

THE
LIBERAL.

VERSE AND PROSE FROM THE
SOUTH.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

NEVER was a greater outcry raised among the hypocrites of all classes, than against this publication. What with the "great vulgar" protesting, the "small" abusing, lawyers denouncing, "divines" cursing, scandal-mongers bawling, dunces of all sorts shrieking—all the sore places of the community seem to have been touched, and the "body politic" agitated accordingly.

"As when the long-ear'd, milky mothers wait
At some sick miser's triple-bolted gate,
For their defrauded, absent foals they make
A moan so loud, that all the Guild awake;
Sore sighs Sir Gilbert, starting at the bray,
From dreams of millions, and three groats to pay:
So swells each windpipe: ass intones to ass,
Harmonic twang! of leather, horn, and brass;
Such as from lab'ring lungs th' enthusiast blows,
High sounds, attempered to the vocal nose;
Or such as bellow from the deep divine:
There, Webster! peal'd thy voice; and, Whitfield! thine;
But far o'er all sonorous Blackmore's strain:
Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again.
In Tottenham fields the brethren with amaze,
Prick all their ears up, and forget to graze!
Long Chancery Lane, retentive, rolls the sound,
And courts to courts return it round and round."—*Dunciad*.

All these people deserve no better answer than a laughing quotation. But we will just admonish some well-meaning persons,

not over strong in their understandings, that with respect to the religious part of the business, they are most grossly and "irreligiously" taken in, if they suffer themselves to be persuaded, that it is we who would lessen the divinity of what is really divine. It is these pretended "divines" and their abettors, who lessen it; —those raisers-up of absurd and inhuman imaginations, which they first impudently confound with divine things, and then, because we shew the nonsense of the imaginations, as impudently call their expositors blasphemers. Were we inclined to retort their own terms upon them, we should say that there was nothing in the world more "blasphemous" than such charges of blasphemy. The whole secret is just what we have stated. They first assume unworthy notions of the Divine Spirit, and then because that very Spirit is in fact vindicated from their degradations by an exposure of the absurdity and impossibility of such notions, they assume a divine right to denounce the vindicators, and to rouse up all the fears, weakness, and ignorance of society, in defence of the degradation. Of this stuff have the "Scribes, Pharisees, and Hypocrites" in all ages been made, whenever established opinion was to be divested of any of its corruptions. "He blasphemeth!" quoth the modern tribunal. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" quoth the Quarterly. *This* is the point, which persons who undertake to be didactic in Reviews, should answer; and not a hundred things which we never said.

There is a more generous indignation which we allow might be felt by some persons upon another point, but still owing to real want of information on the subject. We allude to what has been said in the *Liberal* of the late King. The *Vision of Judgment* was written in a fit of indignation and disgust at Mr. Southey's nonsense; and we confess that had we seen a copy of it in Italy, before it went to press (for we had none by us) we should have taken more pains to explain one or two expressions with regard to that Prince. Had the Preface also, entrusted to Mr. Murray, been sent, as it ought to have been, to the new publisher, much of the unintended part of the effect produced upon weak minds

would have been explained away at once ;—that effect, which the hypocritical enemies of the Liberal at once delighted to assist in producing, and most pretended to deprecate. But the virtues of the late King, though of a negative kind, were of a kind nevertheless exceedingly calculated to excite a great many feelings in favour of him in a society like that of England ; while his vices (pardon us, dear self-love of our countrymen, for supposing that you *have* vices) were equally calculated to be overlooked in a certain general blindness prevailing on that subject. Yet to those vices,—extreme self-will for instance, sullenness of purpose, a strong natural vindictiveness, &c. was owing the bloody protraction of the American War : to those vices, as well as to Mr. Pitt's haughty sympathy with them, was mainly owing the general war against liberty which was roused among the despots of the continent : and if certain staid and well-intentioned people suppose, that persons quite as moral and as pious as themselves, could not hold the late King in a light very different from their own, and much more revolting than even we hold it, they are most egregiously mistaken. What was thought of George the Third's natural character by a man of the highest respectability, who knew him intimately at court,—to wit, his own Governor when Prince of Wales,—may be seen by those *who wish to do us justice*, in the Memoirs of James, Earl of Waldegrave, published by the aforesaid Mr. Murray. See also Dr. Franklin's Life, Junius, and the opinion of Mr. Southey's friend, the author of Gebir. What the Earl of Waldegrave prophesied of that character, may be seen also in Mr. Murray's publication. We think that prophecy came to pass. The most pious and virtuous person we ever knew, even in the ordinary sense of those terms (and she might have stood by the side of the most virtuous, in the most extraordinary) thought so too, and taught some of us to think so in our childhood. The ruin of her family and prospects was brought upon her, to her knowledge, by that Prince's temper and obstinacy ; and though the strict religious way in which she was brought up might have induced her to carry too far her opinion

of the *cause* of that calamitous and awful affliction under which he suffered, the parasites of his memory are under a much greater mistake, when instead of turning their knowledge on that point to its great and proper account (which has never yet been hinted even in this great nation of reasoning freemen!) they fancy they can put down all thoughts upon such subjects, and all the unfortunate consequences of such *facts*, by raising a hypocritical cry against a few hasty expressions, uttered in that very spirit of sympathy with the community at large, which they count as nothing.

We cannot close this Advertisement without adding our cordial voice (truly humble on the present occasion) to the universal harmony prevailing in England on the subject of the glorious rights and equally glorious behaviour of Spain. We must also say, how much surprise and relief have been afforded to us by the political plain-speaking (granting even it ends in little more) of the accomplished person who has succeeded that vizor of a statesman, Lord Castlereagh.

THE
LIBERAL.

No. III.

THE BLUES,
A LITERARY ECLOGUE.

“Nimium nè crede colori.”—VIRGIL.

O trust not, ye beautiful creatures, to hue,
Though your *hair* were as *red* as your *stockings* are *blue*.

ECLOGUE FIRST.

LONDON.—*Before the Door of a Lecture Room.*

Enter TRACY, meeting INKEL.

INKEL.

YOU'RE too late.

TRACY.

Is it over?

INKEL.

Nor will be this hour.

But the benches are crammed, like a garden in flower,
With the pride of our Belles, who have made it the fashion;
So instead of “*beaux arts*,” we may say “*la belle passion*”

VOL. II.

B

For learning, which lately has taken the lead in
The world, and set all the fine gentlemen reading.

TRACY.

I know it too well, and have worn out my patience
With studying to study your new publications.
There's Vamp, Scamp, and Mouthy, and Wordswords and Co.
With their damnable—

INKEL.

Hold, my good friend, do you know
Whom you speak to?

TRACY.

Right well, boy, and so does "the Row:"
You're an author—a poet—

INKEL.

And think you that I
Can stand tamely in silence, to hear you decry
The Muses?

TRACY.

Excuse me; I meant no offence
To the Nine; though the number who make some pretence
To their favours is such—but the subject to drop,
I am just piping hot from a publisher's shop
(Next door to the pastry-cook's; so that when I
Cannot find the new volume I wanted to buy
On the bibliopole's shelves, it is only two paces,
As one finds every author in one of those places)
Where I just had been skimming a charming critique,
So studded with wit, and so sprinkled with Greek!
Where your friend—you know who—has just got such a
threshing,
That it is, as the phrase goes, extremely "*refreshing*."
What a beautiful word!

INKEL.

Very true; 'tis so soft
And so cooling—they use it a little too oft;
And the papers have got it at last—but no matter.
So they've cut up our friend then?

TRACY.

Not left him a tatter—
Not a rag of his present or past reputation,
Which they call a disgrace to the age and the nation.

INKEL.

I'm sorry to hear this; for friendship, you know—
Our poor friend!—but I thought it would terminate so.
Our friendship is such, I'll read nothing to shock it.
You don't happen to have the Review in your pocket?

TRACY.

No; I left a round dozen of authors and others
(Very sorry, no doubt, since the cause is a brother's)
All scrambling and jostling, like so many imps,
And on fire with impatience to get the next glimpse.

INKEL.

Let us join them.

TRACY.

What, won't you return to the lecture?

INKEL.

Why, the place is so crammed, there's not room for a spectre.
Besides, our friend Scamp is to-day so absurd—

TRACY.

How can you know that till you hear him?

INKEL.

I heard
Quite enough; and to tell you the truth, my retreat
Was from his vile nonsense, no less than the heat.

THE BLUES.

TRACY.

I have had no great loss then?

INKEL.

Loss!—such a palaver!

I'd inoculate sooner my wife with the slaver
Of a dog when gone rabid, than listen two hours
To the torrent of trash which around him he pours,
Pumped up with such effort, disgorged with such labour,
That——come——do not make me speak ill of one's neighbour.

TRACY.

I make you!

INKEL.

Yes, you! I said nothing until
You compelled me, by speaking the truth——

TRACY.

To speak ill?

Is that your deduction?

INKEL.

When speaking of Scamp ill,
I certainly *follow, not set* an example.
The fellow's a fool, an impostor, a zany.

TRACY.

And the crowd of to-day shows that one fool makes many.
But we two will be wise.

INKEL.

Pray, then, let us retire.

TRACY.

I would, but——

INKEL.

There must be attraction much higher
Than Scamp, or the Jews'-harp he nicknames his lyre,
To call *you* to this hot-bed.

TRACY.

I own it—'tis true—

A fair lady—

INKEL.

A spinster?

TRACY.

Miss Lilac!

INKEL.

The Blue!

The heiress?

TRACY.

The angel!

INKEL.

The devil! why, man!

Pray, get out of this hobble as fast as you can.

You wed with Miss Lilac! 'twould be your perdition:

She's a poet, a chemist, a mathematician.

TRACY.

I say she's an angel.

INKEL.

Say rather an *angle*.

If you and she marry, you'll certainly wrangle.

I say she's a Blue, man, as blue as the ether.

TRACY.

And is that any cause for not coming together?

INKEL.

Humph! I can't say I know any happy alliance

Which has lately sprung up from a wedlock with science.

She's so learned in all things, and fond of concerning

Herself in all matters connected with learning,

That—

TRACY.

What?

THE BLUES.

INKEL.

I perhaps may as well hold my tongue ;
But there's five hundred people can tell you you're wrong.

TRACY.

You forget Lady Lilac's as rich as a Jew.

INKEL.

Is it Miss, or the cash of mamma, you pursue ?

TRACY.

Why, Jack, I'll be frank with you—something of both.
The girl's a fine girl.

INKEL.

And you feel nothing loth
To her good lady mother's reversion ; and yet
Her life is as good as your own, I will bet.

TRACY.

Let her live ; and, as long as she likes, I demand
Nothing more than the heart of her daughter and hand.

INKEL.

Why, that heart's in the inkstand—that hand on the pen.

TRACY.

Apropos—Will you write me a song now and then ?

INKEL.

To what purpose ?

TRACY.

You know, my dear friend, that in prose
My talent is decent, as far as it goes ;
But in rhyme—

INKEL.

You're a terrible stick, to be sure.

TRACY.

I own it ; and yet, in these times, there's no lure
For the heart of the fair like a stanza or two ;
And so, as I can't, will you furnish a few ?

INKEL.

In your name?

TRACY.

In my name. I will copy them out,
To slip into her hand at the very next rout.

INKEL.

Are you so far advanced as to hazard this?

TRACY.

Why,
Do you think me subdued by a Blue-stocking's eye,
So far as to tremble to tell her in rhyme
What I've told her in prose, at the least, as sublime?

INKEL.

As sublime! If it be so, no need of my Muse.

TRACY.

But consider, dear Inkel, she's one of the "Blues."

INKEL.

As sublime!—Mr. Tracy—I've nothing to say.
Stick to prose—As sublime!!—but I wish you good day.

TRACY.

Nay, stay, my dear fellow—consider—I'm wrong;
I own it; but, prithee, compose me the song.

INKEL.

As sublime!!

TRACY.

I but used the expression in haste.

INKEL.

That may be, Mr. Tracy, but shows damned bad taste.

TRACY.

I own it—I know it—acknowledge it—what
Can I say to you more?

INKEL.

I see what you'd be at:

You disparage my parts with insidious abuse,
Till you think you can turn them best to your own use.

TRACY.

And is that not a sign I respect them?

INKEL.

Why that

To be sure makes a difference.

TRACY.

I know what is what :

And you, who're a man of the gay world, no less
Than a poet of t'other, may easily guess
That I never could mean, by a word, to offend
A genius like you, and moreover my friend.

INKEL.

No doubt; you by this time should know what is due
To a man of——but come——let us shake hands.

TRACY.

You knew,

And you *know*, my dear fellow, how heartily I,
Whatever you publish, am ready to buy.

INKEL.

That's my bookseller's business; I care not for sale;
Indeed the best poems at first rather fail.
There were Renegade's epics, and Botherby's plays,
And my own grand romance——

TRACY.

Had its full share of praise.

I myself saw it puffed in the "Old Girl's Review."

INKEL.

What Review?

TRACY.

'Tis the English "Journal de Trevoux;"

A clerical work of our Jesuits at home.
Have you never yet seen it?

INKEL.

That pleasure's to come.

TRACY.

Make haste then.

INKEL.

Why so?

TRACY.

I have heard people say,
That it threatened to give up the *ghost* t'other day.

INKEL.

Well, that is a sign of some *spirit*.

TRACY.

No doubt.

Shall you be at the Countess of Fiddlecome's rout?

INKEL.

I've a card, and shall go; but at present, as soon
As friend Scamp shall be pleased to step down from the
moon

(Where he seems to be soaring in search of his wits)
And an interval grants from his lecturing fits,
I'm engaged to the Lady Bluebottle's collation,
To partake of a luncheon and learn'd conversation:
'Tis a sort of re-union for Scamp, on the days
Of his lecture, to treat him with cold tongue and praise.
And I own, for my own part, that 'tis not unpleasant.
Will you go? There's Miss Lilac will also be present.

TRACY.

That "metal's attractive."

INKEL.

No doubt—to the pocket.

TRACY.

You should rather encourage my passion than shock it.
But let us proceed ; for I think, by the hum——

INKEL.

Very true ; let us go, then, before they can come,
Or else we'll be kept here an hour at their levy,
On the rack of cross questions, by all the blue bevy.
Hark ! Zounds, they'll be on us ; I know by the drone
Of old Botherby's spouting, ex-cathedrâ tone.
Aye ! there he is at it. Poor Scamp ! better join
Your friends, or he'll pay you back in your own coin.

TRACY.

All fair ; 'tis but lecture for lecture.

INKEL.

That's clear.

But for God's sake let's go, or the bore will be here.
Come, come : nay, I'm off. [Exit INKEL.

TRACY.

You are right, and I'll follow ;
'Tis high time for a "*Sic me servavit Apollo.*"
And yet we shall have the whole crew on our kibes,
Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes,
All flocking to moisten their exquisite throttles
With a glass of Madeira at Lady Bluebottle's.

[Exit TRACY.

End of Eclogue First.

ECLOGUE SECOND.

An Apartment in the House of LADY BLUEBOTTLE.—A Table prepared.

SIR RICHARD BLUEBOTTLE *solus.*

Was there ever a man who was married so sorry?
 Like a fool, I must needs do the thing in a hurry.
 My life is reversed, and my quiet destroyed;
 My days, which once pass'd in so gentle a void,
 Must now, every hour of the twelve, be employed;
 The twelve, do I say?—of the whole twenty-four,
 Is there one which I dare call my own any more?
 What with driving, and visiting, dancing, and dining,
 What with learning, and teaching, and scribbling, and
 shining,

In science and art, I'll be curst if I know
 Myself from my wife; for although we are two,
 Yet she somehow contrives that all things shall be done
 In a style which proclaims us eternally one.
 But the thing of all things which distresses me more
 Than the bills of the week (though they trouble me sore)
 Is the numerous, humourous, back-biting crew
 Of scribblers, wits, lecturers, white, black, and blue,
 Who are brought to my house as an inn, to my cost
 (For the bill here, it seems, is defrayed by the host)
 No pleasure! no leisure! no thought for my pains,
 But to hear a vile jargon which addles my brains;

A smatter and chatter, gleaned out of reviews,
 By the rag, tag, and bobtail, of those they call "Blues;"
 A rabble who know not——But soft, here they come!
 Would to God I were deaf! as I'm not, I'll be dumb.

Enter LADY BLUEBOTTLE, MISS LILAC, LADY BLUE-
 MOUNT, MR. BOTHERBY, INKEL, TRACY, MISS MA-
 ZARINE, *and others, with SCAMP the Lecturer, &c. &c.*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Ah! Sir Richard, good morning; I've brought you some
 friends.

SIR RICHARD *bows, and afterwards aside.*

If friends, they're the first.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

But the luncheon attends.

I pray ye be seated, "*sans ceremonie.*"

Mr. Scamp, you're fatigued; take your chair there, next me.

[*They all sit.*]

SIR RICHARD, *aside.*

If he does, his fatigue is to come.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Tracy—

Lady Bluemount—Miss Lilac—be pleased, pray, to place ye;
 And you, Mr. Botherby—

BOTHERBY.

Oh, my dear Lady,

I obey.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Inkel, I ought to upbraid ye;
 You were not at the lecture.

INKEL.

Excuse me, I was;

But the heat forced me out in the best part—alas!
And when——

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

To be sure it was broiling; but then
You have lost such a lecture!

BOTHERBY.

The best of the ten.

TRACY.

How can you know that? there are two more.

BOTHERBY.

Because

I defy him to beat this day's wondrous applause.
The very walls shook.

INKEL.

Oh, if that be the test,
I allow our friend Scamp has this day done his best.
Miss Lilac, permit me to help you?—a wing?

MISS LILAC.

No more, Sir, I thank you. Who lectures next Spring?

BOTHERBY.

Dick Dunder.

INKEL.

That is, if he lives.

MISS LILAC.

And why not?

INKEL.

No reason whatever, save that he's a sot.
Lady Bluemount! a glass of Madeira?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

With pleasure.

INKEL.

How does your friend Wordswords, that Windermere treasure?

Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches he sings,
And their gatherers, as Homer sung warriors and kings?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He has just got a place.

INKEL.

As a footman?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame!

Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a name.

INKEL.

Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied his master;
For the poet of pedlars 'twere, sure, no disaster
To wear a new livery; the more, as 'tis not
The first time he has turned both his creed and his coat.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame! I repeat. If Sir George could but hear——

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Never mind our friend Inkel; we all know, my dear,
'Tis his way.

SIR RICHARD.

But this place——

INKEL.

Is perhaps like friend Scamp's,
A lecturer's.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Excuse me——'tis one in "the Stamps:"
He is made a Collector.

TRACY.

Collector!

SIR RICHARD.

How?

MISS LILAC.

What?

INKEL.

I shall think of him oft when I buy a new hat ;
There his works will appear——

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, they reach to the Ganges.

INKEL.

I shan't go so far—I can have them at Grange's.*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Oh fie!

MISS LILAC.

And for shame!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're too bad.

BOTHERBY.

Very good!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

How good?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nought—'tis his phrase.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

He grows rude.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nothing; nay, ask him.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Pray, Sir! did you mean

What you say?

INKEL.

Never mind if he did; 'twill be seen
That whatever he means won't alloy what he says.

BOTHERBY.

Sir!

* Grange is or was a famous pastry-cook and fruiterer in Piccadilly.

INKEL.

Pray be content with your portion of praise ;
'Twas in your defence.

BOTHERBY.

If you please, with submission,
I can make out my own.

INKEL.

It would be your perdition.
While you live, my dear Botherby, never defend
Yourself or your works ; but leave both to a friend.
Apropos—Is your play then accepted at last ?

BOTHERBY.

At last ?

INKEL.

Why I thought—that's to say—there had past
A few Green-room whispers, which hinted—you know
That the taste of the actors at best is so so.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, the Green-room's in raptures, and so's the Committee.

INKEL.

Aye—yours are the plays for exciting our "pity
And fear," as the Greek says : for "purging the mind,"
I doubt if you'll leave us an equal behind.

BOTHERBY.

I have written the prologue, and meant to have prayed
For a spice of your wit in an epilogue's aid.

INKEL.

Well, time enough yet, when the play's to be played.
Is it cast yet ?

BOTHERBY.

The actors are fighting for parts,
As is usual in that most litigious of arts.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

We'll all make a party, and go the *first* night.

TRACY.

And you promised the epilogue, Inkel.

INKEL.

Not quite.

However, to save my friend, Botherby, trouble,
I'll do what I can, though my pains must be double.

TRACY.

Why so?

INKEL.

To do justice to what goes before.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, I'm happy to say, I've no fears on that score.
Your parts, Mr. Inkel, are——

INKEL.

Never mind *mine* ;

Stick to those of your play, which is quite your own line.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're a fugitive writer, I think, Sir, of rhymes ?

INKEL.

Yes, Ma'am ; and a fugitive reader sometimes.
On Wordswords, for instance, I seldom alight,
Or on Mouthey, his friend, without taking to flight.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, your taste is too common ; but time and posterity
Will right these great men, and this age's severity
Become its reproach.

INKEL.

I've no sort of objection,
So I am not of the party to take the infection.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Perhaps you have doubts that they ever will *take* ?

INKEL.

Not at all; on the contrary, those of the lake
Have taken already, and still will continue
To take—what they can, from a groat to a guinea,
Of pension or place;—but the subject's a bore.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Well, Sir, the time's coming.

INKEL.

Scamp! don't you feel sore?

What say you to this?

SCAMP.

They have merit, I own;
Though their system's absurdity keeps it unknown.

INKEL.

Then why not unearth it in one of your lectures!

SCAMP.

It is only time past which comes under my strictures.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Come, a truce with all tartness :—the joy of my heart
Is to see Nature's triumph o'er all that is art.

Wild Nature!—Grand Shakspeare!

