason as well as instinct, refuse that nourishment to her offspring which no other animal withholds, and hesitate to perform that duty which all of the mammalia class invariably discharge? Besides, it may be truly said, that nursing the infant is most beneficial both to the mother and the child, and that women who have been previously delicate, often become strong and healthy while they suckle.

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"A female of luxury and refinement is often in this respect a worse mother than the inhabitant of the meanest hovel, who nurses her children, and brings them up healthy under privations and bodily exertions to obtain subsistence, which might almost excuse her refusal.

"The frequent sight of the child, watching it at the breast, the repeated calls for attention, the dawn of each attack of disease, and the cause of its little cries, are constantly begetting feelings of affection, which a mother who does not suckle seldom feels in an equal degree, when she allows the care of her child to devolve upon another, and suffers her maternal feelings to give place to indolence or caprice, on the empty calls of a fashionable and luxurious life."

33 Pp. 47-48.

34 Vol. i., p. 57.

35 A common term in Norfolk for an isolated piece of water.

36 Vol., i., pp. 61, 62.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 70.

38 Vol. i. pp. 71, 72.

39 *Ibid.* p. 81.

40 Vol. i. p. 85.

41 Vol. ii. p. 421.

42 Vol. i. p. 88.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 100.

44 Vol. i., p. 106.

45 Vol. i., p. 107.

46 *Ib.*, p. 112.

47 *Ib.*, p. 113.

48 *Ib.*, p. 114.

49 *Ib.*, p. 94.

50 Vol. i. p. 119.

51 P. 134.

52 Vol. i. pp. 161, 164.

53 *Ib.* p. 213.

54 *Ib.* p. 172.

55 Vol. ii. p. 53.

56 Vol. i. p. 173.

57 Vol. i. pp. 174-175.

58 *Ib.* p. 175.

59 *Ib.* p. 178.

60 *Ib.* p. 172-3.

**Transcriber's Note:**

Inconsistent spelling and hyphenation are as in the original.

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