BOTHERBY.

And down Aristotle!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir George thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle;
And my Lord Seventy-four, who protects our dear Bard,
And who gave him his place, has the greatest regard
For the poet, who, singing of pedlars and asses,
Has found out the way to dispense with Parnassus.

TRACY.

And you, Scamp!—

SCAMP.

I needs must confess, I'm embarrassed.

INKEL.

Don't call upon Scamp, who's already so harassed
With old *schools*, and new *schools*, and no *schools*, and all *schools*.

TRACY.

Well, one thing is certain, that *some* must be fools.
I should like to know who:

INKEL.

And I should not be sorry
To know who are *not*:—it would save us some worry.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

A truce with remark, and let nothing controul
This "feast of our reason, and flow of the soul."
Oh, my dear Mr. Botherby! sympathise!—I
Now feel such a rapture, I'm ready to fly,
I feel so elastic,—"*so buoyant—so buoyant!*"*

INKEL.

Tracy! open the window.

TRACY.

I wish her much joy on't.

BOTHERBY.

For God's sake, my Lady Bluebottle, check not
This gentle emotion, so seldom our lot
Upon earth. Give it way; 'tis an impulse which lifts
Our spirits from earth; the sublimest of gifts;
For which poor Prometheus was chain'd to his mountain.
'Tis the source of all sentiment—feeling's true fountain:
'Tis the Vision of Heaven upon Earth: 'tis the gas
Of the soul: 'tis the seizing of shades as they pass,
And making them substance: 'tis something divine:—

INKEL.

Shall I help you, my friend, to a little more wine?

* Fact from life, with the words.

BOTHERBY.

I thank you. Not any more, Sir, till I dine.

INKEL.

Apropos!—Do you dine with Sir Humphrey to day?

TRACY.

I should think with *Duke* Humphrey was more in your way.

INKEL.

It might be of yore; but we authors now look
To the knight, as a landlord, much more than the Duke.
The truth is—each writer now quite at his ease is,
And (except with his publisher) dines where he pleases.
But 'tis now nearly five, and I must to the Park.

TRACY.

And I'll take a turn with you there till 'tis dark.
And you, Scamp—

SCAMP.

Excuse me; I must to my notes,
For my lecture next week.

INKEL.

He must mind whom he quotes
Out of "Elegant Extracts."

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Well, now we break up;
But remember Miss Diddle invites us to sup.

INKEL.

Then at two hours past midnight we all meet again,
For the sciences, sandwiches, hock and champaigne!

TRACY.

And the sweet lobster sallad!

BOTHERBY.

I honour that meal;
For 'tis then that our feelings most genuinely—feel.

INKEL.

True ; feeling is truest *then*, far beyond question ;
I wish to the gods 'twas the same with digestion !

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Pshaw !—never mind that ; for one moment of feeling
Is worth—God knows what.

INKEL.

'Tis at least worth concealing
For itself, or what follows—But here comes your carriage.

SIR RICHARD (*aside*).

I wish all these people were d——d with *my* marriage !
[*Exeunt.*

End of Eclogue the Second.

MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH POETS.

My father was a Dissenting Minister at W—m in Shropshire; and in the year 1798 (the figures that compose that date are to me like the “dreaded name of Demogorgon”) Mr. Coleridge came to Shrewsbury, to succeed Mr. Rowe in the spiritual charge of a Unitarian Congregation there. He did not come till late on the Saturday afternoon before he was to preach; and Mr. Rowe, who himself went down to the coach in a state of anxiety and expectation, to look for the arrival of his successor, could find no one at all answering the description but a round-faced man in a short black coat (like a shooting-jacket) which hardly seemed to have been made for him, but who seemed to be talking at a great rate to his fellow-passengers. Mr. Rowe had scarce returned to give an account of his disappointment, when the round-faced man in black entered, and dissipated all doubts on the subject, by beginning to talk. He did not cease while he staid; nor has he since, that I know of. He held the good town of Shrewsbury in delightful suspense for three weeks that he remained there, “fluttering the *proud Salopians* like an eagle in a dove-cote;” and the Welch mountains that skirt the horizon with their tempestuous confusion, agree to have heard no such mystic sounds since the days of

“High-born Hoel’s harp or soft Llewellyn’s lay!”

As we passed along between W—m and Shrewsbury, and I eyed their blue tops seen through the wintry branches, or

the red rustling leaves of the sturdy oak-trees by the road-side, a sound was in my ears as of a Siren's song; I was stunned, startled with it, as from deep sleep; but I had no notion then that I should ever be able to express my admiration to others in motley imagery or quaint allusion, till the light of his genius shone into my soul, like the sun's rays glittering in the puddles of the road. I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the way-side, crushed, bleeding, lifeless; but now, bursting from the deadly bands that "bound them,

"With Styx nine times round them,"

my ideas float on winged words, and as they expand their plumes, catch the golden light of other years. My soul has indeed remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of this rude clay, has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to; but that my understanding also did not remain dumb and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge. But this is not to my purpose.

My father lived ten miles from Shrewsbury, and was in the habit of exchanging visits with Mr Rowe, and with Mr. Jenkins of Whitchurch (nine miles farther on) according to the custom of Dissenting Ministers in each other's neighbourhood. A line of communication is thus established, by which the flame of civil and religious liberty is kept alive, and nourishes its smouldering fire unquenchable, like the fires in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, placed at different stations, that waited for ten long years to announce with their blazing pyramids the destruction of Troy. Coleridge had agreed to come over to see my father, according to the courtesy of the

country, as Mr. Rowe's probable successor; but in the mean time I had gone to hear him preach the Sunday after his arrival. A poet and a philosopher getting up into a Unitarian pulpit to preach the Gospel, was a romance in these degenerate days, a sort of revival of the primitive spirit of Christianity, which was not to be resisted.

It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before day-light, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798.—*Il y a des impressions que ni le tems ni les circonstances peuvent effacer. Dusse-je vivre des siècles entiers, le doux tems de ma jeunesse ne peut renaître pour moi, ni s'effacer jamais dans ma mémoire.* When I got there, the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and, when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE." As he gave out this text, his voice "rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes," and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St. John came into mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey." The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state—not their alliance, but their separation—on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made

a poetical and pastoral excursion,—and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, “as though he should never be old,” and the same poor country-lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an alehouse, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood.

“Such were the notes our once-lov'd poet sung.”

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together, Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still labouring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause*; and the cold dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature, that turned every thing into good. The face of nature had not then the brand of *JUS DIVINUM* on it:

“Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.”

On the Tuesday following, the half-inspired speaker came. I was called down into the room where he was, and went half-hoping, half-afraid. He received me very graciously, and I listened for a long time without uttering a word. I did not suffer in his opinion by my silence. “For those two hours,” he afterwards was pleased to say, “he was conversing with W. H.'s forehead!” His appearance was different from what I had anticipated from seeing him before. At a

distance, and in the dim light of the chapel, there was to me a strange wildness in his aspect, a dusky obscurity, and I thought him pitted with the small-pox. His complexion was at that time clear, and even bright—

“As are the children of yon azure sheen.”

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. “A certain tender bloom his face o’erspread,” a purple tinge as we see it in the pale thoughtful complexions of the Spanish portrait-painters, Murillo and Velasquez. His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent; his chin good-humoured and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing—like what he has done. It might seem that the genius of his face as from a height surveyed and projected him (with sufficient capacity and huge aspiration) into the world unknown of thought and imagination, with nothing to support or guide his veering purpose, as if Columbus had launched his adventurous course for the New World in a scallop, without oars or compass. So at least I comment on it after the event. Coleridge in his person was rather above the common size, inclining to the corpulent, or like Lord Hamlet, “somewhat fat and porsy.” His hair (now, alas! grey) was then black and glossy as the raven’s, and fell in smooth masses over his forehead. This long pendulous hair is peculiar to enthusiasts, to those whose minds tend heavenward; and is traditionally inseparable (though of a different colour) from the pictures of Christ. It ought to belong, as a character, to all who preach *Christ crucified*, and Coleridge was at that time one of those!

It was curious to observe the contrast between him and

my father, who was a veteran in the cause, and then declining into the vale of years. He had been a poor Irish lad, carefully brought up by his parents, and sent to the University of Glasgow (where he studied under Adam Smith) to prepare him for his future destination. It was his mother's proudest wish to see her son a Dissenting Minister. So if we look back to past generations (as far as eye can reach) we see the same hopes, fears, wishes, followed by the same disappointments, throbbing in the human heart; and so we may see them (if we look forward) rising up for ever, and disappearing, like vapourish bubbles, in the human breast! After being tossed about from congregation to congregation in the heats of the Unitarian controversy, and squabbles about the American war, he had been relegated to an obscure village, where he was to spend the last thirty years of his life, far from the only converse that he loved, the talk about disputed texts of Scripture and the cause of civil and religious liberty. Here he passed his days, repining but resigned, in the study of the Bible, and the perusal of the Commentators,—huge folios, not easily got through, one of which would outlast a winter! Why did he pore on these from morn to night (with the exception of a walk in the fields or a turn in the garden to gather brocoli-plants or kidney-beans of his own rearing, with no small degree of pride and pleasure)?—Here were “no figures nor no fantasies,”—neither poetry nor philosophy—nothing to dazzle, nothing to excite modern curiosity; but to his lack-lustre eyes there appeared, within the pages of the ponderous, unwieldy, neglected tomes, the sacred name of JEHOVAH in Hebrew capitals: pressed down by the weight of the style, worn to the last fading thinness of the understanding, there were glimpses, glimmering notions of the patriarchal wanderings, with palm-trees hovering in the horizon, and processions of camels at

the distance of three thousand years; there was Moses with the Burning Bush, the number of the Twelve Tribes, types, shadows, glosses on the law and the prophets; there were discussions (dull enough) on the age of Methuselah, a mighty speculation! there were outlines, rude guesses at the shape of Noah's Ark and of the riches of Solomon's Temple; questions as to the date of the creation, predictions of the end of all things; the great lapses of time, the strange mutations of the globe were unfolded with the voluminous leaf, as it turned over; and though the soul might slumber with an hieroglyphic veil of inscrutable mysteries drawn over it, yet it was in a slumber ill-exchanged for all the sharpened realities of sense, wit, fancy, or reason. My father's life was comparatively a dream; but it was a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, the resurrection, and a judgment to come!

No two individuals were ever more unlike than were the host and his guest. A poet was to my father a sort of non-descript: yet whatever added grace to the Unitarian cause was to him welcome. He could hardly have been more surprised or pleased, if our visitor had worn wings. Indeed, his thoughts had wings; and as the silken sounds rustled round our little wainscoted parlour, my father threw back his spectacles over his forehead, his white hairs mixing with its sanguine hue; and a smile of delight beamed across his rugged cordial face, to think that Truth had found a new ally in Fancy! * Besides, Coleridge seemed to take considerable notice of me, and that of itself was enough. He talked very

* My father was one of those who mistook his talent after all. He used to be very much dissatisfied that I preferred his Letters to his Sermons. The last were forced and dry; the first came naturally from him. For ease, half-plays on words, and a supine, monkish, indolent pleasantry, I have never seen them equalled.

familiarly, but agreeably, and glanced over a variety of subjects. At dinner-time he grew more animated, and dilated in a very edifying manner on Mary Wolstonecraft and Mackintosh. The last, he said, he considered (on my father's speaking of his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* as a capital performance) as a clever scholastic man—a master of the topics,—or as the ready warehouseman of letters, who knew exactly where to lay his hand on what he wanted, though the goods were not his own. He thought him no match for Burke, either in style or matter. Burke was a metaphysician, Mackintosh a mere logician. Burke was an orator (almost a poet) who reasoned in figures, because he had an eye for nature: Mackintosh, on the other hand, was a rhetorician, who had only an eye to common-places. On this I ventured to say that I had always entertained a great opinion of Burke, and that (as far as I could find) the speaking of him with contempt might be made the test of a vulgar democratical mind. This was the first observation I ever made to Coleridge, and he said it was a very just and striking one. I remember the leg of Welsh mutton and the turnips on the table that day had the finest flavour imaginable. Coleridge added that Mackintosh and Tom. Wedgwood (of whom, however, he spoke highly) had expressed a very indifferent opinion of his friend Mr. Wordsworth, on which he remarked to them—"He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance!" Godwin had once boasted to him of having carried on an argument with Mackintosh for three hours with dubious success; Coleridge told him—"If there had been a man of genius in the room, he would have settled the question in five minutes." He asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wolstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off Godwin's objections to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He

replied, that "this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect." He did not rate Godwin very high* (this was caprice or prejudice, real or affected) but he had a great idea of Mrs. Wolstonecraft's powers of conversation, none at all of her talent for book-making. We talked a little about Holcroft. He had been asked if he was not much struck *with* him, and he said, he thought himself in more danger of being struck *by* him. I complained that he would not let me get on at all, for he required a definition of every the commonest word, exclaiming, "What do you mean by a *sensation*, Sir? What do you mean by an *idea*?" This, Coleridge said, was barricadoing the road to truth:—it was setting up a turnpike-gate at every step we took. I forget a great number of things, many more than I remember; but the day passed off pleasantly, and the next morning Mr. Coleridge was to return to Shrewsbury. When I came down to breakfast, I found that he had just received a letter from his friend, T. Wedgwood, making him an offer of £150. a-year if he chose to wave his present pursuit, and devote himself entirely to the study of poetry and philosophy. Coleridge seemed to make up his mind to close with this proposal in the act of tying on one of his shoes. It threw an additional damp on his departure. It took the wayward enthusiast quite from us to cast him into Deva's winding vales, or by the shores of old romance. Instead of living at ten miles distance, of being the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Shrewsbury, he was henceforth to inhabit the

* He complained in particular of the presumption of his attempting to establish the future immortality of man, "without" (as he said) "knowing what Death was or what Life was"—and the tone in which he pronounced these two words seemed to convey a complete image of both.

Hill of Parnassus, to be a Shepherd on the Delectable Mountains. Alas! I knew not the way thither, and felt very little gratitude for Mr. Wedgwood's bounty. I was presently relieved from this dilemma; for Mr. Coleridge, asking for a pen and ink, and going to a table to write something on a bit of card, advanced towards me with undulating step, and giving me the precious document, said that that was his address, *Mr. Coleridge, Nether-Stowey, Somersetshire*; and that he should be glad to see me there in a few weeks' time, and, if I chose, would come half-way to meet me. I was not less surprised than the shepherd-boy (this simile is to be found in *Cassandra*) when he sees a thunder-bolt fall close at his feet. I stammered out my acknowledgments and acceptance of this offer (I thought Mr. Wedgwood's annuity a trifle to it) as well as I could; and this mighty business being settled, the poet-preacher took leave, and I accompanied him six miles on the road. It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The scholar in Chaucer is described as going

— "Sounding on his way."

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. He told me in confidence (going along) that he should have preached two sermons before he accepted the situation at Shrewsbury, one on Infant Baptism, the other on the Lord's Supper, shewing that he could not administer either, which would have effectually disqualified him for the object in view. I observed that he continually crossed me on the way by shifting from one side of the foot-path to the other. This struck me as an odd movement; but I did not at that time connect it with any instability of purpose or involuntary change of principle, as I have done since. He

seemed unable to keep on in a straight line. He spoke slightingly of Hume (whose *Essay on Miracles* he said was stolen from an objection started in one of South's Sermons—*Credat Judæus Apella!*). I was not very much pleased at this account of Hume, for I had just been reading, with infinite relish, that completest of all metaphysical *choke-pears*, his *Treatise on Human Nature*, to which the *Essays*, in point of scholastic subtlety and close reasoning, are mere elegant trifling, light summer-reading. Coleridge even denied the excellence of Hume's general style, which I think betrayed a want of taste or candour. He however made me amends by the manner in which he spoke of Berkeley. He dwelt particularly on his *Essay on Vision* as a masterpiece of analytical reasoning. So it undoubtedly is. He was exceedingly angry with Dr. Johnson for striking the stone with his foot, in allusion to this author's Theory of Matter and Spirit, and saying, "Thus I confute him, Sir." Coleridge drew a parallel (I don't know how he brought about the connection) between Bishop Berkeley and Tom Paine. He said the one was an instance of a subtle, the other of an acute mind, than which no two things could be more distinct. The one was a shop-boy's quality, the other the characteristic of a philosopher. He considered Bishop Butler as a true philosopher, a profound and conscientious thinker, a genuine reader of nature and of his own mind. He did not speak of his *Analogy*, but of his *Sermons at the Rolls' Chapel*, of which I had never heard. Coleridge somehow always contrived to prefer the *unknown* to the *known*. In this instance he was right. The *Analogy* is a tissue of sophistry, of wire-drawn, theological special-pleading; the *Sermons* (with the Preface to them) are in a fine vein of deep, matured reflection, a candid appeal to our observation of human nature, without pedantry and without bias. I told Coleridge I had written a few remarks, and was

sometimes foolish enough to believe that I had made a discovery on the same subject (the *Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*)—and I tried to explain my view of it to Coleridge, who listened with great willingness, but I did not succeed in making myself understood. I sat down to the task shortly afterwards for the twentieth time, got new pens and paper, determined to make clear work of it, wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton-style of a mathematical demonstration, stopped half-way down the second page; and, after trying in vain to pump up any words, images, notions, apprehensions, facts, or observations, from that gulph of abstraction in which I had plunged myself for four or five years preceding, gave up the attempt as labour in vain, and shed tears of helpless despondency on the blank unfinished paper. I can write fast enough now. Am I better than I was then? Oh no! One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency and flippancy in the world. Would that I could go back to what I then was! Why can we not revive past times as we can revisit old places? If I had the quaint Muse of Sir Philip Sidney to assist me, I would write a *Sonnet to the Road between W—m and Shrewsbury*, and immortalise every step of it by some fond enigmatical conceit. I would swear that the very milestones had ears, and that Harmer-hill stooped with all its pines, to listen to a poet, as he passed! I remember but one other topic of discourse in this walk. He mentioned Paley, praised the naturalness and clearness of his style, but condemned his sentiments, thought him a mere time-serving casuist, and said that “the fact of his work on Moral and Political Philosophy being made a text-book in our Universities was a disgrace to the national character.” We parted at the six-mile stone; and I returned homeward, pensive but much pleased. I had met with unexpected

notice from a person, whom I believed to have been prejudiced against me. "Kind and affable to me had been his condescension, and should be honoured ever with suitable regard." He was the first poet I had known, and he certainly answered to that inspired name. I had heard a great deal of his powers of conversation, and was not disappointed. In fact, I never met with any thing at all like them, either before or since. I could easily credit the accounts which were circulated of his holding forth to a large party of ladies and gentlemen, an evening or two before, on the Berkeleian Theory, when he made the whole material universe look like a transparency of fine words; and another story (which I believe he has somewhere told himself) of his being asked to a party at Birmingham, of his smoking tobacco and going to sleep after dinner on a sofa, where the company found him to their no small surprise, which was increased to wonder when he started up of a sudden, and rubbing his eyes, looked about him, and launched into a three-hours' description of the third heaven, of which he had had a dream, very different from Mr. Southey's Vision of Judgment, and also from that other Vision of Judgment, which Mr. Murray, the Secretary of the Bridge-street Junto, has taken into his especial keeping!

On my way back, I had a sound in my ears, it was the voice of Fancy: I had a light before me, it was the face of Poetry. The one still lingers there, the other has not quitted my side! Coleridge in truth met me half-way on the ground of philosophy, or I should not have been won over to his imaginative creed. I had an uneasy, pleasurable sensation all the time, till I was to visit him. During those months the chill breath of winter gave me a welcoming; the vernal air was balm and inspiration to me. The golden sun-sets, the silver star of evening, lighted me on my way to

new hopes and prospects. *I was to visit Coleridge in the Spring.* This circumstance was never absent from my thoughts, and mingled with all my feelings. I wrote to him at the time proposed, and received an answer postponing my intended visit for a week or two, but very cordially urging me to complete my promise then. This delay did not damp, but rather increase my ardour. In the mean time, I went to Llangollen Vale, by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery; and I must say I was enchanted with it. I had been reading Coleridge's description of England, in his fine *Ode on the Departing Year*, and I applied it, *con amore*, to the objects before me. That valley was to me (in a manner) the cradle of a new existence: in the river that winds through it, my spirit was baptised in the waters of Helicon!

I returned home, and soon after set out on my journey with unworn heart and untried feet. My way lay through Worcester and Gloucester, and by Upton, where I thought of Tom Jones and the adventure of the muff. I remember getting completely wet through one day, and stopping at an inn (I think it was at Tewkesbury) where I sat up all night to read Paul and Virginia. Sweet were the showers in early youth that drenched my body, and sweet the drops of pity that fell upon the books I read! I recollect a remark of Coleridge's upon this very book, that nothing could shew the gross indelicacy of French manners and the entire corruption of their imagination more strongly than the behaviour of the heroine in the last fatal scene, who turns away from a person on board the sinking vessel, that offers to save her life, because he has thrown off his clothes to assist him in swimming. Was this a time to think of such a circumstance? I once hinted to Wordsworth, as we were sailing in his boat on Grasmere lake, that I thought he had borrowed

the idea of his *Poems on the Naming of Places* from the local inscriptions of the same kind in Paul and Virginia. He did not own the obligation, and stated some distinction without a difference, in defence of his claim to originality. Any the slightest variation would be sufficient for this purpose in his mind; for whatever *he* added or omitted would inevitably be worth all that any one else had done, and contain the marrow of the sentiment.—I was still two days before the time fixed for my arrival, for I had taken care to set out early enough. I stopped these two days at Bridgewater, and when I was tired of sauntering on the banks of its muddy river, returned to the inn, and read *Canilla*. So have I loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that, have wanted every thing!

I arrived, and was well received. The country about Nether Stowey is beautiful, green and hilly, and near the sea-shore. I saw it but the other day, after an interval of twenty years, from a hill near Taunton. How was the map of my life spread out before me, as the map of the country lay at my feet! In the afternoon, Coleridge took me over to All-Foxden, a romantic old family-mansion of the St. Aubins, where Wordsworth lived. It was then in the possession of a friend of the poet's, who gave him the free use of it. Somehow that period (the time just after the French Revolution) was not a time when *nothing was given for nothing*. The mind opened, and a softness might be perceived coming over the heart of individuals, beneath "the scales that fence" our self-interest. Wordsworth himself was from home, but his sister kept house, and set before us a frugal repast; and we had free access to her brother's poems, the

Lyrical Ballads, which were still in manuscript, or in the form of *Sybilline Leaves*. I dipped into a few of these with great satisfaction, and with the faith of a novice. I slept that night in an old room with blue hangings, and covered with the round-faced family-portraits of the age of George I. and II. and from the wooded declivity of the adjoining park that overlooked my window, at the dawn of day, could

—— “hear the loud stag speak.”

In the outset of life (and particularly at this time I felt it so) our imagination has a body to it. We are in a state between sleeping and waking, and have indistinct but glorious glimpses of strange shapes, and there is always something to come better than what we see. As in our dreams the fulness of the blood gives warmth and reality to the coinage of the brain, so in youth our ideas are clothed, and fed, and pampered with our good spirits; we breathe thick with thoughtless happiness, the weight of future years presses on the strong pulses of the heart, and we repose with undisturbed faith in truth and good. As we advance, we exhaust our fund of enjoyment and of hope. We are no longer wrapped in *lamb's-wool*, lulled in Elysium. As we taste the pleasures of life, their spirit evaporates, the sense palls; and nothing is left but the phantoms, the lifeless shadows of what *has been!*

That morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we strolled out into the park, and seating ourselves on the trunk of an old ash-tree that stretched along the ground, Coleridge read aloud with a sonorous and musical voice, the ballad of *Betty Foy*. I was not critically or sceptically inclined. I saw touches of truth and nature, and took the rest for granted.

But in the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman*, I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged,

“ In spite of pride, in erring reason’s spite,”

as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry came over me. It had to me something of the effect that arises from the turning up of the fresh soil, or of the first welcome breath of Spring,

“ While yet the trembling year is unconfirmed.”

Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high

“ Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix’d fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,”

as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight! He lamented that Wordsworth was not prone enough to belief in the traditional superstitions of the place, and that there was a something corporeal, a *matter-of-fact-ness*, a clinging to the palpable, or often to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence. His genius was not a spirit that descended to him through the air; it sprung out of the ground like a flower, or unfolded itself from a green spray, on which the gold-finch sang. He said, however (if I remember right) that this objection must be confined to his descriptive pieces, that his philosophic poetry had a grand and comprehensive spirit in it, so that his soul seemed to inhabit the universe like a palace, and to discover truth by intuition, rather than by deduction. The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge’s cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend’s description of him, but was more gaunt

and Don Quixote-like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the *costume* of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell. There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance) an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantry's bust wants the marking traits; but he was teased into making it regular and heavy: Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*, is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*, like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said triumphantly that "his marriage with experience had not been so unproductive as Mr. Southey's in teaching him a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the *Castle Spectre* by Monk Lewis, while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said "it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum* merit was however by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect. Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, "How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!" I thought within myself, "With what eyes these poets see nature!" and ever after, when I saw the sun-set stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a

discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me! We went over to All-Foxden again the day following, and Wordsworth read us the story of Peter Bell in the open air; and the comment made upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics! Whatever might be thought of the poem, "his face was as a book where men might read strange matters," and he announced the fate of his hero in prophetic tones. There is a *chant* in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment. Perhaps they have deceived themselves by making habitual use of this ambiguous accompaniment. Coleridge's manner is more full, animated, and varied; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal. The one might be termed more *dramatic*, the other more *lyrical*. Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copsewood; whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a strait gravel-walk, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption. Returning that same evening, I got into a metaphysical argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge was explaining the different notes of the nightingale to his sister, in which we neither of us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly clear and intelligible. Thus I passed three weeks at Nether Stowey and in the neighbourhood, generally devoting the afternoons to a delightful chat in an arbour made of bark by the poet's friend Tom Poole, sitting under two fine elm-trees, and listening to the bees humming round us, while we quaffed our *flip*. It was agreed, among other things, that we should make a jaunt down the Bristol-Channel, as far as Linton. We set off together on foot, Coleridge, John Chester, and I. This Chester was a native of

Nether Stowey, one of those who were attracted to Coleridge's discourse as flies are to honey, or bees in swarming-time to the sound of a brass pan. He "followed in the chace, like a dog who hunts, not like one that made up the cry." He had on a brown cloth coat, boots, and corduroy breeches, was low in stature, bow-legged, had a drag in his walk like a drover, which he assisted by a hazel switch, and kept on a sort of trot by the side of Coleridge, like a running footman by a state coach, that he might not lose a syllable or sound, that fell from Coleridge's lips. He told me his private opinion, that Coleridge was a wonderful man. He scarcely opened his lips, much less offered an opinion the whole way: yet of the three, had I to chuse during that journey, I would be John Chester. He afterwards followed Coleridge into Germany, where the Kantean philosophers were puzzled how to bring him under any of their categories. When he sat down at table with his idol, John's felicity was complete; Sir Walter Scott's, or Mr. Blackwood's, when they sat down at the same table with the King, was not more so. We passed Dunster on our right, a small town between the brow of a hill and the sea. I remember eying it wistfully as it lay below us: contrasted with the woody scene around, it looked as clear, as pure, as *embrowned* and ideal as any landscape I have seen since, of Gaspar Poussin's or Domenichino's. We had a long day's march—(our feet kept time to the echoes of Coleridge's tongue)—through Minehead and by the Blue Anchor, and on to Linton, which we did not reach till near midnight, and where we had some difficulty in making a lodgment. We however knocked the people of the house up at last, and we were repaid for our apprehensions and fatigue by some excellent rashers of fried bacon and eggs. The view in coming along had been splendid. We walked for miles and miles on dark brown heaths

overlooking the channel, with the Welsh hills beyond; and at times descended into little sheltered valleys close by the sea-side, with a smuggler's face scowling by us; and then had to ascend conical hills with a path winding up through a coppice to a barren top, like a monk's shaven crown, from one of which I pointed out to Coleridge's notice the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship in the *Ancient Mariner*. At Linton the character of the sea-coast becomes more marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks* (I suspect this was only the poetical name for it) bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath; into which the waves dash, and where the sea-gull for ever wheels its screaming flight. On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fretwork of perpendicular rocks, something like the *Giant's Causeway*. A thunder-storm came on while we were at the inn, and Coleridge was running out bareheaded to enjoy the commotion of the elements in the *Valley of Rocks*, but as if in spite, the clouds only muttered a few angry sounds, and let fall a few refreshing drops. Coleridge told me that he and Wordsworth were to have made this place the scene of a prose-tale, which was to have been in the manner of, but far superior to, the *Death of Abel*, but they had relinquished the design. In the morning of the second day, we breakfasted luxuriously in an old-fashioned parlour, on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, in the very sight of the bee-hives from which it had been taken, and a garden full of thyme and wild flowers that had produced it. On this occasion Coleridge spoke of Virgil's *Georgics*, but not well. I do not think he had much feeling for the classical or elegant. It was in this room that we found a little worn-out copy of the *Seasons*, lying in a

window-seat, on which Coleridge exclaimed, "That is true fame!" He said Thomson was a great poet, rather than a good one; his style was as meretricious as his thoughts were natural. He spoke of Cowper as the best modern poet. He said the *Lyrical Ballads* were an experiment about to be tried by him and Wordsworth, to see how far the public taste would endure poetry written in a more natural and simple style than had hitherto been attempted; totally discarding the artifices of poetical diction, and making use only of such words as had probably been common in the most ordinary language since the days of Henry II. Some comparison was introduced between Shakespear and Milton. He said "he hardly knew which to prefer. Shakespear seemed to him a mere stripling in the art; he was as tall and as strong, with infinitely more activity than Milton, but he never appeared to have come to man's estate; or if he had, he would not have been a man, but a monster." He spoke with contempt of Gray, and with intolerance of Pope. He did not like the versification of the latter. He observed that "the ears of these couplet-writers might be charged with having short memories, that could not retain the harmony of whole passages." He thought little of Junius as a writer; he had a dislike of Dr. Johnson; and a much higher opinion of Burke as an orator and politician, than of Fox or Pitt. He however thought him very inferior in richness of style and imagery to some of our elder prose-writers, particularly Jeremy Taylor. He liked Richardson, but not Fielding; nor could I get him to enter into the merits of *Caleb Williams*.* In short, he was profound and discriminating with

* He had no idea of pictures, of Claude or Raphael, and at this time I had as little as he. He sometimes gives a striking account at present of the Cartoons at Pisa, by Buffamacco and others; of one in particular, where Death is seen in the air brandishing his scythe, and the great and mighty of the earth

respect to those authors whom he liked; and where he gave his judgment fair play; capricious, perverse, and prejudiced in his antipathies and distastes. We loitered on the "ribbed sea-sands," in such talk as this, a whole morning, and I recollect met with a curious sea-weed, of which John Chester told us the country name! A fisherman gave Coleridge an account of a boy that had been drowned the day before, and that they had tried to save him at the risk of their own lives. He said "he did not know how it was that they ventured; but, Sir, we have a *nature* towards one another." This expression, Coleridge remarked to me, was a fine illustration of that theory of disinterestedness which I (in common with Butler) had adopted. I broached to him an argument of mine to prove that *likeness* was not mere association of ideas. I said that the mark in the sand put one in mind of a man's foot, not because it was part of a former impression of a man's foot (for it was quite new) but because it was like the shape of a man's foot. He assented to the justness of this distinction (which I have explained at length elsewhere, for the benefit of the curious) and John Chester listened; not from any interest in the subject, but because he was astonished that I should be able to suggest any thing to Coleridge that he did not already know. We returned on the third morning, and Coleridge remarked the silent cottage-smoke eurling up the valleys where, a few evenings before, we had seen the lights gleaming through the dark.

In a day or two after we arrived at Stowey, we set out, I on my return home, and he for Germany. It was a Sunday morning, and he was to preach that day for Dr. Toulmin of Taunton. I asked him if he had prepared any thing for the

shudder at his approach, while the beggars and the wretched kneel to him as their deliverer. He would of course understand so broad and fine a moral as this at any time.

occasion? He said he had not even thought of the text, but should as soon as we parted. I did not go to hear him,—this was a fault,—but we met in the evening at Bridgewater. The next day we had a long day's walk to Bristol, and sat down, I recollect, by a well-side on the road, to cool ourselves and satisfy our thirst, when Coleridge repeated to me some descriptive lines from his tragedy of Remorse; which I must say became his mouth and that occasion better than they, some years after, did Mr. Elliston's and the Drury-lane boards,—

“ Oh memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,
And give those scenes thine everlasting life.”

I saw no more of him for a year or two, during which period he had been wandering in the Hartz Forest in Germany; and his return was cometary, meteorous, unlike his setting out. It was not till some time after that I knew his friends Lamb and Southey. The last always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a common-place book under his arm, and the first with a *bon-mot* in his mouth. It was at Godwin's that I met him with Holcroft and Coleridge, where they were disputing fiercely which was the best—*Man as he was, or man as he is to be*. “ Give me,” says Lamb, “ man as he is *not* to be.” This saying was the beginning of a friendship between us, which I believe still continues.—Enough of this for the present.

“ But there is matter for another rhyme,
And I to this may add a second tale.”

W. H.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

LETTER III.—ITALY.

MY DEAR N.

I WRITE you, as you request, a very long letter, "on the largest sized paper, and in the smallest hand-writing." You call the request a modest one, and I cannot but allow it has some pretensions to bashfulness, not only inasmuch as it comes in the corner of another, but because it is—let me see—just twenty lines long. However, you see what I think your twenty lines worth: and you are so accustomed, in matters of intercourse, to have the part of obliger to yourself, that it would be indecent to haggle with you about the tare and tret of an epistle. If you send me forty lines, I suppose I must write you a quarto.

You ask me to tell you a world of things about Italian composers, singers, &c. Alas! my dear N., I may truly say to you, that for music you must "look at home;" at least as far as my own experience goes. Even the biographies which you speak of, are, I fear, not to be found in any great quantity; but I will do my best to get them together. Both Pisa and Genoa have little pretensions either to music or books. We ought to be at Rome for one, and Milan for the other. Florence perhaps has a reasonable quantity of both, besides being rich in its Gallery: but I will tell you

one thing, which, albeit you are of Italian origin, will mortify you to hear; viz. that Mozart is nothing in Italy, and Rossini every thing. Nobody even says any thing of Mozart, since *Figaro* (tell it not in Gothland!) *was hissed at Florence*. His name appears to be suppressed by agreement; while Rossini is talked of, written of, copied, sung, hummed, whistled, and demi-semi-quavered from morning to night. If there is a portrait in a shop-window, it is Rossini's. If you hear a song in the street, it is Rossini's. "If you go to a music-shop to have something copied,—“An air of Rossini's?" Mayer, I believe, is the only German who takes the turn with him at the Opera here; but Mozart, be assured, never. I believe they would shut their ears at a burst of his harmony, as your friends the Chinese did at Lord Macartney's band.

I suspect, however, that there are more reasons than one for this extraordinary piece of intolerance, and not altogether so unhandsome as they appear at first sight. As to theatres, I need not tell you the dislike which singers have to compositions that afford them no excuse for running riot in their own quavers and cadences. They hate to be

“Married to immortal verse.”

They prefer a good, flimsy, dying sort of a “do-me-no-harm, good-man,” whom they can twist about and desert as they please. This is common to theatres every where. But in Italy, besides a natural prejudice in favour of their own composers, there has always been another, you know, against that richness of accompaniment, with which the Germans follow up their vocal music, turning every air, as it were, into a triumphal procession. They think that if a melody is full of nature and passion, it should be oftener suffered to

make out its own merit, and triumph by its own sufficing beauty: like Adam in the poem, when he walked forth to meet the angel,—

Without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections:

or Eve afterwards, when she received him,—

Undeck'd, save with herself; more lovely fair
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove.
— — — — — No veil
She needed, virtue-proof: no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek.

(What poetry is there! what sentiment! what delicacy! what words full of meaning!) You know what I think on this subject, when the composer is a truly great one like Paesiello: and I know what you think too, when the air is one of his divinest, like *Il Mio Ben* in the opera of *Nina*. But Rossini is not Paesiello? True. He gives us a delightful air now and then; but in the hurry of his industry and his animal spirits, pours forth a torrent of common-places. His is not a flow of music,—

“ Whose stream is amber, and whose gravel gold.”

It is, for the most part, common water, brisk in its course, and bringing down only grains of gold, however worth sifting. Nevertheless, he *has* animal spirits,—he runs merrily; his stream is for the most part native; and the Italians are as willing to be made merry with “thin potations” as with old hock. I meant to shew you how it was that they were prepared to undervalue Mozart; and I think I can now explain to you, in one word, how it is that they contrive to render themselves deaf to the rest of his merits, and to the

inspiration which he himself drank at an Italian source. Mozart was a *German*. I do not mean simply that he was a German in music; but he was a German by birth. The Germans in Italy, the lords over Italian freedom and the Italian soil, trumpet his superiority over Italian composers; and however right they may be, at all events with regard to modern ones, this is enough to make the Italians hate him. It mortifies them the more, because they know that he is an exception to the general dulness of their conquerors; and not even the non-chalance of his own conduct towards kings and composers (which was truly edifying *) could reconcile

* Even when this great musician was a child, he felt the superiority of genius over rank. If his flatterers, however high their station, exhibited no real feeling for the art, he played nothing but trifling pieces for their amusement, and was insensible even to their flattery. When called upon to display the astonishing prematurity of his powers before the Emperor Francis the First, he said to his Majesty, with a simplicity that must have been somewhat frightful at court, "Is not Mr. Wagenseil here? We must send for him; *he understands the thing.*" The Emperor sent for Wagenseil, who took his Majesty's place by the side of the performer. "Sir," said Mozart, "I am going to play one of your concertos; you must turn over the leaves for me." The Emperor Joseph the Second said to him once, speaking of his opera the *Enlèvement du Serail*, "My dear Mozart, this is too fine for my ears: there are too many notes." "I beg your Majesty's pardon," replied Mozart, "there are just as many as are necessary."—See the "Lives of Haydn and Mozart." The genius of Haydn was not of this self-sufficing and jacobinical turn. He was eminently loyal and orthodox,—the reason, no doubt, why the Quarterly Review mentions his parting with his wife, and "attaching himself to the society of Signora Borelli," with so much indifference, or rather a tone of approbation. "Flesh and blood," they say, "could no longer bear it." We have no sort of objection, for our parts, if this was the case; especially as his wife was "a prude and a devotee," who made him write masses for the monks; whereas Signora Borelli was a "lovely" woman, who sympathized in his pursuits till she died. But how the Quarterly Reviewers settle all this with their conventional consciences,

them to the misery of preferring *any thing* German to the least thing Italian.

The Genoese are not a musical specimen of the Italians; but the national talent seems lurking wherever you go. The most beggarly minstrel gets another to make out a harmony with him, on some sort of an instrument, if only a gourd with a string or two. Such at least appeared to me a strange-looking "wild-fowl" of a fiddle, which a man was strumming the other day,—or rather a gourd stuck upon a long fiddle of deal. Perhaps you know of such an instrument. I think I have seen something like it in pictures. They all sing out their words distinctly, some accompanying themselves all the while in the guitar style, others putting in a symphony now and then, even if it be nothing better than two notes always the same. There is one blind beggar who seems an enthusiast for Rossini. Imagine a sturdy-looking fellow in rags, laying his hot face against his fiddle, rolling his blind eyeballs against the sunshine, and vociferating with all the true open-mouth and syllabical particularity of the

we leave it to themselves to explain, and shall be glad to hear. As the singers say, we shall be "all attention." They are bound to cant in their most choral style, to make amends for this incautious and profane ebullition,—this *extra-cathedram* chaunt,—this whistle in church-time; as strange as if a Bishop, instead of the Athanasian creed, or rather the Seventh Commandment, were to strike up "In the merry month of May." (See an article on the Lives abovementioned, in the Review for October, 1817.)

The example of Mozart might be instructive to certain German men of talent, who do not blush to fall in with all the nonsense of the Allied Sovereigns. How delightful would it be, for instance, if M. Gentz, when about to write some legislation under his master's eye, were to say, "Is Mr. Bentham here? we must send for him: he understands the thing." Or if the Emperor should say to him, "My dear Gentz, this is too free for my notions: there are too many popular provisions,"—for M. Gentz to answer, "I beg your Majesty's pardon: there are just as many as are necessary."

Italians, a part of one of the duets of that lively master. His companion having his eye-sight and being therefore not so vivacious, sings his part with a sedater vigour; though even when the former is singing a solo, I have heard him throw in some unisons at intervals, as if his help were equally wanting to the blind man, vocal as well as corporal.

Among the novelties that impress a stranger in Italy, I have not before noticed the vivacity prevalent among all classes of people. The gesticulation is not French. It has an air of greater simplicity and sincerity, and has more to do with the eyes, and expression of countenance. But after being used to it, the English must look like a nation of scorers and prudes. When serious, the women will walk with a certain piquant stateliness, evidently the same which impressed the ancient as well as modern poets of Italy, Virgil in particular; but it has no haughtiness. You might imagine them walking up to a dance, or priestesses of Venus approaching a temple. When lively, their manner out of doors is that of our liveliest women within. If they make a quicker movement than usual, if they recognise a friend, for instance, or call out to somebody, or dispatch somebody with a message, they have all the life, simplicity, and unconsciousness of the happiest of our young women, who are at ease in their gardens or parks. I must add, that since I have known more of Genoa, I have found out that it possesses multitudes of handsome women; and what surprised me, many of them with beautiful northern complexions. But an English lady tells me, that for this latter discovery I am indebted to my short sight. This is probable. You know that I have often been in raptures at faces that have passed me in London, whose only faults were being very coarse and considerably bilious. But never mind. It is not desirable to have a Brobdingnagian sight; and where the mouth is

sweet and the eyes intelligent, there is always the look of beauty with me. Now I have seen heaps of such faces in Genoa. The superiority of the women over the men is indeed remarkable, and is to be accounted for perhaps by the latter being wrapt and screwed up in money-getting. Yet it is just the reverse, I understand, at Naples; and the Neapolitans are accused of being as sharp at a bargain as any body. What is certain, however, from the testimonies of all I have met with, is, that in almost all parts of Italy, gentility of appearance is on the side of the females. The rarity of a gentlemanly look in the men is remarkable. The commonness of it among women of all classes, is equally so. Now the former was certainly not the case in old times, if we are to trust the portraits handed down to us; nor indeed could it easily have been believed, if left upon record. What is the cause then of this extraordinary degeneracy? Is it, after all, an honourable one to the Italians? Is it that the men, thinking of the moral and political situation of their country, and so long habituated to feel themselves degraded, acquire a certain instinctive carelessness and contempt of appearance; while the women, on the other hand, more taken up with their own affairs, with the consciousness of beauty, and the flattery which is more or less always paid them, have retained a greater portion of their self-possession and esteem? The alteration, whatever it is owing to, is of the worst kind. The want of gentility is not supplied, as it so often is with us, by a certain homely simplicity and manliness, quite as good in its way, and better, where the former does not include the better part of it. The appearance, to use a modern cant phrase, has a certain *raffishness* in it, like that of a suspicious-looking fellow in England, who lounges about with his hat on one side, and a flower in his mouth. Nor is it at all confined to men in trade, whether high or

low; though at the same time I must observe, that all men, high or low (with the exceptions, of course, that take place in every case) are notoriously given to pinching and saving, keeping their servants upon the lowest possible allowance, and eating as little as may be themselves, with the exception of their favourite *minestra*, of which I will speak presently, and which being a cheap as well as favourite dish, they gobble in a sufficient quantity to hinder their abstinence in other things from being regarded as the effect of temperance. In Pisa, the great good of life is a hot supper; but at Pisa and Genoa both, as in "the city" with us, if you overhear any thing said in the streets, it is generally about money. *Quattrini, soldi, and lire*, are discussing at every step. I do not know how the case may have been in Spain of late years. It is certainly better now. But a stranger, full of the Italian poets and romances, is surprised to find the southern sunshine overgrown with this vile scurf. One thinks sometimes that men would not know what to do with their time, if it were not for that succession of petty hopes and excitements, which constitutes the essence of trade. It looks like a good-humoured invention of nature to save the foolish part of mankind from getting tired to death with themselves. But we know, from a comparison of different times and nations, that this is not the case. The dancing African and the dozing Asiatic are equally sufficed with a hundredth part of it; and the greater activity of the European has, in times quite as active and a great deal more healthy and pleasurable, dispensed with at least half of it, devoting the rest of his hours to sports and society. Mammon has undoubtedly been the god of these later times; and philosophy will have a harder task in displacing him, than it has had in shaking the strong holds of his colleague, Superstition: for though men cannot serve "God and Mammon"

together (a truth which the Mammonites are always practically disputing, in the very teeth of their own alleged doctrines) they can serve Superstition fast enough. Selfishness is the soul of both, as money formed the inside of Dagon. I believe, for my part, that both the causes above-mentioned have had great effect in forming the character of the modern Italians; but I believe also that the greatest of all (and I need not hesitate to mention it to a man of Catholic stock, out of the pale of the Pope's dominion) is the extraordinary blight that has been thrown in the course of time over all the manlier part of the Italian character, by the notorious ill example, chicanery, worldliness, and petty feeling of all sorts, exhibited by the Court of Rome. I do not allude to the present Pope; and a Pope here and there is of course to be excepted. I believe the reigning Pontiff is a well-meaning, obstinate old gentleman enough, whom events have rendered a little romantic; a character which is nobleness itself compared with that of the majority of his brethren, or indeed with most characters. But the Italians, for centuries, have been accustomed to see the most respected persons among them, and a *sacred* Court, full of the pettiest and most selfish vices; and if they have instinctively lost their respect for the persons, they have still seen these persons the most flourishing among them, and have been taught by their example to make a distinction between belief and practice, that would startle the saving grace of the most impudent of Calvinists. From what I have seen myself (and I would not mention it if it had not been corroborated by others who have resided in Italy several years) there is a prevailing contempt of truth in this country, that would astonish even an oppressed Irishman. It forms an awful comment upon those dangers of *catechising* people into insincerity, which Mr. Bentham has pointed out in his Church-of-Englandism.

We are far enough, God knows, from this universality of evil yet. May such writers always be found to preserve us from it! See Mr. Shelley's admirable preface to the tragedy of the Cenci, where the religious nature of this profanation of truth is pointed out with equal acuteness and eloquence. I have heard instances of falsehood, not only among money-getters, but among "ladies and gentlemen" in ordinary, so extreme, so childish, and apparently so unconscious of wrong, that the very excess of it, however shocking in one respect, relieved one's feelings in another, and shewed how much might be done by proper institutions to exalt the character of a people naturally so ingenuous and so ductile. The great Italian virtues, under their present governments, are being catholic, not being "taken in" by others, and taking in every body else. Persons employed to do the least or the greatest jobs, will alike endeavour to cheat you through thick and thin. It is a perpetual warfare, in which you are at last obliged to fight in self-defence. If you pay any body what he asks you, it never enters into his imagination that you do it from any thing but folly. You are pronounced a *minchione* (a ninny) one of their greatest terms of reproach. On the other hand, if you battle well through your bargain, a perversion of the natural principle of self-defence leads to a feeling of real respect for you. A dispute may arise; the man may grin, stare, threaten, and pour out torrents of reasons and injured innocence, as they always do; but be firm, and he goes away equally angry and admiring. If you take them in, doubtless the admiration as well as the anger is still in proportion, like that of the gallant knights of old when they were beaten in single combat. An English lady told me an amusing story the other day, which will shew you the spirit of this matter at once. A friend of hers at Pisa was in the habit of dealing with a man, whose knaveries, as

usual, compelled her to keep a reasonable eye to her side of the bargain. She said to this man one day, "Ah, so-and-so, no doubt you think me a great *minchione*." The man, at this speech, put on a look of the sincerest deference and respect; and in a tone of deprecation, not at all intended, as you might suppose, for a grave joke, but for the most serious thing in the world, replied, "*Minchione! No! E gran furba lei.*"—"You a ninny! Oh no, Ma'am: you are a great thief!" This man was a Jew: but then what dealer in Italy is not? They say, that Jews cannot find a living in Genoa. I know of one, however, who both lives and gets fat. I asked him one day to direct me to some one who dealt in a particular article. He did so; adding, in an under tone, and clapping his finger at the same time against his nose, "He'll ask you such and such a sum for it; but take care you don't pay it though." The love of getting and saving pervades all classes of the community, the female part, however, I have no doubt, much less than the male. The love of ornament, as well as a more generous passion, interferes. The men seem to believe in nothing but the existence of power, and as they cannot attain to it in its grander shapes, do all they can to accumulate a bit of it in its meanest. The women retain a better and more redeeming faith; and yet every thing is done to spoil them. Cicisbeism (of which I will tell you more at another opportunity) is the consequence of a state of society, more nonsensical in fact than itself, though less startling to the present habits of the world; but it is managed in the worst possible manner; and, singularly enough, is almost as gross, more formal, and quite as hypocritical as what it displaces. It is a stupid system. The poorer the people, the less of course it takes place among them: but as the husband, in all cases, has the most to do for his family, and is the person least cared for, he is resolved to get what he can before marriage; and a

vile custom prevails among the poorest, by which no girl can get married, unless she brings a certain dowry. Unmarried females are also watched with exceeding strictness; and in order to obtain at once a husband and freedom, every nerve is strained to get this important dowry. Daughters scrape up and servants pilfer for it. If they were not obliged to ornament themselves, as a help towards their object, I do not know whether even the natural vanity of youth would not be sacrificed, and girls hang out rags as a proof of their hoard, instead of the "outward and visible sign" of crosses and ear-rings. Dress, however, disputes the palm with saving; and as a certain consciousness of their fine eyes and their natural graces survives every thing else among southern womankind, you have no conception of the high hand with which the humblest females carry it at a dance or an evening party. Hair dressed up, white gowns, satins, flowers, fans, and gold ornaments, all form a part of the glitter of the evening, amidst (I have no doubt) as great, and perhaps as graceful a profusion of compliments and love-making, as takes place in the most privileged ball-rooms. Yet it is twenty to one, that nine out of ten persons in the room have dirty stockings on, and shoes out at heel. Nobody thinks of saving up articles of that description; and they are too useful, and not shewy enough, to be cared for *en passant*. Therefore Italian girls may often enough be well compared to flowers; --with head and bodies all ornament, their feet are very likely in the earth; and thus they go nodding forth for sale, "growing, blowing, and all alive." A foolish English servant whom we brought out with us, fell into an absolute rage of jealousy at seeing my wife give a crown of flowers to a young Italian one, who was going to a dance. The latter, who is of the most respectable sort, and looks as lady-like as you please when dressed, received the flowers with gratitude,

though without surprise; but both of them were struck speechless, when, in addition to the crown, my wife gave her a pair of her own shoes and stockings. They were doubtless the triumph of the evening. Next day we heard accounts of the beautiful dancing,—of Signor F. the English valet opening the ball with the handsome chandler's-shop woman, &c. and our poor countrywoman was ready to expire.

As the miscellaneous poetry of Alfieri is little known in England, I will take this occasion of sending you the commencement of a satire of his on money-getting. I was going to translate the whole of it, but it turned off into allusions of too local a nature. He does not spare the English; though he would have found some distinction, I trust, between us and the Dutch, in this matter, could he have heard the shouts sent up the other day upon Change in honour of the Spanish patriots, and seen the willingness which nine tenths of us evince to open our purses in behalf of that glorious cause. May God speed it, and contrive to make *all* our rich men as much poorer, and our poor as much richer, as they ought to be! But I am forgetting my satire. The close of the extract, I think, presents a very ludicrous image.

E in te pur, d'ogni lucro Idolo ingordo
 Nume di questo secolo borsale,
 Un pocolin la penna mia qui lordo :

Ch'ove oggi tanto, oltre il dover, prevale
 Quest' acciecatò culto, onde ti bei,
 Dritt' è, che ti saetti alcun mio strale.

Figlio di mezza libertade, il sei ;
 Nè il niego io già ; ma in un mostrarti padre
 Vo' di servaggio doppio e d'usi rei.

Ecco, ingombri ha di prepotenti squadre
La magra Europa i mari tutti, e mille
Terre farà di pianto e di sangue adre.

Sian belligere genti, o sian tranquille,
Abbiano o no metalli, indaco, o pepe,
Di selve sieno o abitator di ville,

Stuzzicar tutti densi, ovunque repe
Quest' insetto tirannico Européo,
Per impinguar le sua famelich' epe.

Stupidi e inguisti, noi sprezziam l'Ebreo,
Che compra e vende, e vende e compra, e vende;
Ma siam ben noi popol più vile e reo :

Che, non contenti a quanto il suol ci rende,
Dell' altrui ladris ove il furar sia lieve,
Facciam pel globo tutto a chi più prende.

Taccio del sangue American, cui bene
L'atroce Ispano; e il vitto agl' Indi tolto
Dall' Anglo, che il suo vitto agl' Indi deve.

Se in fasce orrende al nascer suo ravvolto
Mostrar volessi il rio commercio, or fora
Il mio sermone (e invan) prolisso molto.

Basta ben sol, che la sua infamia d'ora
Per me si illustri, appalesando il come
L'iniqua Europa sue laidezze indora.

Annichillate, impoverite, o dome
Par lei le genti di remote spiagge,
Di alloro no, di Baccalà le chiome,

Orniamle, &c. &c.

Yes, glutton of the land and sea,
This pursy age's deity,
I'll dirt my pen awhile with thee.

For since this gloating in a purse,
Which blinds mankind, grows worse and worse,
'Tis fit I smite thee with a verse.

Half-freedom's child, I know thou art :
I'll prove thee father, ere we part,
Of two-fold slavery and no heart.

Lo, dry-drawn Europe sends her brood
Of traders out, like a new flood,
To sow the earth with tears and blood.

Whether a land's at war or peace,
Produces metals, tops, or teas,
Or lives in towns, or villages,

This vermin, mightiest thing alive,
Makes them all herd, and crowd, and drive,
To fatten up it's hungry hive.

Unjust and stupid, we despise
The Jew that buys, and sells, and buys,
As if we acted otherwise !

Nay, we are worse; for not content,
Like other thieves, with a home rent,
We rob on every continent.

I pass the Americans that bled
For Spain's fierce thirst, and English bread,
Torn from the Indians it should feed :

Were I to track through all his woes
The monster to his swaddling clothes,
Where I should end, God only knows.

Enough for me, if I can tear
The mask off now, and show the care
Hag Europe takes to be thought fair.

How should we crown her, having trod
Whole nations down for this her god?
With laurel? No,—with salted cod.

This species of dried fish being greatly in request in Catholic countries, the image becomes very ludicrous to an Italian. There is a propriety, and yet a beautiful want of propriety in it. Were Satirists to strike coins as well as verses, a head of Italy some centuries hence, with a crown of dried fish on it, would puzzle the antiquaries.

If Italy is famous at present for any two things, it is for cicisbeism and *minestra*. Wherever you find shops, you see baskets full of a yellow stuff, made up in long stripes like tape, and tied up in bundles. This is the main compound of *minestra*, or to use the Neapolitan term, your old acquaintance *macaroni*. I need not explain the nature of it to you; but some of your fellow readers may chafe to be informed, that it is

nothing but common paste, made up into interminable pipes. Much of it is naturally of a yellowish colour, but the Genoese die it deeper with saffron. When made into a soup it is called *minestra*, and mixed sometimes with meat, sometimes with oil or butter, but always, if it is to be had, with grated cheese, and that cheese Parmesan. An Italian has no notion of eating any thing plain. If he cannot have his *minestra* and his oil, he is thrown out of all his calculations, physical and moral. He has a great abstract respect for fasting; but fights hard for an indulgence. The Genoese in particular, being but Canaanites or borderers in Italy, and accustomed to profane intercourse by their maritime situation, as well as to an heterodox appetite by their industry and sea-air, appear to be extremely restive on the subject of fasting. They make pathetic representations to the Archbishop respecting beef and pudding, and allege their health and their household economies. Fish is luckily dear. I have now before me a Genoese Gazette of the 8th February last, in which there is an extract from the circular of the Archbishop respecting the late Lent indulgences. He says, that "the Holiness of Our Lord" (for so the Pope is styled) "has seen with the greatest displeasure, that the ardent desire which he has always nourished" (an aukward word!) "of restoring the ancient rigour of Lent, is again rendered of no effect, by representations which he finds it impossible to resist." He therefore permits the inhabitants of the Archbishop's diocese to make "one meal a-day of eggs and white-meats (*latticini*) during Lent; and such of them as have really need of it, the use of flesh:" but he says; that this latter permission "leaves a heavy load on his conscience," and that he positively forbids the promiscuous use of flesh and fish. I must add, for my part, that I think the Pope has reason in this roasting of eggs. In all countries

the devil (to speak after the received theory of good and ill) seems to provide for a due diminution of health and happiness by something in the shape of meat and drink. The northern nations exasperate their bile with beer, the southern with oil, and all with butter and meat. I would swear, that Dante was a great eater of minestra. Poor Lord Castle-reagh (for *you* will readily believe, that in the abstract, and setting aside his Six Acts and other tyrannous doings, the Liberal can pity even him) had had his buttered toast, I see, served up for breakfast the day he killed himself; a very mock-heroic help, I allow, towards a political catastrophe; but not the less likely for that. If wars have been made, and balances of power overturned, by a quarrel about a pair of gloves, or a tap of the fan from a king's mistress, it is little to expedite the death of a minister by teasing his hypochondres with fried butter.

God bless you and all friends. If I write another word, my illegitimate signature will stare the postman in the face.

P. S. Nothing which has here been said upon the faults of the Italians, can of course prejudice those finer characters among them, who, by the very excess of the corruptions and foreign oppression they see on all sides, are daily excited more and more to a patriotic wish to get rid of them. You may rest satisfied, that the multitude of these characters is daily increasing. I have just lit upon a sonnet of Alfieri's, by which it appears that the Genoese in his time were as fast bound in the Styx of superstition as of money-getting. It is not so now at any rate:—the folds are neither so strong nor so numerous.—The first quatrain is a fine and true picture of the city.

TO GENOA.

Nobil città, che delle Liguri onde
 Liede a specchio, in sembiante altera tanto,
 E, torreggiando al ciel da curve sponde,
 Fai scorno ai monti, onde hai da tergo ammanto ;
 A tue moli superbe, a cui seconde
 Null' altre Italia d'innalzare ha il vanto,
 Dei cittadini tuoi chè non risponde
 L'aspetto, il cor, l'alma, o l'ingegno alquanto ?

L'oro sudato, che adunasti e aduni,
 Puoi seppellir con minor costo in grotte
 Ove ascondon se stessi *e i lor digiuni*.
 Tue ricchezze non spese, eppur corrotte,
 Fan dignoranza un denso velo agli uni ;
 Superstizion tien gli altri ; a tutti è notte.

Proud city, that by the Ligurian sea
 Sittest as at a mirror, lofty and fair ;
 And towering from thy curving banks in air,
 Scornest the mountains that attend on thee ;
 Why, with such structures, to which Italy
 Has nothing else, though glorious, to compare,
 Hast thou not souls, with something like a share,
 Of look, heart, spirit, and ingenuity ?

Better to bury at once ('twould cost thee less)
 Thy golden-sweating heaps, where cramp'd from light,
 They and their pinch'd fasts ply their old distress.
 Thy rotting wealth, unspent, like a thick blight,
 Clouds the close eyes of these :—dark hands oppress
 With superstition those :—and all is night.

MADAME D'HOUTETOT.

HUMAN nature is in general fond of riddles. We delight to unravel a knotty point, and we study with the greatest pleasure those characters, whose ruling feeling we do not entirely comprehend. They oblige us to disentangle our ideas with delicate precision, and to make subtle differences, at once exercising our talents and our patience. It is for this reason, in a great measure, that so many books have been written about Rousseau. His sensibility, his genius, his pride, his alleged ingratitude and subsequent madness, have made him one of the most interesting personages of modern times: the misrepresentations of his enemies have given a spur to our researches: and we may safely assert that we know more of his character and actions than his contemporaries: just as we are better acquainted with the course of a river, looking down on it from a distant eminence, than sitting on its banks, listening to the murmur of its waters. From the character of Rousseau, our attention has been turned to that of his friends; we have become familiar with them also, and the merits of Diderot, Grimm, Madame d'Epinay, and Therese, have undergone a severe scrutiny, and their falsehood or truth have received their merited judgment.

Among these last, no one more excites our sympathy than Madame d'Houtetôt, the object of his passionate love and the cause of so many of his misfortunes. Madame d'Hou-

tetôt was a woman of talent, and of the gentlest and most affectionate disposition. But unpretending and unnoticed, we should probably never have heard of her existence but for the passionate remembrance of Rousseau. It is the attribute of genius to gift with immortality all the objects it deigns to hallow by its touch. The memory of the feelings of the heart, however amiable and prized, expires with that heart which was their shrine. But genius cannot die: The present moment passes with the sun that hastens to its repose in the deep; and oblivion, like night, descends upon its world of suffering, enjoyment, or thought, did not genius prolong it to an eternity. The wisest hand down to us the actions of the best. When the chain of such spirits is snapt we emphatically call those times the "Dark Ages:" we turn shuddering from a time when men acted, but were unable to record their acts, and we seek with fresh avidity those remains of our fellow creatures which are more lasting than regal mausoleums, and more akin to our nature than the very body, preserved in a thousand folds of the embalmer's cloth.

It is on Rousseau's account therefore that we feel curious concerning the character of Madame d'Houtetôt. But while satisfying that curiosity we become interested on her own account, and although she has left little behind her by which we may trace her life, yet we are touched and pleased, and finish by declaring her worthy for her own sake of that attention, which we at first bestowed on her for another's. Elizabeth-Sophie-Françoise de la Live de Bellegarde was the daughter of M. de Bellegarde, Farmer-General, and the father of M. d'Epinay. Madame d'Epinay and she were therefore sisters-in-law, and lived together under the same roof until the marriage of the latter. Mademoiselle de la Live was born in the year 1730; she was five years younger

than her sister-in-law ; and from her earliest years was distinguished by her sensibility, her gaiety, and her talent. Loving every one, she was much beloved ; and this extraordinary tenderness of disposition which characterised her infancy, continued to adorn her to the end of her life. She was married in the year 1747 to the Count d'Houtetôt. The preliminaries of this marriage are a curious specimen of the manners of the age. Madame d'Epinay describes Count d'Houtetôt as " a young nobleman without fortune ; twenty-two years of age ; a gamester by profession ; as ugly as the devil, and of low rank in the army ; in a word, ignorant, and apparently formed by nature to continue so." She says further, that when she first heard of the proposal she could not have restrained her laughter, had she not feared that the consequences of this ridiculous affair would render her sister-in-law unhappy. In addition to this, it is affirmed that at the moment of his marriage Count d'Houtetôt was passionately attached to another woman, to whom he was unable to unite himself.

Such circumstances offend and even disgust those who are accustomed to look upon any disposal of the person of woman, however legalized, as disgraceful, unless it be sanctioned by the feelings of the heart. The individual character of Sophie is the redeeming ore amidst this loam ; her acknowledged excellence attaches us to her, and we desire to follow her through her path of life, to read a new page in the volume of human nature, and to see how this amiable and gifted creature conducted herself in circumstances the most unfavourable to the developement of the nobler virtues of our nature. The passions of Sophie were in repose ; she therefore permitted herself to be disposed of according to the customs of her country, though her unsophisticated nature shuddered at the formation of a tie, intended to be the dearest link among

human beings, on this occasion degraded to little other than a tangible chain.

The proposal of marriage was made on the part of Count d'Houtetôt by M. de Rinville, his distant relation. M. de Bellegarde declared that his first wish was to please his daughter, and agreed to meet the young Count the next day at a dinner given by M. de Rinville, where the young people should be introduced to each other. The family of Bellegarde were present at this meeting, and found assembled at the house of M. de Rinville, the Marquess and Marchioness d'Houtetôt, the young Count their son, and a whole host of relations. The Marchioness rose eagerly to receive them as they entered, and embraced them all with cordiality. The first introduction over, she took the young Sophie aside, talked to her, complimented her, and was struck with sudden admiration of her attractions and understanding. At table the young people were placed near each other, and the parents of the bridegroom seized upon M. de Bellegarde. They were determined to take the poor girl by storm; they employed every art to cajole her and her relations, and solicited an immediate *yes* or *no* to their proposition. Sophie blushed, and was praised, her father was caressed, and Madame d'Esclavelle (the mother of Madame d'Epinay) alone retarded the final decision. She turned to the lady of the house, saying: "It appears to me, Madam, that M. de Rinville is too hasty in this affair. The particulars are not sufficiently arranged for our young friends to decide; and if, in expectation of an union, they should become mutually attached, and obstacles should afterwards arise"——"You are quite right," exclaimed M. de Rinville, clapping his hands; "good counsel for ever! We had better first arrange the articles, and while we are thus engaged, the young people may converse and become better acquainted; that's the best

way! that's the best way!" Then taking the parents of the young Count by the hand, he led them to a corner near M. de Bellegarde and Madame d'Esclavelle, calling out to the younger part of the company: "Amuse yourselves, my dears; we are going to employ ourselves in finding means to render you both happy." The fortune of the young Count was then declared, and the old Countess d'Houtetôt, regarding the relations of Sophie with eager solicitude, cried: "I understand nothing of business; but I will give all I have to give, and above all, my diamonds:—my diamonds, Sir, which are very fine. I do not know their exact value; but I will give them all to my daughter-in-law, independent of my son."—"This, my good friend," said M. de Rinville to M. de Bellegarde, "is a very handsome present, and what is more, very handsomely bestowed. What say you to our propositions?" M. de Bellegarde declared himself satisfied, but still insisted on consulting the happiness of his daughter. He was interrupted by an eulogium on the young Count: his wife, it was declared, must be the most fortunate of women. M. de Bellegarde was overcome: he stated the dowry of his daughter, and M. de Rinville instantly demanded that the contract should be signed that evening, the first banns published on the following Sunday, dispensation for the rest procured, and the nuptials celebrated on Monday. The family of d'Houtetôt applauded this arrangement; the relations of Sophie hesitated, but the importunity of the officious M. de Rinville was triumphant. The families of both parties were assembled; all unknown one to the other, they looked on each other with distrust, while the reserve, suspicion, and anxiety, inspired by so sudden an event, gave them all an air of stupidity. The marriage-articles were read, the Marchioness presented Sophie with two cases of diamonds,

the contract was signed, the assembly went to supper, and the marriage was fixed for the following Monday.

During this short interval, rumours not very creditable to the family of d'Houtetôt reached the ears of M. d. Bellegarde; but it was too late; the fate of Sophie was decided. She was passive during the arrangement of the contract, but her spirits became agitated as the decisive moment approached. If she appeared thoughtless and gay in company, yet she wept in secret. It was on the eve of her marriage that she saw Rousseau for the first time. She shewed him the suite of rooms that had been prepared for her, and conversed with him for a long time with that fascinating ease that was natural to her. The next morning, when Madame d'Epinay assisted at her toilette, she was very sorrowful, and had been weeping bitterly. She was going to live among strangers, and to submit her future happiness to the guidance of a man whom she hardly knew by sight.

She married, and became one of that society which has been handed down to us as a model of all that we can know of elegant, refined, well-informed and amusing,—but over which, the strange mode in which their domestic ties were arranged casts an air of heartlessness and intrigue. The conduct of Madame d'Houtetôt was influenced by the opinions of those around her; but she was nevertheless unblemished by those cardinal defects; and every one of every party unites in celebrating the warmth of her heart and the almost childish ingenuousness of her nature. Her person and character have been so vividly described, that we feel as if we knew her, and that her form flitted before us as we depict it upon paper. She was not handsome. Her face was even plain; her forehead low, her nose large, her complexion yellow and deeply marked by the small-pox; but

this irregularity of feature was compensated by the vivacity and sweetness of her expression. Her person was remarkably elegant, her hands and arms fair, her feet small, and she danced with extreme grace. She was vivacious, absent even, frank, and unaffected; her wit was spontaneous and her imagination lively: Her soul was penetrated and made up of love. This unrestrained affectionateness of her disposition was indeed her characteristic. Given up to the enjoyment of the emotions of her heart, she never permitted her ill-wishers to have the satisfaction of exciting in any degree a mutual sentiment in her pure and angerless mind. Her intellect was richly adorned by every talent, but her natural modesty prevented her from making any display. Possessed of great poetical talent, she neither published nor permitted her friends to make copies of her verses: she probably shrunk from any competition of wit with St. Lambert, who was a *Poët de Compagnie*, and whose laboured and dull productions form a striking contrast with her simple and spirited effusions. Both Rousseau and St. Lambert have left descriptions of her character. The one by the latter is almost the only passage of interest in his superficial "Catechisme Universelle." "She has devoted herself," he says, "from infancy to the pleasure of loving, and has enjoyed all the happiness which an affectionate nature can bestow. She is passionately attached to all who are amiable in her own family and among her friends; and the ingratitude and treachery with which her sentiments have been repaid, have not diminished the strength of her affections, but only forced her to change their object. She has never hated those whom she has ceased to love; and she desires more to be assured of the happiness of her friends than of their attachment to her. Gratitude, benevolence, and generosity, are her attributes; and now in the flower of womanhood, she preserves

all the artlessness and candour of a child. Her understanding is penetrating, just, and delicate; but she has abstained from all abstruse studies. She delights in the fine arts, and writes verses full of feeling and sweetness. She is, from her extreme goodness, often the dupe of the malice of others, but she shuts her eyes to all evil, and the native purity of her mind hinders her from understanding the petty meannesses of those around her."

It was doubtless to this fortunate blindness and her extreme vivacity that Madame d'Houtetôt owed the tranquility and happiness she enjoyed; for otherwise her delicate tact would have been perpetually wounded by the sight of the vices and defects of her associates. She began, however to suffer early from the bad character of her husband. Count d'Houtetôt proceeded legally against M. de Bellegarde for the dowry of his wife. We are unable to explain the circumstances; but Count d'Houtetôt was universally blamed, and M. de Bellegarde so much irritated that he refused to see him. Poor Sophie threw herself at the feet of her father, and entreated him not to confound her in the anger he felt against her husband. M. de Bellegarde was deeply hurt by the conduct of his son-in-law: he was moved by the dutiful affection of Sophie, but he was unable to distinguish in his own mind the different feelings with which he ought to have regarded her and her husband. He was cold and reserved. Madame d'Houtetôt was afflicted by this injustice; she was told that it was more of manner than of sentiment, but it must have estranged her from her paternal house, and it may have contributed not a little to the formation of her attachment for St. Lambert. During the first years of our entrance into life we still cling to our early affections; the name of a father is sacred, and the companion of our infancy and the chosen friend of our heart are regarded

with increased love. But at the same time, our heart, opened to a thousand new emotions, requires tenderness and warmth in return for the treasure of affection it so readily bestows. We may easily put ourselves in the situation of Sophie. The attentions of her husband were cold and heartless; his unworthy conduct destroyed the sensation of tender friendship which she at first felt for him; his parents, given up to dissipation, could not win her esteem. Her father was estranged from her: her sister-in-law, Madame d'Epinau, was engrossed by her own intrigues. Her heart overflowed with the necessity of loving; her joys were all centered in the exercise of her affections. She saw St. Lambert; she loved and was beloved. In the society to which she was confined, her passion was not considered criminal as long as she covered it with the veil of what was called decency. Her husband required no more; and thus, without blame, or the consciousness of a fault, Madame d'Houtetôt became the friend, the constant, passionately attached and faithful friend of her lover, from the moment her connexion with him began until death.

St. Lambert was a poor noble of Lorraine, and his pecuniary circumstances constrained him at one time to serve in a regiment of infantry. He was introduced into notice after the death of Madame du Chastelêt, as the successful rival of Voltaire in the favours of that lady. Soon after her death he appeared, for the first time, in Paris. He was received in all the best society, and became a partaker of the *petits soupers* of Mademoiselle Quinault, the French actress, who assembled at her house the leading characters among the French literati. During the life of King Stanislaus he divided his time between Paris and Lorraine, where he had the place of *Exempt* in the body-guard of the King of Poland; he afterwards sold his batôn and obtained a colonel's commis-

sion in the French service. During the first part of his Parisian career, Madame d'Épinay mentions him in strong terms of favour and admiration. She was pleased with his society, and describes him as possessing great talent, delicate taste, and poetical imagination. He took a principal part in the society to which he belonged, and, as a philosopher and poet, attracted the admiration of his associates. He has since published the result of his philosophical studies and the verses long dormant in his portfolio. The one is without originality or truth; the latter display neither imagination nor passion. But in society these things wear a different aspect; and the brilliancy of his conversation, and the vivacity of his delivery, stood in place of profundity or wit.

Madame d'Houtetôt became attached to St. Lambert with all the warmth of her affectionate heart; and her attachment to him compensated for the keen disappointment she must have felt from the conduct of her husband. His meanness, his avidity for money, his avarice, became every day more apparent, and the coarseness of his manners admitted of no disguise. She turned an indulgent eye on his faults; she did not reproach him with his want of integrity; she bore his caprices with equanimity, whenever her mind, ever blind to the evil side of human nature, permitted her to perceive it; her greatest revenge was a madrigal, where a perception of the ridiculous, and not satirical bitterness, made the point of her reproof. Her life under the roof of his parents was passed in a routine of pleasure, which at intervals was exchanged for the solitude of their country seat on the seaside, in Normandy: She made one at the parties of Madame d'Épinay, and was one of the performers at her private theatre. She took a part in the "Engagement Temeraire," a comedy by Rousseau, who also had a part in it, and at that

time was often in the society of his afterwards beloved Sophie. They took long walks together, and conversation never flagged between them: he thought her very agreeable, but he was far from foreseeing that she was to become the destiny of his life, and the innocent cause of so many of his misfortunes. We may guess the reason why his heart was at that time less susceptible of passion. He lived in society, and his literary efforts were of a political and philosophical nature. Besides, at that time, just awakened to the consciousness of his powers, his mind was too full of its own identity and exertions, to expend itself upon sympathy with another. But during his romantic residence at the Hermitage, his solitary wanderings in the wood of Montmorenci, and his impassioned day-dreams, when he created Julie and St. Preux, his heart was awakened, and he was prepared for the reception of that love which he so eloquently described. In the mean time, years passed over the head of Madame d'Houtetôt; she continued gay, simple, and enthusiastic, forgetful of all except her constant and unalterable attachment towards her friends. To them she was a sympathizing companion during their joyous hours, an angel of consolation in their adversity; the sensibility that filled her heart gave a touching amiability to her manners, and her vivacity never wounded, because it was always animated by the truest spirit of delicacy.

St. Lambert was often absent during the campaigns. On occasion of one of these absences, she came to the Hermitage, where Rousseau then resided, to bring him news of his friend. Her journey thither was full of adventures. Her coachman lost his way, her carriage stuck in the mud, she alighted to walk, but her slight shoes were soon destroyed, and she arrived at the hermitage in boots, laughing heartily at her misfortune. Rousseau was delighted with her frank

and amiable demeanour ; her stay was short, but they parted mutually pleased, and she promised to renew her visit.

She executed her promise the following year. M. d'Houtetôt and St. Lambert, who both served, were absent. Her husband had wished her to retire to their estate in Normandy, but her friends opposed themselves to so melancholy a separation ; her ill health was a pretext, and she was permitted to rent a small house at Eaubonne, situated midway between the Hermitage and La Chevrette, the seat of Madame d'Epinay. She came over from Eaubonne to the Hermitage on horseback, and in man's attire. Rousseau would not have been pleased with this disguise in another, but the natural grace of Madame d'Houtetôt embellished every action of her life ; she even lent an air of romance to this visit, and the first emotions of the most passionate love were awakened in the heart of Rousseau. He was then occupied in the composition of " La Nouvelle Heloise," and his imagination was excited by his extatic reveries ; he was in love without on object, and this love fascinated his sight. At first he saw his Julie in Madame d'Houtetôt ; but soon Julie was forgotten, and this amiable woman endowed with all the perfections of the idol of his heart. Madame d'Houtetôt made him the confidant of her affection for St. Lambert ; she spoke of him with enthusiastic tenderness, and the contagion of passion was communicated to her unfortunate hearer. For a long time he was unaware of the feeling that had taken possession of him ; he attributed his agitation and deep sympathy to the warmth of his friendship. It was not until he found, during his noon-day reveries, the idea of Madame d'Houtetôt substituted for Julie, that he opened his eyes, and saw the extent of his misfortune.

At first, shame and timidity rendered him silent : his agitation betrayed him, and Madame d'Houtetot found that

she was beloved. Her gentle nature would not permit her to be angry with a man whose fault was his attachment to her, and she hesitated to deprive St. Lambert of a friend whom he prized. She saw a middle course, and, unread in the human heart, she trusted that utter hopelessness would destroy the ill-placed love, while her sincere friendship would preserve the happiness of Rousseau. She talked to him of St. Lambert; she drew a lively picture of the delightful intercourse that might exist between all three, when he should have restrained his feelings within reasonable bounds; she exhorted him to put in exercise his virtuous principles, and she reproached him for his treason towards his friend. Rousseau listened with docility; and his own understanding added force to her arguments. There was one, however, that she did not use, but which speedily suggested itself to his mind, and which became a spur instead of a check to his passion. He thought of his age, and of the unalterable fidelity of Madame d'Houtetôt to her lover. What, he thought, can St. Lambert, the tenderly beloved St. Lambert, have to fear from me? Old, unattractive, sick, my folly can hurt myself alone, and I may love and weep, fearless of being guilty of any treachery towards my young and favoured friend.

Rousseau having thus silenced his remorse, he gave himself entirely up to his destructive passion. Madame d'Houtetôt never flattered his delusion, or ceased to remonstrate against it; but she treated him with gentleness, and falsely trusted that her friendship would suffice to content a sentiment, which ever requires entire sympathy and unconditional return. This misjudged kindness led them both to the brink of a precipice. They spent much of their time together; they took long walks in the romantic country they inhabited; they passed evenings together, under the shade

of trees in a small wood. Love made Rousseau eloquent, even beyond his natural talent, but the fidelity of Madame d'Houtetôt remained unshaken; she was moved to tears, but St. Lambert occupied solely the shrine of her heart; his idea was perpetually present to her; she recalled it to the memory of Rousseau, and he saw with despair the insurmountable bounds that she eternally placed to his vainly towering passion.

This state of things could not continue long; it could not have endured of itself, and it was broken in upon by the intervention of others. His love became known, and attracted universal attention; an anonymous letter awakened the suspicions of St. Lambert. He did justice to the constancy of Madame d'Houtetôt; but she had concealed the love of Rousseau from him, and this occasioned some diffidence in his mind. Angry with herself for her injudicious indulgence, and fearful of its consequences, Madame d'Houtetôt declared to Rousseau, that he must forget his unhappy passion, or he could see her no more. The suspicions which he conceived of Madame d'Epinaÿ's interference, and the return of St. Lambert, brought on the catastrophe. St. Lambert reproached him with gentleness, and Rousseau was humiliated. On the departure of the Marquess, Madame d'Houtetôt was altered; she became cold and estranged, and even asked him to return her letters. Rousseau saw that the dream was over; he saw the necessity of exerting all his powers to extinguish his ill-fated passion. Madame d'Houtetôt was conscious that gentleness had been fuel to the fire that filled his heart: her visits to the Hermitage were relinquished; he was no longer received with the same cordiality at Eaubonne, and he ceased to visit there. Soon after St. Lambert was taken ill, Madame d'Houtetôt became

solely occupied by his welfare ; she quitted Eaubonne, and all intimate connexion between her and Rousseau was at an end.*

On his recovery, St. Lambert quitted the French service, and came to live at Paris. Madame d'Houtetôt, who endured much painful solicitude during his absences at the army, was doubly gay and contented on this change. St. Lambert gave himself entirely up to literature ; he became a Member of the French Academy, was subsequently elected its Secretary, and afterwards succeeded Buffon as its Director. He published his "Saisons," a work he had long before composed and read to his friends, and on which his poetical reputation chiefly rested. The publication, however, destroyed the drawing-room poet ; it was declared with one voice (a voice which all into whose hands it falls must echo) tame, dull, and unreadable ; nor could the notes and tales by which it was accompanied give feathers to the leaden-footed Muse. Some time afterwards he published his Catechisme

* As we are not writing either a justification or a life of Rousseau, we pass over the various contradictory accounts that have been published concerning his conduct in this affair, and the accusations that have been heaped upon him. His own statement by no means exculpates him, and the tone of sensuality that reigns throughout is in conformity to the style of "La Nouvelle Heloise," but takes from his passion that purity and exaltation of sentiment which make the best part of our sympathy for a lover's sufferings. We confine ourselves in our present account to Madame d'Houtetôt, who held a clear course ; she was divided between compassion for Rousseau and her constant attachment to St. Lambert. Her mistakes were owing to the tenderness of her heart ; and to the end she demonstrated the sweetness of her disposition, tinctured, as was usual to her, by a little indiscretion of conduct and incongruity in her reasoning faculties. Nor have we entered here upon those extensive questions which might naturally be raised on such a subject. We are only drawing a portrait, and leave the criticism upon it to others.

Universelle ; a book of false and superficial philosophy. The best parts are borrowed from Rousseau, but the sentiments, so eloquently expressed in the *Emile*, meet you despoiled and arid under the shape of St. Lambert's aphorisms and conclusive arguments. With his youth St. Lambert seems also to have lost the amiable and brilliant qualities that once distinguished him. Not so Madame d'Houtetôt ; her mind seemed endowed with perpetual youth ; age did not diminish either the gaiety of her spirits or the affectionateness of her disposition. She nursed St. Lambert in ill health ; she humoured his foibles, and ever continued his constant and unequalled friend. The lady to whom M. d'Houtetôt had been attached died, and he transferred to his wife the attentions and friendship of which she had hitherto been bereaved. The fragments of poetry which remain of hers were chiefly written during old age ; and amidst all its displeasures, she fondly dwells upon those affections which formed her only consolations.

It would have given us great pleasure if we could have traced Madame d'Houtetôt through the remaining years of her long life, but we know of no record that can aid us in this research. She was a witness of those tremendous vicissitudes that shook our moral world as an earthquake ; she beheld the fall of what in her younger days must have appeared to her as firm set as the earth's foundations—the Bourbon dynasty. She saw the rise and fall of Napoleon. The last years of her life were spent at Baubonne. Her husband and lover were both dead ; all that before had lent life and interest to the Vale of Montmorenci had passed away. The Hermitage was gone, Rousseau was no more. She remained the sole land-mark of a strange country, which the waves of time had washed over even to obliteration. The hearts that had beat for her were cold, but hers was yet

warm. She was surrounded by her grandchildren, and sought consolation in new friendships for a fresh race. As she sat over her embroidery frame, she sang the songs she had composed in years long gone by, and composed others adapted to her present circumstances. Her imagination and feelings were vanquished by death alone.

She died in the year 1813, aged 83, and we lost in her the last relic of the age of Louis XV.

SHAKESPEAR'S FOOLS.

I WAS of half a dozen minds how to begin, till at last I fixed upon gravity. So here goes:—

“ If a man were to introduce a Fool, to do nothing but speak ‘folly, it were foolishness itself,” as was well said or sung by Mr. Coleridge (and he is a grave man) among other good things touching motley gentry, in an extempore lecture; for his pocket was picked of the written one in his way to the Institution. It was pleasant to see Kant’s philosophy, once in a way, hand-in-hand with Tom-foolery. Just then I heard there was extant a huge production on Shakespear’s Fools, by one Douce. A friend lent me the volumes, assuring me it was a “ standard work,” and so were all the books in his library;—they were ever standard. With what joy I soiled my white handkerchief in flapping away the dust, how snugly they lay under my arm, and what care I promised to take of them! Ah, thought I, now I have a treasure!—What a disappointment! Why this man, Douce, had no more to do with Shakespear, than the housewife who sacrilegiously steals one of his pages to tie down a pickle-jar. The deuce was in Douce. It was an antiquarian treatise on Fools’ dresses, grounded on authorities from Shakespear, all up-side-down. For instance, because one of them says, “ I did impetticoat thy gratuity,” he gravely proves that Fools wore petticoats, blind to the staring fact that it was the sweetheart’s petticoat intended, and follows it up with

copies from monstrous old wood-cuts. Again, he affirms this particular Fool was not quite an idiot, and this one only half a natural, and so on, classing them as a gardener does cabbages. Touchstone half a natural! Oh, Mr. Douce, what are you? That a man should knock his head against a wall is pardonable; but that he should obstinately keep it there, through two such big volumes, is by no means pardonable,—it is only astonishing.

It is said, in Shakespear's time Fools became less tolerable. Most likely. In his days there was an inquiring spirit abroad, which made truth insupportable; though once it was pretty sport to hear it spoken when no one else believed in it, as a beauty enjoys the joke of being called ugly; but when her charms begin to fade, it becomes a serious matter, a very intolerable piece of insolence.

Now to speak of them as individuals. It is a blank mistake to imagine, because they are all in motley, that their characters are of one colour. They are not like our harlequins in a Christmas pantomime, always the same identical harlequins, whether under the influence of a Mother Goose, a Friar Bacon, or a little silver fairy, jumping out of a full-blown tinsel rose. Even Douce could distinguish between them in his dousing way. Come forth, my merry gentles, all four of you (I wish there were a dozen) and let me take you by the hand, one by one, that I may introduce you in a particular manner to our friends and acquaintance.

The lady Olivia's Fool shall be first,—not for his own merits, but purely in compliment to the lady. There is something suspicious about him. Would you believe it?—he hath a leman! yea, and absents himself from the house, we don't know how long, and will not confess where he has been. This is the more inexcusable, as there happens to be a touch of prudery among the good qualities of his noble

mistress. He is a wild young rogue, and ought not to be amended. Besides, I don't half dislike him on another score. I pass by his cutting a joke about hell "to ears polite," and his contending he "lives by the church;" the most orthodox have been guilty of the like. But what are we to think of him when he puts on the gown of Sir Topaz the curate? Soon as it is thrown over his shoulders, he speaks this pertinence—"I will dissemble myself in it; and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown." Then he pays a visit to a poor wretch in the clutches of his masters, with the text of "Peace in this prison!"—declaring he is "one of those gentle ones, that will use the devil himself with courtesy," and, at the same time, falls into most intolerant abuse. So, this is his idea of a Sir Topaz! After endeavouring to persuade the prisoner he is vexed by a fiend, is a lunatic, and that a dark room is a light one, he questions him as to the tenets of a particular kind of faith, which was once held most sacred. When this is answered, his catechism comes to that fearful point of "What think'st thou of his opinion?" "I think," says the prisoner, "nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion." This, considering it was impossible for him to believe, seems moderate. But his Reverence, who (you must all the while understand) is the Fool, immediately puts on the sullens, croaks out, "Fare thee well: remain thou still in darkness!"—insists on his giving credence to an incredible faith, and then, with another "Fare thee well," leaves him to his evil fate. If these mysteries are too sublime, gentlemen, for your understanding, it is pitiful. But as this Fool, who "wore not motley in his brain," did not choose to apply them to his times, I will even follow so wise an example. What's this, my boy? A tabor! Ah! I know thou art very fond of music, and hast "a sweet breath to sing," "a mellifluous voice," "a contagious breath,"—no

wonder thou hast a leman! Thou canst sing "a love-song, or a song of good life," or join in a catch that shall "rouse the night owl, and draw three souls out of one weaver," or chaunt a pathetic tender ditty, which

—— " is silly sooth,
And dallies with the innocence of love,
Like the old age."

But your epilogue-song, I hear, from good authority, is the most despairing thing your father ever wrote. With submission I think these five stanzas are not more despairing than the "Seven Ages;" though in a song, and with the original music, the bare history of man falls upon the heart with greater melancholy. I had always regarded it in no other light than as a hint to the audience, after having laughed, through a pleasant comedy, at the frailties and passions of their fellows, to look to themselves. At all events, I contend it does but "dally with the innocence" of despair.

Next, "good Mr. Lavatch," as thou art highly titled by the crest-fallen Parolles, step forth thou whose wit is like a "barber's chair." You may see, with half an eye, he has not the same jaunty air with the rest; though, when occasion serves, he can "make a leg, put off's cap, kiss his hand, and say nothing." His knowledge is somewhat limited; he has never been much beyond the walls of the Castle of Rousillon; yet when he visits the court he comes off with a passable grace. "My lord, that's gone, made himself much sport out of him;" and as every one must love the memory of the old count, this is the brightest feather in his cap. He too can sing, though he treats us with only one specimen, and that is the most appropriate to his situation, a fragment from the old Troubadours of Provençe; albeit a little twisted—"corrupted," the countess calls it—to serve his own pur-

poses. He should be designated in the *Dramatis Personæ* as an uneasy bachelor. Benedick rails at love and marriage, but not at womankind, as they are to him quite an abstract species; but this Fool, having a mind to marry, especially "Isbel the woman," looks forward to his chance in the lottery with strange misgivings, and, in his fears, finds fault with all the sex together. A marrying man is often thus. Our experienced dames know how to translate this language of general abuse, and when they meet with a likely young man shockingly guilty of it, entertain high hopes, and are remarkably busy in thrusting daughters and nieces in his way. Hannah More has but sublimated the first part of the character of Mr. Lavatch in her "Cœlebs in search of a Wife." Both give their special reasons for matrimony, only the Fool's are the more unanswerable, and both bewail the uncertainty of their approaching fate with sundry insinuations against the good qualities of all expecting maidens. The only difference is, that one sets out with a sweetheart in his eye, and the other sets his eye agog for a sweetheart. Cœlebs at last finds an angelic nonpareil; but as Shakespear had no acquaintance with such young ladies, he finishes his bachelor otherwise, and down falls the curtain without a wife for Mr. Lavatch. He had been to court, forsooth! and returns home with "no mind to Isbel. The brain," quoth he, "of my Cupid's knock'd out; and I begin to love, as an old man loves money, with no stomach." Upon this theme, a married man, with plenty of leisure and industry, might furnish a considerable folio; but that is none of my business; besides, Touchstone is growing impatient.

Here he comes, lugging in something after him. What, Audrey! I can't speak to thee now, Audrey. Go along, Audrey. "The Gods have not made thee poetical."—This fellow is the reverse of Mr. Lavatch; he has been brought up at court, and

then becomes fixed in a country life. He is a philosopher, but his humour is melancholy and satirical. It is not surprising that Jacques should take so strong a liking to him, as their minds are much of the same hue; only Touchstone is no misanthrope, because he had been no libertine. There never yet was satirist, who did not "rail on lady Fortune," and waste his time in reflections on its fleeting nature; however he does it "wisely and in good set terms." His education among courtiers, and his daily experience with shepherds, afford him everlasting subjects of discourse. Nothing escapes him, not Audrey herself; at every step he starts fresh game for his wit to shoot at; and is a mighty hunter in the forest of Arden. All base metals are tried and proved counterfeit by this Touchstone. Who will set our pious sermons and moral treatises on the sin of duelling against his "finding the quarrel on the seventh cause?" What ridicule he throws upon those nice distinctions which are to make a gentleman draw his sword and put it up again; and how he sneers at the masked poltroonery of these men of—(valour, I was about to say, but mine Host of the Garter reminds me of a better word)—of "mock-water." These rules for quarrelling still exist, much in the same fashion, among our pistol-mongers; and I am convinced it is because they cannot study Shakespear. Touchstone's satire flies more direct to its object than that of any other of the motley tribe, and is more caustic and personal. He is a walking Juvenal "under the shade of melancholy boughs." Though he gives us a scrap of a stanza, and can rhyme to "the right butter-woman's rate to market," he neither sings nor loves singing. From mere idleness he asks the Pages for a song, and then makes a most ungracious return. His having "no music in himself" is quite in character; and indeed I have read that the jaundice is often attended by a

partial loss of hearing. Audrey's admiration of him, and her being, I have no doubt, a comely, brown, black-eyed girl, may have effected somewhat; though I suspect the chief cause of his paying court to her, with no hurry to be married, was the want of a mental excitement in a pastoral life. I cannot love him so well as the others, but perhaps I love to read him more, as he, like Jacques, is "full of matter."

"Now, our joy, though last, not least," my dearest of all Fools, Lear's Fool! Ah, what a noble heart, a gentle and a loving one, lies hid beneath that party-coloured jerkin. Thou hast been cruelly treated. Regan and Goneril could but hang thee, while the unfeeling players did worse; for they tainted thy character, and at last thrust thee from the stage, as one unfit to appear in their worshipful company. Regardless of that warning voice, forbidding them to "speak more than is set down for them," they have put into thy mouth words so foreign to thy nature,* that they might, with as much propriety, be given to Cardinal Wolsey. But let me take thee, without addition or diminution, from the hands of Shakespear, and then art thou one of his most perfect creations. Look at him! It may be your eyes see him not as mine do, but he appears to me of a light delicate

* There are three passages, foisted in by the players, and adopted by the printers, which ought to be for ever expunged from the text. They are the following:—the couplet at the end of the first act; the whole of Merlin's prophecy during the storm, beginning with "This is a brave night," &c. as the Fool should go out with Lear; and those brutal words, "And I'll go to bed at noon," when the old king sinks into sleep. Such contradictions puzzled me for a long time, till looking among the Annotations, a profitable task once in a hundred times, I discovered that none of these three passages are in the quarto editions, printed eight years before Shakespear's death, but are introduced into the folio one, printed seven years after it. This, together with their absurdity, makes it plain they are not Shakespear's.

frame, every feature expressive of sensibility even to pain, with eyes lustrously intelligent, a mouth blandly beautiful, and withal a hectic flush upon his cheek. O, that I were a painter! O, that I could describe him as I knew him in my boyhood, when the Fool made me shed tears, while Lear did but terrify me!

“ But where’s my Fool? I have not seen him these two days.

Knight. Since my young lady’s going into France, the Fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.”

I have sometimes speculated on filling an octavo sheet on Shakespear’s admirable introduction of characters; but a little reflection showed me that I must write a volume, and that’s a fearful thing. This would rank among his best. We are prepared to see him with his mind full of the fatal “division of the kingdom,” and oppressed with “thick-coming fancies;” and when he appears before us, we are convinced of both, though not in an ordinary way. Those who have never read any thing but the French Theatre, or the English plays of the last century, would expect to see him upon the scene, wiping his eyes with his cloak; as if the worst of sorrows did not frequently vent themselves in jests, and that there are not beings who dare not trust their nature with a serious face when the soul is deeply struck. Besides, his profession compels him to raillery and a seeming jollity. The very excess of merriment is here an evidence of grief; and when he enters throwing his coxcomb at Kent, and instantly follows it up with allusions to the miserable rashness of Lear, we ought to understand him from that moment to the last. Throughout this scene his wit, however varied, still aims at the same point; and in spite of

threats, and regardless how his words may be construed by Goneril's creatures, with the eagerness of a filial love he prompts the old King to "resume the shape which he had cast off." "This is not altogether Fool, my Lord." But alas! it is too late. And when driven from the scene by Goneril, he turns upon her with an indignation that knows no fear of the "halter" for himself:—

" A fox when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter."

That such a character should be distorted by players, printers, and commentators! Observe every word he speaks; his meaning, one would imagine, could not be misinterpreted; and when he at length finds his covert reproaches can avail nothing, he changes his discourse to simple mirth, in order to distract the sorrows of his master. When Lear is in the storm, who is with him? None—not even Kent—

" None but the Fool; who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries."

The tremendous agony of Lear's mind would be too painful, and even deficient in pathos, without this poor faithful servant at his side. It is he that touches our hearts with pity, while Lear fills the imagination to aching. "The explosions of his passion," as Mr. Lamb has written in an excellent criticism, "are terrible as a volcano; they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches." Such a scene wanted relief, and Shakespear, we may rely upon it, gives us the best. But it is acted otherwise,—no, it is Tate that is acted. Let

them, if they choose, bring this tragedy on the stage; but, by all means, let us not be without the Fool. I can imagine an actor in this part, with despair in his face, and a tongue for ever struggling with a jest, that should thrill every bosom. What! banish him from the tragedy, when Lear says, "I have one part in my heart that's sorry yet for thee;" and when he so feelingly addresses him with "Come on, my boy: How dost, my boy? Art cold? I am cold myself." At that pitch of rage, "Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here!" could we but see the Fool throw himself into his master's arms, to stay their fury, looking up in his countenance with eyes that would fain appear as if they wept not, and hear his pathetic entreaty, "Pr'ythee, nuncle, be contented!"—Pshaw! these players know nothing of their trade. While Gloster and Kent are planning to procure shelter for the King, whose wits at that time "begin to unsettle," he remains silent in grief; but afterwards, in the farm-house, we find him endeavouring to divert the progress of Lear's madness, as it becomes haunted by the visions of his daughters, and that in the most artful manner, by humouring the wanderings of his reason, and then striving to dazzle him with cheerfulness. At the last, we behold him, when all his efforts are proved unavailing, utterly dumb! "And my poor Fool is hanged!"

"With a hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
For the rain it raineth every day."

Yes—there must be something very despairing in that epilogue-song, or it could not have entered my head at such a time.

I have said there are only four Fools in Shakespear, but we have the skull of a fifth. "Alas, poor Yorick!" And

this conjures to one's mind the idea of Hamlet in petticoats. Without this fact staring me in the face, I could have as soon thought of Juliet grown older than her old Nurse. But it is very true. Hamlet must have once been a squalling baby; and soon after, in little breeches, "with shining morning face." Nor could his infancy be better ennobled, than by telling us he kissed the King's Jester "I know not how oft," and was "borne on his back a thousand times."

CARLUCCIO.

THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS.

By Leigh Hunt

de auto τῶν ἀρχῶν - Chap. 17 -
Ἀρχεῖτε, Μῦσαι φίλαι, ἀρχεῖτ' αἰδῶς.—THEOCRITUS.

Begin, dear Muses, *but* begin.

I.

“Twenty sweet summers I will tie together,”
Said the rejoicing bridegroom in the play,
Who was to have one month of honied weather,
And then, to please the tyrant, die next day. (1)
The vile, hard-hearted——yet I don't know either——
However, what I was about to say
Was this,—that in these light poetic spinnings,
I tie together twenty sweet beginnings.

II.

Exordiums are my theme.—Thou great “O thou!”
Whoe'er thou art, whom poets thou by thousands,
Whether thou sit'st upon the Olympian brow
Of epic bard, or wonderest at the cow's hands
Of rude invoker, rhyming any how,
Allow me to be clerk for both advowsons;
For if my own rhyme's nothing of itself,
It sings of others worthy of thy shelf.

III.

I want, in fact, to finish a whole poem
 At once; and to write properly, I find
 I can't have flow'rs as quickly as I sow 'em
 Something will still take place, not to my mind,
 Some weakness, lameness, some hard buddings (blow 'em!)
 Some graftings, which I hate to leave behind:
 So I must take my time with such grave matters,
 And sow, meanwhile, my cresses in these tatters. (2)

IV.

I must have light refreshment, relishes quick,
 Fruits that I can dispatch with a brief eating,
 And yet that I can eat too in the thick
 Of trees and gardens; sketches of one sitting,
 But then of looks, at which a painter's stick
 Might feel the life return to it, ev'n to beating.
 When I want more, I go and wrap me round
 In Milton's, Chaucer's, Spenser's holy ground.

V.

I'm like a knight of old. I'm fierce to-day,
 Desperate and grim, in middle of the fight;
 Nothing will serve me but to hack my way
 At kings and chieftains, trampers of the right:
 Anon, I'm gentle as a morn of May,
 Am all for flow'rs, and loving dreams at night,
 And must go waken blossoms in the bushes,
 Warblings of birds, and worlds of rosy blushes.

VI.

See,—the word “ May ” disturb’d my simile,
And took me with it, like a lass-led boy.
I meant to say, that as the knight would be
Now all for fighting, and the terrible joy
Of riding plumed battle like a sea,
And now would be rapt off, far from annoy,
Into the arms of fairies and their bowers,
So frown and smile my party-colour’d hours.

VII.

So when my turn comes to repose, I read
My magic books, and then with a bird’s eye
Dart me far off, as he does to his bed,
Now to some piping vale of Arcady,
Now to some mountain-top, which I’ve heard said,
Holds the most ghastly breath in Tartary ;
And then I’m cradled ’twixt my Appenines,
Spying the blue sky through the yellow vines.

VIII.

And then I’m all with Ovid and his changes,
Or all with Spenser and his woods, or all
With Ariosto and his endless ranges,
Riding his Hippogriff, till I grow too small
For eye to see :—then lo ! I’m by the Ganges,
Quick as that fatal wight, who gave a call
To Solomon to send him out o’ the way
Of Death, and met him there that very day. (3)

IX.

And then again I'm playing fast and loose
 With girls, in isles that stud the Grecian sea: (4)
 And then I'm in old Greece, and Œdipus
 Holding his blind eyes up, creeps quietly
 By his dear daughter's side, whom I would chuse,
 Were I a god, my worshipp'd wife to be: (5)
 And then I'm in the valley, "wonder deep,"
 Where the cold waters lull old Sleep to sleep. (6)

X.

And then I'm all for Araby, my first love;
 I'm Giafar, I'm a "genie," I'm a jar;
 I'm Sindbad in some very horrid grove,—
 Which is delicious: I'm the Calendar,
 Who with the lady was *one* hand and glove;
 I am the prince, who shot his bow so far,
 And found that cellar, with a stock divine
 Of lips to kiss, still redder than the wine. (7)

XI.

And then I take a pen, pluck'd from the wing
 Of the rich hour, and let my fancy flow,
 Dipping delighted in my ebony spring,
 (For Sindbad would have call'd my ink-stand so);
 And first of all (which you will think a thing
 Not needing to be mention'd, but 'tis though,
 For it's my subject, and I hold me in,
 Not to have done too quickly) I *begin*!

XII.

Beginnings are high moments. I appeal
 To you, musicians, when you're all prepar'd
 To pour some storm of harmony you know well ;
 Painters, to you, when after studying hard,
 You've got a subject, that you're sure you feel ;
 Readers, to you, when suddenly your regard
 Is cast upon a packet, square, tight, brown,—
 " Ah, you mean books ?"—I do,—the new from town.

XIII.

" Dinner on table " after a long walk
 Has it's exordium : so has going to sleep,—
 Fading by fine degrees from a friend's talk :
 Reaching a wood is not to be held cheap,
 After a ride through sun, and dust, and chalk :
 But the beginning the most sweet and deep,
 The first of firsts,—ah, you know what it is,—
 Is the first trembling, touching, trusting kiss.

XIV.

I give up that. . But not the breathing wood,
 Enter'd, with hat off, after sun and dust ;
 Not going to sleep in smiling gratitude ;
 Nor meal that we approach, as walkers must ;
 Not cutting string from books ; nor subject good,
 Hit on by finger'd pencil ; nor the gust
 Of Philharmonic winds, waked all at once, (8)
 Touch like a bard's pen, tilted for the nonce.

XV.

Gravely I feel it, lightly though I say.
 All bards have felt it, great as well as small,
 And shew the proud delight with which they lay
 Their hand to pen. Lo, listen first of all,
 To Homer, opening his triumphant way!
 What Horace says of modesty withal
 And meek beginnings, must be read *our grano*,
 Or what becomes of arms *virumque cano*?

XVI.

The opening, like the ending, must be settled
 By nature and the occasion. Homer, treating
 Of the wise wanderer, and how well he battled
 Through his long ills by patient wit (and cheating),
 As calmly brings him in; but when the high-mettled
 And fierce Achilles is to give us greeting,
 He strikes a trumpet up in his first line,
 Fit for the coming of a wrath divine.

XVII.

Beginnings please us, some for the mere style,
 Some for the sentiment, and some for both.
 All should be musical; and most, the while,
 Seem full of a sure pleasure, nothing loth,
 Whether their business be to mourn or smile,
 Whether the Delphic voice be sweet or wroth:
 For 'tis a task so noble, that of verse,
 It aye must taste the pleasure it confers.

XVIII.

Hesiod's Theogony commences well,
 He puts the Muses first with such delight,
 Their bathings, and their dances amiable,
 And that delicious voice they send at night
 Over the mountain-tops on which they dwell,
 Like choral nuns, and take a hymning flight.
 He heard them under Helicon, he says,
 A shepherd; and they fill'd his hand with bays. (9)

XIX.

E'en Burns's holly must submit to this,
 True as it is, and blithe with berries red;
 For Hesiod really pass'd those nights of his
 Under the mountain with it's laurel'd head,
 Where those fair birds were thought to live in bliss.
 But fancies are facts too:—let that be said.
 Besides, we've Fairy-land. The Muse, I grant her,
 Kept house in Greece; but then we've Tam o' Shanter.

XX.

Dante's first lines are simple, grave, sincere,
 Too full of awe for shew (10):—Milton's the same.
 Dryden's Religio Laici takes my ear
 With an exordium, that should put to shame
 All the monotonous lines we hold so dear,
 Time-beaters for dull heads (11). Think not I blame
 Nevertheless the glorious Rape o' the Lock,
 The airiest wit that ever rais'd a joke. (12)

XXI.

Pope was a true-born poet, modified
 By his infirm complexion and small sphere ;
 But then so great in that, that he could hide
 Scores of us dwarfs in our savannahs here :
 His rooms were not mere rooms, but worlds beside
 Of spirits, who hung pearls in every ear.
 Wit, lover, friend, his lays were like his lawns ;
 His face, as rich and sensitive as a fawn's. (13)

XXII.

Yet what is fit for miniature, may not suit
 With oils, and lets more trifling copiers pass.
 But to return. The learn'd will think me a brute,
 But I must own, such is my taste, alas !
 For what is natural, and new to boot,
 That I could wish it proved (granting it was
 As foreign to his subject too as Pegu),
 That Virgil did begin with *Ille ego*.

XXIII.

The bard was a dear lover of the woods,
 He loved their loving nymphs, he lov'd their dreams ;
 Glens and philosophy were his two great goods ;
 And when he thought of quitting his mild streams
 For seats of war and their ensanguin'd floods,
 It was as natural he should turn his beams
 Once more to look on what he left, as men,
 When the drum calls them, kiss their wives again. (14)

XXIV.

Lucretius opens nobly with his hymn
 To Venus, and her warm Dædalian sway :
 You bask in it; nor wonder that Mars grim
 Doats on her face in that devouring way. (15)
 I like all poets, who thus seem to swim
 Into their subject, proud of the sweet play :
 The lordly swan, let out on his own river,
 Feels not the dimpling with a sweeter shiver.

XXV.

“ Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori, (16)
 Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese, io canto,
 Chè furo al tempo che passaro i Mori
 D'Africa il mare, e in Francia nocquer tanto,
 Seguendo l'ire e i giovenil furore
 D'Agramante lor re, che si diè vanto
 Di vendicar la morte di Trojano
 Sopra re Carlo, imperator Romano.”

XXVI.

“ Ladies, and cavaliers, and loves, and arms,
 And courtesies, and haughty deeds I sing,
 What time the Moors of Africa in swarms
 Came o'er the sea with Agramant their king,
 And did such harm in France, and blew the alarms
 He made in his young rage, vowing to bring
 To fierce account, for his old father slain,
 The illustrious Roman emperor, Charlemagne.”

XXVII.

So enters on his task, with gallant joy,
 The Ferrarese, whose very name's a pleasure.
 Nor scarcely less charms he, who chose to employ
 His time in polishing another's treasure: (17).
 He brings his wine, like the Idæan boy;
 Like pleasant friendship, comes he on our leisure;
 For our own sakes he comes, as well as his,
 Touching a brilliant lute;—and here he is:—

XXVIII.

“ *Leggiadri amanti, e donne innamorate,
 Vaghe d'udir piacevol cose e nuove,
 Benignamente, vi prego, ascoltate
 La bella istoria, che'l mio canto muove;
 E udirete l'opre alte e lodate,
 Le gloriose, egregie, inchite pruove,
 Che fece il conte Orlando per amore,
 Regnando in Francia Carlo imperadore.*”

XXIX.

“ Gallants in love, and ladies touch'd as they,
 Who love to hear delightful things, and new,
 Benignly lend your gentle ears, I pray,
 To the high story I'm preludeing to;
 And you shall hear the great, the glorious way,
 In which a thousand wonders were gone through
 By County Orlando, for a loving glance,
 What time the Emperor Charles was king in France.”

XXX.

'Tis music truly,—tis a myrtle tree,—
 Incense lit up,—a bunch of heart's-ease roots :
 Remember too, these rhymes of Italy
 Once on a time were really sung to lutes :
 Petrarch sung his : and such a taste had he,
 Not only in voice, which warbled like a flute's,
 Or rather was brimful of liquid power,
 But his own airs were sung in every bower. (18)

XXXI.

Our only lyrist, now-a-days, in the sense
 Of Greece and Tuscany, is Thomas Moore :
 But all should write, as under influence
 Of modulated sounds and their full store ;
 And then, and only then, they may commence
 With their "O Thou's,"—"I sing's,"—and harps of yore ;
 And this reminds me of that prelate merry,
 Who has a name so militant, Forteguerra.

XXXII.

"Emmi venuta certa fantasia, (19)
 Che non posso cacciarmi da la testa,
 Di scriver un istoria in poesia
 Affatto ignota, o poco manifesta.
 Non è figlia del Sol la Musa mia,
 Nè ha cetra d'oro, o d'ebano contesta :
 E rozza villanella, e si trastulla
 Cantando a aria, conforme le frulla.

XXXIII.

“ Ma con tutto che avezza a le boscaglie,
E beva acqua di rio, e mangi ghiande,
Cantar vuole d'eroi e di battaglie,
E d'amori e d'imprese memorande ;
E se avverrà, che alcuna volta sbaglie,
Piccolo fallo è in lei ogni error grande,
Perchè non studiò mai ; e il suo soggiorno
Or fu presso un abeta, or presso un orno.

XXXIV,

“ E intanto canterà d'armi e d'amori,
Perchè in Arcadia nostra oggi son scesi
Così sublimi e nobili pastori,
Che son di tutte le scienze intesi :
Vi son poeti, vi sono oratori
Che passan quelli de gli altri paesi :
Or ella, che fra loro usa è di stare
Si è messo in testa di saper cantare.

XXXV.

“ Ma, come voi vedrete, spesso spesso
S'imbroglierà ne la geografia,
Come formica in camminar sul gesso,
O su la polve, o farina che sia ;
O come quel pittor, ch' alto cipresso
Nel bel turchino mare coloria,
E le balene poi su gli erti monti ;
Così forse saranno i suoi racconti.

XXXVI.

“ Ma non per questo maltrattar si dee,
Nè farle lima lima, e vella vella :
La semplicità non ha certe idee,
Che fan l'istoria luminosa e bella ;
Nè lesse mai in su le carte Achee,
Ovver di Roma, o di nostra favella,
Le cose belle che cantar' coloro,
Ch' ebber mente divina e plettro d'oro.

XXXVII.

“ Ma cantar per istar allegramente,
E acciò che si rallegrì ancor chi l'ode :
Nè sa, nè bada a regole niente,
Sprezzatrice di biasimo e di lode,
Che tiraneggia cotanto la gente ;
Che v'è infino chi l'ugna si rode,
E il capo si stropiccia, e'l crin si strazia,
Per trovar rime ch' abbian qualche grazia.

XXXVIII.

“ Voi la vedrete ancor (tanto è ragazza)
Or qua, or là, saltar, come un ranocchio ;
Nè in ciò la biasmo, nè fa cosa pazza ;
Che da gli omeri infin sotto il ginocchio
La poesia ha penne onde svolazza ;
E va più presto che in un batter d'occhio
Or quinci, or quindi ; e così tiene attente
L'orecchie di chi l'ode, e in un la mente.

XXXIX.

“ Così veggiamo nel furor de l'armi,
 Tra il sangue, tra le stragi e le ruine,
 In un momento rivoltarsi i carmi
 Ai dolci amori ; e quindi a le divine
 Cose, e parlar di templi e sagri marmi ;
 Indi volare su l'onde marine,
 E raccontar le lagrime e il cordoglio
 D'Arianna lasciata in su lo scoglio.

XL.

“ Ma già si è posta in man la sua zampogna,
 E canta sotto voce, e non si attenda.
 Non la guardate ancor, che si vergogna,
 E come rosa il volto le diventa :
 Ma presto passa un poco di vergogna :
 Principiato che ell' ha, non si spaventa :
 E già incomincia : or noi, dov' ella siede,
 Taciti andiamo, ed in punta di piede.”

XLI.

“ A certain freak has got into my head,
 Which I can't conquer for the life of me,
 Of taking up some history little read,
 Or known, and writing it in poetry.
 My Muse is no Sun's daughter, be it said ;
 She has no harp of gold and ebony :
 She is a little clown, one of your singers
 Who sport it to the snapping of their fingers.

XLII.

“ And yet for all she has been used to keep
Within the woods, drinks water, and eats nuts,
She’s fain to sing of arms and soldiership,
And loves, and lofty cuttings of one’s throats :
So that, if any time she makes a slip,
You must not give her very savage cuts ;
Because she never studied. Her degrees
Have all been taken underneath the trees.

XLIII.

“ But she must sing of warriors and amours,
Because of late so many noble swains
Have come down to this Arcady of ours,
Who’ve been through all the sciences and their reigns :
There are your poets, there your orators,
Not to be found on any other plains ! (20)
Now she being used to hear them, the vain thing,
Has got it in her head, she too can sing.

XLIV.

“ But, as you’ll find, she will embroil herself
Often and often with geography,
Just like an ant poking about a shelf
Midst plaister, dust, and bits of cookery ;
Or as the painter did, who in a gulf
Of fine blue water put a cypress-tree,
And made his craggy mountains produce whales :
Such, very probably, will be her tales.

XLV.

" But you must not abuse her for all that,
 Nor keep on finding fault, and teasing her :
 The little simpleton was never pat
 At things that render histories fine and clear ;
 She never read Greek books, never look'd at
 Latin ones, nay, knows not one's own, poor dear !
 She never knew the fine things, new or old,
 Done by the mind divine and harp of gold.

XLVI.

" All that she sings is for her own pure pleasure,
 Including, it is true, the hearer's too :
 She neither knows nor cares for rules and measure ;
 Deaf to the blames or praises, false or true,
 Which make such holes in other people's leisure,
 Making this bite his nails, and that look blue,
 And t'other claw his head and tear his hair,
 For rhymes that may look pretty here and there.

XLVII.

" You'll find her also (she is such a romp)
 Leaping, like frog, about her on all sides ;
 And yet you mustn't set her down *non comp.*,
 For every Muse has feathers which she hides,
 Enabling her at will to frisk and jump ;
 And in the twinkling of an eye she glides,
 Now here, now there ; and so in occupation
 Holds all that witness her divine flirtation.

XLVIII.

Thus we shall see, amidst the rage of arms,
 Midst blood and slaughter and huge overthrow,
 That in a wink she'll turn with all her charms
 To love and joy, and then get up and go
 To church; and talk of shrines and saints in swarms;
 And then she'll whisk me to the sea-shore, lo!
 And tell us of the tears and the sad shock
 That Ariadne met with on the rock.

XLIX.

But see,—her hand is placed upon her reed;
 She preludes *sotto voce*,—she composes;—
 Don't you look yet;—she'll blush,—she will indeed;
 Her little cheeks will be all over roses;
 'Tis but a touch of bashfulness, soon fled;
 When once begun, there's nothing she refuses:
 Now she begins;—there,—now then let us go
 Near where she sits,—but softly,—on tip-toe."

L.

The reason why I turn this toy so long,
 Is, that I took it up but t'other day.
 It spins, as it proceeds, too coarse a song;
 But then refines, and makes a pretty play
 Of giddy colours. You may think it wrong
 To say, he came to scoff, but stayed to pray;
 But the fact is, our laughter at romance
 Grew fond of his wild partner in the dance.

LI.

How could he help it, seeing that she had
 Through all her laughing ways so sweet an eye,
 Such stories for him, grave as well as glad,
 And unaffected tears, when grief went by ;
 A face, as Chaucer says, " sweet, glad, and sad ?"
 I'm none of those who take to misery
 To rouse a callous palate ; but the very
 Profoundest want of mirth's profoundly merry.

LII.

Our lively prelate, living in a sphere
 Of hypocrites, and courtiers, and gay nothings,
 And having got perhaps he scarce knew where,
 Was much inclined to laugh at high and low things ;
 But being in his nature kind, sincere,
 And much a man, for all his lordly clothings,
 He grew in love with his romantic shelves,
 And only mock'd the hypocrites themselves.

LIII.

Tyrannous ills, that patriots would pull down,
 Slaveries, and slaughters, inequalities
 Extreme and insolent, and of use to none,
 Cause tears indeed, that from all human eyes
 Brave hands should seek to wipe ; but if but one
 Huge, glaring, broad-eyed mirth laugh'd in our skies,
 'Twould dry up all kind things, tears, smiles, and flowers,
 And make our hearts as wither'd as our bowers.

LIV.

Alas! I need not speak in the behalf
Of tears, the very best, I who have long
Seen what a cup the world consents to quaff,
Doing sweet smiles and sacred nature wrong:
'Tis Melancholy's laugh, and Mockery's laugh,
I speak of; and ev'n they utter a strong
And shuddering voice against the ills they clasp,
E'en while they kiss the beldams, and cry "Grasp!"

LV.

But I digress; so here I stop; for *Finis*
Coronat opus,—"a good end's a crown;"
A maxim, that in my mind so divine is,
That heartily, and with "devocioun,
As Chaucer says, I wish that every Highness
And Majesty (but ours) may soon lie down,
And treat their realms with the sole coronations
That give a perfect finish to their stations.

NOTES TO THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS.

(1) "*Twenty sweet summers I will tie together.*"—Fletcher's *Wife for a Month*.—What divine plays would not Beaumont and Fletcher have left us, if they had not been "fine gentlemen about town" as well as poets, and ambitious to please a perishing generation. Their Muse is like an accomplished country beauty, of the most exquisite kind, seduced up to town, and made familiar with the most devilish parts of it, yet retaining through all her debauchery a sweet regret, and an adoring fondness for nature. She has lilies about her paint and patch-boxes, and loves them almost as much as when she was a child.

(2) *And sow, meanwhile, my cresses in these tatters.*—It is well known that this species of small salad will spring up in the course of a few hours in a piece of flannel.

(3) *Of Death, and met him there that very day.*—A fine story, illustrative of the great Eastern dogma of fatality, has been told somewhere by Voltaire. He says, that Solomon was one day walking out of doors with somebody, when the latter, with much consternation, said, "Who is this terrible figure approaching? He fills me with horror. Send me, I pray thee, to the remotest mountain of India." Solomon, in his quality of magician, sent him thither accordingly. The figure by this time had come up, and addressing the monarch, said, "Solomon, how came that person to be walking here? I was to have fetched him from the remotest mountain of India." "*Angel of Death,*" replied Solomon, "thou wilt find him there."

(4) *With girls in isles that stud the Grecian sea.*—An allusion to a modern Greek dance, supposed to have been handed down from antiquity, and to represent the story of Theseus and Ariadne in the Labyrinth.

(5) *Were I a god, my worshipp'd wife to be.*—With the exception of the Philoctetes, I have but lately had the happiness to become acquainted with the divine dramas of Sophocles. I do not quote dramatic exordiums, because they speak the feelings of the author's characters, rather than his own; and my business is with a sort of personal consciousness of commencement: but the allusion in the text is to the beginning of the *Ædipus in Colonus*,—which see. Let no one imagine however he will find the least resemblance of Sophocles in a translator like Franklin, who, albeit he was an University Professor, could not write common English, much less translate some of the noblest poetry in the world. It is a pity that so many glorious works are lost to readers of taste, who do not happen to understand the ancient languages. Why does not Mr. Jones, the author of the Greek and English Grammar, oblige his countrymen with it's natural successor, a Greek and English Dictionary? Many might be allured to the study of a single language, who are deterred by the alarming necessity of understanding two, and by the comparatively frigid medium of Latin; for the Romans do not present themselves to the minds of people in general in the same glowing and poetical light as the Greeks; and this deduction from their history is a just one. Latin compared with Greek is a statue compared with a spirit.

(6) *Where the cold waters lull old Sleep to sleep.*—See *Chaucer's Dream*, beginning

I have great wonder, by this light,
How I live:—

for there is another under the same title. The poem in question is full of the deepest imagination and sentiment. The beginning conveys some touching information respecting the poet himself; and

nothing can surpass the faculty of abstraction in the account of the Valley of Sleep, or the living presence of his portrait of a woman afterwards, perhaps the completest ever painted.

(7) *Of lips to kiss, still redder than the wine.*—“The Story of Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari Banou.” The reader knows it, of course; but I write the words for the pleasure of repeating them.

(8) *Of Philharmonic winds waked all at once.*—Audi the Philharmonic Society; or if you cannot do that as soon as you wish, go to the Portuguese Ambassador’s chapel in South-street, Grosvenor-square, and hear the organ there waked up by the hand of a master. I, to wit, one of the “Satanic School” (Oh Bob!) have stood in that chapel, under the influence of that organ, and with a tenderness for which an ill state of health must excuse me to my Scottish friends (whose ancestors called an instrument of that description “a grit box o’ whistles”) have felt the tears run down my cheeks at the crowd of thoughts that came upon me. “Aye,” quoth the Laureat, “you were sorry that you had no longer a faith.” Excuse me; I have a faith, though not in your dammatory one, or your verses: but I was struck to think of all the miseries and bloody wars that had accompanied the spread of the kindest of doctrines: and wondered how it was possible for men to look upon the altar-piece before me, and hear the music that melted towards it, and not find out, that to injure and damn one another to eternity, was unbecoming even the wrath of charity.

(9) *A shepherd; and they fill’d his hand with bays.*

Μουσῶν Ἑλικωνιάδων ἀρχαίμθ’ αἰδεῖν,
 Ἄϊθ’ Ἑλικωνος ἔχουσιν ὄρος μέγα τε ζαθέριτε,
 Καὶ τε προ κρητὴν ἰοῖδεα ποσσ’ ἀπαλοῖσιν
 Ὀρχιυτται, καὶ βωμοὶ ἰρισθενίος Κρονίωτος
 Καὶ τε λοισσάμενται τερενα χροῶ Τερμησσοῖο,
 Ἡΰπω κρητῆς, ἢ Ὀλμῖου ζῆθοιο,

Ἀφροτάτω Ἑλικῶν χορὸς σπιτωμισάντο
 Καλοῦ, ἱεροῦνας ἐκέρθαισαντο δὲ ποσσίν.
 Ἐθὲν ἀπορρυμέναι, κικαλυμμέναι ἠὲ πολλῶ,
 Ἐννυχίαι σιγῶν, περικαλλία οὔσαι ἰήσαι,
 Ὕμνουσαι Δία τ' αἰγιόχοιο, κ. τ. λ.

With it's own Muses be our strain begun,
 Who hold the top of haunted Helicon,
 Who make a choral altar of the mountain
 To Jove, and dance about the dark-blue fountain.
 With delicate feet they dance, first having been
 With their sweet limbs inside of Hippocrene,
 Or other sacred waters of the hill;
 And then they mount its starriest pinnacle,
 And weave the dance, the lovely, the desired,
 Warming it more and more, because their souls are fired.
 Thence, rapt away, and wrought up to delight,
 Veil'd by the dark, they follow through the night,
 Uttering a charming voice, and singing hymns
 To Jove, who hangs a shadow on his limbs:
 &c. &c.

There follows a list of deities, with the translation of which I have not time to please myself; nor can I add the Muse's visit to Hesiod, which succeeds. It is hardly necessary to observe, that the translations attempted in this article are only intended to furnish the English reader with some idea of the originals, in default of a better. Ricciardetto is a trifle; but exordiums like those of Hesiod, are to be approached with reverence.

(10) *Too full of awe for shew*:—Milton's the same.—I do not mean to say that both these exordiums are not very impressive, particularly Dante's;—but see the beginning of Note 5. The following is the commencement of the great saturnine Italian, who, except in the bitterness of his intolerance, was more a northern genius than a southern. The strong apprehension of the literal imagery in unison with the metaphorical, announces at once the hand of a great poet. The trunks of his trees are tangible and gigantic: and every thing

admirably expresses the fierce and gloomy doubts likely to fall upon a mind subject to violent passions, but capable of reflection.

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
 Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,
 Che la diritta via era smarrita :
 E quanto a dir qual'era, è cosa dura,
 Questa selva selcaggia ed aspra e forte,
 Che nel pensier rinnuova la paura.
 Tanto è amara, che poco è più morte.

“ In the midway of this our mortal life
 I found me in a gloomy wood, astray,
 Gone from the path direct: and e'en to tell
 It were no easy task, how savage wild
 That forest, how robust and rough it's growth,
 Which to remember only, my dismay
 Renews, in bitterness not far from death.”

CARY.

(11) *Time-beaters for dull heads.*—This passage of noble and various music is as follows:—

Dim as the borrowed beams of Moon and stars
 To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
 Is Reason to the soul:—and as on high,
 Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
 Not light us here; so Reason's glimmering ray
 Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
 But guide us upward to a better day. }
 And as those nightly tapers disappear,
 When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,
 So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,
 So dies,—and so dissolves,—in supernatural light.

I never repeat this dignified strain of verse, without being at once soothed and elevated. Nor are my feelings without an echo to the sentiment, though by the word Reason I take leave to understand “common reasoning,” and by Religion something very different from what is irrational. It is possible, perhaps, that the ear might have had a greater glut of satisfaction by a shifting of one of the pauses,

and the insertion of another couplet between the last two; but I do not know: and it might have hurt the earnestness of the thoughts, and so re-acted in an injurious manner upon itself. Dryden, after all, was only writing an epistolary style; but he could not deny himself the pleasure of this noble exordium. The first four lines are perfect; and how divinely, and like the image it presents to the mind, does the last couplet linger, and fade away! Spenser himself has not a more glorious Alexandrine.

It was hardly my intention to bring examples of commencement from poems so short as this of Dryden; but I could not resist the recollection of an old favourite. Dryden abounds in spirited exordiums, worthy of his conscious power of versification. The opening of Absalom and Achitophel is another instance, and that of the Hind and Panther a third. It is observable, that in the last, where he begins with a description of his spotless favourite the Hind, he adopts a smooth and lady-like versification like that of Pope;—but see how with one vigorous touch,—one fervid and unhalting union of one of his couplets with another,—he rescues his softness from monotony.

A milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged,
 Fed on the lawns, and in the forest rang'd;
 Without unspotted, innocent within,
 She feared no danger, for she knew no sin:
 Yet had she oft been chas'd with horns and hounds
 And Scythian shafts, and many winged wounds
Aim'd at her heart; had oft been forc'd to fly,
 And doom'd to death, though fated not to die.

Dryden was the last English poet who studied versification, or in another word, *numbers*, which are the soul of it. The word itself has now become obsolete; at least it is never mentioned in connexion with modern poetry. Of Pope, I have no scruple to repeat, especially as the public are now used to the repetition from others, that he had a poor ear for the music of his art, as well as for all other music. But it was good enough to discover, and to be satisfied with, the softest and most obvious melodies in the poetry of Dryden and Wal-

ler; and, what is called his system of versification, was made up of nothing but their unvaried repetition. The ears of the multitude of readers are no better, especially in the North; and as they are not only satisfied with the versification when they read, but find it very easy to imitate when they write, their self-love has completed the delusion, and they cry up that as the finest *system* of verse, which by their own facility in copying it, they must feel to be no system at all. It may be asked,—why not be content with this sort of melody, or why not even think it the best, if it pleases the greatest number of people? I answer, first, that the greatest poets have not been satisfied with it themselves; secondly, that the object of the finest poetry is not to please the greatest multitude of readers, but the greatest number of readers who have wit and sensibility enough to be moved by it; and thirdly, that as this wit and sensibility may be extended, and rendered more common, by the very circumstance of the poet's not truckling to every thing which he finds established, so the general ear, like a particular one, may undoubtedly be rendered better or worse, according to the music to which the reigning poets accustom it.—Before any body however quotes the opinion here expressed of Pope, let him do me the justice to consult the two following Notes, 12 and 13.

Among other poets, who begin small compositions in a spirited and enjoying manner, I must not omit Theocritus and Chaucer.—There is scarcely an idyl of the former, which might not be adduced as an example; and though the construction of most of his pieces is dramatic, we have more right to identify a moral dramatist with his speakers, than any other, because his subject is generally of a more willing and ordinary nature, and turns upon pleasures common to every body's apprehension. How delightfully Theocritus opens his volume with that mention of the breathing pine-tree, the water, and the goat-herd's pipe!

Ἄδῦ τι τὸ ψιθυρισμὰ καὶ ἀπίτυς, αἰψολὲ, τῆγα
 Ἄ ποτὶ ταῖς παῖσι, μελισσεται ἄδῦ δὲ καὶ τῷ
 Εὐριδίῃ.

Goat-herd, the pine-tree, over the springs there,
 Has a delicious whisper in it's hair;
 And you too play us a delicious air.

We imagine that the goat-herd has been playing something on his pipe,—that a silence of admiration has taken place, in which the pine-tree was heard over those fresh little plashes of water,—and that his friend the shepherd suddenly breaks out into that beautiful comparison. But I must apologize for this sorry translation. Theocritus makes the comparison completer by saying that the whisper, or *ψιθυρισμα*, of the pine-tree (what a charming word!) “sings something delicious,”—*αδὺ τι μελισσεται*. I could willingly spend a whole morning in trying to turn the passage better; but I did not intend to write notes of such a length as have grown upon me; and though the excuse is a very bad one in general, the periodical nature of this publication really does not allow me time to linger upon them more than I do. Turning to Creech, who had a real genius for translation, if he could have been more patient with it, I find he has very properly retained the word in question:—

Goat-herd, that pine-tree's boughs, by yonder spring,
 In pleasing murmurs mix, and sweetly sing;
 And thou dost sweetly pipe.

But then we lose the happy indefinite air of the “something sweet;” —“murmurs” does not express the whispering sound of the original word; and “spring” is by no means the same thing as *springs*, in the plural, which suggest a variety of little waters leaping out of the ground together. Add, by the way, to this glimpse of Theocritus's scenery, the climate of Sicily, and perhaps the mountain in the distance, and what a picture for Claude or Gaspar Poussin!

I will take this opportunity of observing, that although the error with Creech was on the more promising side, he was as wrong in making Theocritus's shepherds talk so often like mere clowns, as more common-place translators have been in giving them the mere smoothness and conventional polish of Pope's Pastorals. The truth lies in a certain medium of strength and simplicity, leaning however to ele-

gance: for there is not such a difference between the languages of the various classes of society in the South as there is in the North, and most likely never was; the cause being of a nature as much physical as moral, namely, the more general diffusion of an equal quantity of enthusiasm and sensibility. All the senses of the South are critical. A Tuscan of the poorer orders trolls the pearls of his native language consciously over his tongue,—and addresses you on the most ordinary occasion with speeches that would be high-flown and affected in the mouth of an Englishman of the same class. The Sicilian dialect, I believe, though much less renowned, piques itself to this day upon a similar refinement, and is accounted a very sweet and happy one. I have read somewhere that there are modern pastorals in it of great beauty.

I have gone a great way from Chaucer, but it is always easy to return to him. His exquisite series of portraits, at the beginning of the *Canterbury Tales*, may be accounted a string of happy exordiums. But see also the *Dream* referred to in Note 6, the *Complaint of Mars and Venus*, the *Flower and the Leaf*, &c. never forgetting the exordium of the *Wife of Bath's Tale*, in which he jokes the friars so happily upon their succeeding to the ubiquitous privileges of the fairies. Readers of taste, who have suffered themselves to be dismayed by the imaginary difficulties of Chaucer's language, are astonished when they come to find how melodious, as well as easy to read, is this "rude old poet" as some have called him.—The syllables, it is to be observed, that form the plural terminations, are to be pronounced,—*motès*, *burghès*, &c. as they are to this day in many instances among the uneducated classes of the metropolis; and it is a pity we ever left off pronouncing them, our consonants being at all times too ready to crowd together and thrust out their softer neighbours, like fellows in a pit at the theatre. The final *e* also in many words must be humoured, as it still is in French poetry, the common ancestor of our own.

In oldè dayès of the king Artoùr,
Of which that Bretons speke gret honoür,
All was this lond ful filled of faërie;

The elf-queene with her joly compaignie
 Danced ful oft in many a grenè mede.
 This was the old opinion as I rede ;
 I speke of many hundred yeres ago ;
 But now can no man see non elvès mo ;
 For now the gretè charitee and prayeres
 Of limitoures and other holy freres,—
 That serchen every land and every streme,
 As thikke as motès in the sunnè-beme,
 Blessing hallès, chambres, kitchenès, and boures,
 Citees and burghès, castles high and toures,
 Thropès and bernès, shepènès and dairies,
 This maketh that there ben no faeries ;
 For ther as wont to walken was an elf,
Ther walketh now the limitour himself,
 In undermelès* and in morwēnings,
 And sayth his matinès and his holy thinges,
 As he goth in his limitatioun :
 Women may now go safely up and down ;
 In every bush and under every tree,
There is non other incubus but he.

(12) *The airiest wit that ever rais'd a joke.*—If ever the enamelled versification of Pope was proper for any poem throughout, it was for this lightest and most polished of satires, which in my opinion surpasses all other mock-heroics beyond all comparison. It has been said that Boileau has the advantage of Pope in *propriety* ; that is to say, his characters always act in a manner suitable to real life, while Pope's wage imaginary battles in drawing-rooms, make addresses to the gods, &c. I am not sure that the objection is not more than specious ; but the play between truth and fiction is one of the merits of poems of this description ; and as the characters in Pope are taken from a more airy and fanciful class of life than those in Boileau, perhaps we may apply to them what a friend of mine once said to me about actors,—a remark, which I have good reason to remember, because it overturned, in two or three words, a certain reputation for criticism in stage matters, which I had been raising ever since I was

* After dinner.

a youth. He observed, that it is not the business of actors to be natural, and nothing more: they should shew that they are masters of the literal truth, but add to it a certain spiritual colouring of their own, so as to unite ideal pleasure to the representation of reality, and make us admire their art without losing sight of nature. Now if we can suppose a certain dramatic consciousness in the personages of the Rape of the Lock, the prayers to the gods, the altar of "twelve vast French romances," &c. become matters of propriety as well as grace, the nature of comedy being duly considered; and unless we do suppose it, the battle in the last canto becomes a mere tragedy, and the metaphorical deaths by ladies' eyes, &c. real coroner's-inquest catastrophes, which the author certainly never intended. Be this as it may, the Rape of the Lock can afford to be something short of perfection; and I will here observe, that the only real advantage which the *Lutrin* appears to me to have over it, is in possessing a livelier exordium. The first paragraph of the Rape of the Lock is the only common-place passage in the poem. The author redeems it, to be sure, instantly; but still it is unworthy of what follows. The story of the *Lutrin* turns upon a dispute that happened between the Treasurer of a Chapter (whose station answers to our Dean) and the Chanter. An enormous Pulpit or Reading-desk stood in the way of the Chanter, and obscured his dignity. He had it removed. The Dean insisted on its being restored. Boileau sets out in high spirit, and a true mock-heroic vein:—

Je chante les combats, et ce prélat terrible,
 Qui par ses longs travaux, et sa force invincible,
 Dans une illustre église exerçant son grand cœur,
 Fit placer, à la fin, un *Lutrin* dans le cœur.
 C'est en vain que le Chantre, abusant d'un faux titre,
 Deux fois l'en fit ôter par les mains du Chapitre.
 Ce prélat, sur le banc de son rival altier,
 Deux fois le rapportant, l'en couvrit tout entier.

Arms and the mighty-hearted dean I sing,
 Who in a church divinely triumphing,
 By his long toils and his resistless ire,

Got placed, at last, a Pulpit in the choir.
 In vain the Chanter, on a false pretence,
 Twice got the Church to take the Pulpit thence;
 The Dean, upon his lofty rival's place,
 Twice took it back, and fixed, for ever, in his face.

I ought to have mentioned this exordium in the text; but an Englishman when thinking of poetry is so apt to forget the French, that it never occurred to me. I allude of course to poetry in it's more poetical sense. In it's other sense, as a sayer of lively and pithy things in verse, the French have all the abundance that was to be expected of a nation of their good sense and good humour. But as Terence was called Half-Menander, so Boileau is Half-Pope. He wants Ariel: he wants his invisible world: he wants that poetical part of poetry, which consists in bringing a remote and creative fancy to wait upon the more obvious wit and graces that lie about us. For as to the machines in the *Lutrin*, besides being too grave and heavy, they are not his own, nor rendered so by sufficient novelty of handling.

(13) *His face as rich and sensitive as a fawn's.*—This comparison must not be taken as a rhyme to fill up. It struck me forcibly when I was looking at a bust of Pope, that was exhibited in the British Institution. I think it is by Roubilliac. I never saw any thing that exhibited a nicer sensibility, a more delicate apprehensiveness. The nose seemed the very "tip of taste;" as if it were snuffing up the odour of his Banstead mutton, or the flowers he had gathered for Miss Blount. And when I recollected the fine dark eye in his painted portrait, the simile was complete. I have anticipated most of what I intended to say upon this stanza in the note preceding; but with respect to his style of composition, a word or two remains to be said, which has been suggested to me by a consideration of his person; especially as contrasted with that of Dryden. The physical conformation of a writer becomes a just ground of criticism and illustration, when there can be no suspicion of malignity. The portraits

of Dryden are those of a robust, or at least of a sufficiently able-bodied person, with a manly and breathing countenance. Pope's countenance is fine, and perhaps his eye has a more internal look with it; but it is unnecessary to inform the reader, that he had a person equally small and infirm, and that he could not even dress without assistance. I cannot help thinking that there is the same difference between Pope and Dryden in their verses, as in their persons. Pope goes to work cautiously, and with a certain minuteness of intention, like a miniature-painter preparing his ivory. Dryden takes up his brush with ease, and dashes at his oil-painting in a broader and more confident style. Pope, as if conscious of a complexional want of strength, takes all possible pains to do nothing amiss or incorrectly. Dryden trusts to the aspect of his strength for an effect, when he does not chuse to take the pains of proving it. As there is a vigour in his laxity, so there is a weakness in the very strength of the other. Pope seems to fear every stepping-stone in his way, and to resolve to get over the gutter handsomely, without detriment to his "little suit of black:"—Dryden puts forth a "manly leg," and steps across at once, certain that he shall go well over, whether with care or not. This kind of sympathy between mental and bodily conformation might afford some curious enquiries, and I think would be found to hold good throughout biography. Nothing however, which has been here said, can apply to the weak carelessness of many who might allege Dryden as an excuse, or to the smooth nothings of those who find their master in Pope. Both these great geniuses are always full of matter, and never write to fill up. Their poems are not plaster-walls, with an occasional look out. The whole edifice is enchanted work, instinct with life, and illuminated with fretting fires.

(14) *When the drum calls them, kiss their wives again.*

Ille ego qui quondam gracili modulatus avena
 Carmen, et egressus silvis, vicina coegi
 Ut quamvis avido parerent arva colono,
 Gratum opus agricolis; at nunc horrentia Martis
 Arma virumque cano, &c.

I, who erewhile warbled in sylvan shades,
 And issued then to light, and forc'd the meads
 To glut the exacting swain, who loved my song ;
 Yet now, a fierce note blowing, and a strong,
 Arms and the man I sing—

I confess I have not only most of the commentators against me, Heyne included, but what is worse, Dryden himself, and that in a very peremptory manner. I must own also, that what he so finely observes respecting the ordinary commencement,—that “ the author seems to sound a charge, and begins like the clangor of a trumpet,” is very true; and that, as I have hinted in the text, such an exordium is more directly to the purpose.

“ Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris.”

“ Scarce a word,” says Dryden, “ without an *r*, and the vowels, for the greater part, sonorous.” But still I must venture to refer to what I have said respecting the poet’s natural inclinations. Dryden himself thinks the *Georgics* his most perfect work; and with regard to the verbal objections which he and the commentators make to the passage in question, they might perhaps have been quite as ingenious and peremptory in defending the words, had the humour been upon them, especially the word *horrentia*, of which (including of course it’s root and derivatives) Virgil, I will be bold to say, was even fond, and not the less so for it’s being suggested by certain rural images, such as the bristling of corn, of reeds, &c. The exordium has the same charm with it, to me, which is found in the allusions to themselves made by other great poets. It even looks like the triumph of Virgil’s nature over his art, or that famous “ judgment” for which he is so cried up,—often, I cannot help thinking, both at the expense of his better reputation and the matter of fact. However, if I find Dryden against me, which ought to make me diffident, my confidence is restored by having Spenser and Milton on my side: at least I have a right to consider them so, when they have both imitated this very exordium,—Milton in the commencement of his *Paradise Regained*, and Spenser more particularly in that of his great poem, the *Faerie*

Queene. He was enabled to do so, by his having written pastorals himself. The stanza is a fine one, though the enthusiasm is subdued. I will delay no farther upon this subject, but finish with quoting it :

Lo! I, the man, whose Muse whylome did maske,
 As time her taught, in lowly shepheard's weeds,
 Am now enforst (a farre unfitter taske)
 For trumpets stern to chaunge mine oaten reeds,
 And sing of knights, and ladies' gentle deeds;
 Whose praises having slept in silence long,
 Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
 To blazon broad amongst her learned throng:
 Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song.

(15) *Doats on her face in that devouring way.*—Spenser, as well as several other poets, has also given an imitation of this magnificent exordium of Lucretius, one of the finest in the world, and worthy of his Greek inspiration: for Lucretius was evidently conversant with the more poetical part of Greek philosophy as well as Epicurus's, and, like all men of imagination, had a religion in spite of himself. Certainly, Venus would never have asked a nobler or more passionate address from the most orthodox of her worshippers.

“ *Æneadam genetrix, hominum Divûmque voluptas,
 Alma Venus, cœli subter labentia signa
 Quæ mare navigerum, quæ terras frugiferentes
 Concelebras; per te quoniam genus omne animantum
 Concipitur, visitque exortum lumina solis;
 Te, Dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila cœli,
 Adventumque tuum: tibi suaves dædala tellus
 Summittit flores; tibi rident æquora ponti,
 Placatumque nitet diffuso lumine cœlum.
 Nam simul ac species patefacta est verna diei,
 Et reserata viget genitabilis aura Favonf,
 Aëriæ primùm volucres te, Diva, tuumque
 Significant initum, perculsæ corda tuâ vi.
 Inde feræ pecudes persultant pabula læta,
 Et rapidos tranant amnes; ita capta lepore,
 Ille labrisque tuis, omnis natura animantum
 Te sequitur cupidè, quo quamque inducere pergis.*”

*Denique per maria, ac montes, fluviosque rapaces,
Frondfiferasque domos avium, camposque virentes,
Omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem,
Efficis, ut cupidè generatim sæcla propagant."*

Parent of Rome, delicious Queen of Love,
Thou joy of men below and gods above;
Who in one round of ever-blest increase
Roll'st the green regions and the dancing seas;
From whom all beings catch the race they run,
And leap to life, and visit the dear sun;
Thee, Goddess, thee, the winds, the winters fly,
Thee, and the coming of thy suavity:—
For thee the earth lays forth its flowers: for thee
A lustre laughs along the golden sea,
And lightsome heav'n looks round on all, for thou hast made it free. }
For soon as Spring, thrown open, re-appears,
And forth, with kisses, come the genial airs,
The birds, first smitten to their hearts, announce
Thee, Goddess, and thy balmy benisons:
The herds, made wild again, in pastures bound,
And track the rivers till their mates be found;
And every living thing, drawn with delight,
Follows with greedy will the charming of thy might,
Through seas, o'er mountains, through the fields, the floods,
And the green houses of the birds, the woods;
All snatch into their hearts the generous wound,
That still the ages may roll on, and nature's place be found.

I would fain translate further on, to come at the beautiful passage alluded to in the text; but the poet's fit of enthusiasm certainly makes a pause here. The long line, more than an Alexandrine, into which I have run out at the conclusion, is a modulation often practised by Dryden on passionate occasions, and I think amply deserves to be revived. It lets the spirit have its full vent, and carries it off in triumph, like the long blast of a trumpet. For Spenser's imitation or paraphrase, see the *Faerie Queene*, book 4. canto 10. He lengthens the original into a strain of voluptuous languor, like the incense fuming up from the altars at which it is sung; for the scene is laid in Venus's temple.

(16) *Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori.*—The first stanza of the Orlando Furioso. Ariosto is said to have written the two first verses over and over again, and to have bestowed upon them an “incredible” attention. Thus it is that even the most enjoying spirits work for immortality.

(17) *His time in polishing another's treasure.*—Berni, who remodelled the Orlando Innamorato of Boiardo. The stanza that follows is the exordium of his *Rifacimento*. Though I have been in two eminent cities of Italy, one of them famous for its literature, I have not yet been able to meet with Boiardo's work among the booksellers. I have great faith, however, in these old beginners; and much as I admire Berni, am inclined to suspect that the gallant old Lombard, (who is said to have come galloping home one day in a fit of enthusiasm, and have set all the bells a-ringing in his jurisdiction, because he had found out a fine name for his hero) must have stuff in him well worthy of being read for its own sake. Nor am I shaken in this opinion by the exordium of the original poem, quoted by Sismondi in his *Littérature du Midi de l'Europe*, tom. 2, p. 58, though undoubtedly Berni has given it an address and delicacy, which leave him in full possession of the praise in the text.

I will take this opportunity of observing, now that I am upon the Italian poets, that the opening stanza of Tasso's Jerusalem is not what his readers might have expected from that great writer, especially as he had an ear finely tuned for the dignified and imposing. It was Voltaire (confound him!) that made me discover there were too many O's in it,—a fault, seemingly, frivolous enough to notice, but still less worthy of being committed. The charge is undoubtedly true.

Canto l'armi pietosa, e 'l capitano,
 Che 'l gran sepolcro liberò di Cristo.
 Molto egli oprò col senno e con la mano;
 Molto soffrì nel glorioso acquisto.
 E invan l'inferno a lui s'oppose; e in vano
 S'armò d'Asia e di Libia il popol misto;
 Che il ciel gli diè favore, e sotto ai santi
 Segni ridusse i suoi compagni erranti.

In revenge, I have the pleasure of knowing that Voltaire began his "epic" with a "vile antithesis," about the "right of victory and the right of birth:"—

Je chante le heros, qui regna sur la France,
Et par droit de conquête, et par droit de naissance.

A poem on the Droits of Admiralty might open as well. Voltaire was a wag of wags, a writer of wonderful variety, a great puller down of abuses, though he did not always know what to spare by the way,—in short, a great man, whom little ones would in vain undervalue, by detecting some failures in the universality of his information, which would be passed over in his inferiors: but for epics,—

Look at his face, and you'll forget them all.

(18) *But his own airs were sung in every bower.*—I learn this from an interesting article in the Quarterly Review upon Madame de Genlis' *Petrarque et Laure*. There is another, still more so, in the same publication, No. 42, entitled *Narrative and Romantic Poems of the Italians*; and these two, together with one upon Dante in the Edinburgh Review, contain the best and most comprehensive criticism on Italian Poetry, that we have in our language. The second article includes a notice of Mr. Stewart Rose's happy abridgment of the *Animali Parlanti*, and also of that other piece of wit inspired by Italian romance, entitled *a Prospectus of an intended National Poem*, which only failed of popularity (if indeed it has failed) because it took up a remote subject, instead of one connected with existing manners. It is full of a manly and urbane pleasantry: and here indeed it committed another mistake; for it is in vain put into the mouths of those fraternal handicraft's-men who are supposed to write it. The two saddlers have been used to better society than that of the village-squire, and are as gentlemanly as Archbishop Turpin or the Cid Hamet Benengeli.

I must observe that these articles in the Quarterly Review are in it, not of it. They are even said to be translated from the contributions of a celebrated Italian now resident in England; but be this as

it may, the number above-mentioned contains the usual accompaniment of party paltering and hypocrisy, especially in one of those articles on Mr. Shelley, the disgusting falsehoods and malignity of which I have exposed in another place.

(19) *Emmi venuta certa fantasia*.—The exordium of Forteguerra's tragi-comic romance, Ricciardetto. He was a dignitary of the church in Rome, full of wit and spirit, who hearing his friends one evening wondering at the toil and trouble which it must have cost Ariosto and others to write such a heap of poetry, undertook to shew them it was no such difficult task, and produced the first canto of his romance by the following evening. It is reported, that he wrote all the other cantos with the same expedition. Nor is it incredible, considering the abundance of rhymes in the Italian language, and the natural poetry into which it runs; but with Forteguerra's leave, however delightful he is, and however he may equal Ariosto in parts, he never rises into his glorious beauty;—unless indeed the latter half of his work is different from the first, for I am now but in the middle of it. If so, I must make him the *amende honorable*.

In the meanwhile, I will make the said *amende* to a couple of other accomplished writers, of whom I spoke too hastily some years ago in another piece of rhyming criticism. If any body happens to have a little book in his possession containing "The Feast of the Poets" (which certain critics are always alluding to and never mentioning) he will oblige me by altering the two couplets in which toasts are proposed, to the following:—

Then, says Bob, "I've a toast," and got up like a gander:
Says Phœbus "Don't spoil it with prozing: its Landor."
And Walter look'd up too and begg'd to propose—
"I'll drink him with pleasure," said Phœbus,—"it's Rose."

What I said in the Feast of the Poets respecting the *talents* of the great Scottish Novelist, was before he had exhibited his genius in prose narrative, and I have unsaid it elsewhere. The corrections are very likely of no importance after all; but they are made out of a sense of the duty which I owe to truth.

(20) *Not to be found on any other plains.*—An allusion, and I suspect an ironical one, to the poetical society of Arcadians in Rome, of which Forteguerra was a member. The associates had *pastoral names* given them by *diploma*, and assembled in a spot set apart for them out of doors, where they “made as if” they were in Arcadia, and recited sonnets about sheep and pipes. They numbered some other good poets among them, Guidi, Filicaia, &c.; but like all other societies, in which genius is to be patronized by the great, degenerated into a mere set of courtiers and tattling pretenders, worthy of the contempt with which Goldsmith treats them in his essay on the then State of Literature. I believe any body can be a member now, who writes a sonnet and is orthodox.

A SUNDAY'S FÊTE AT ST. CLOUD.

IF, as some moralists hold, human beings are, generally speaking, happy in proportion as they deserve to be so, the French are the most virtuous people in existence. Let those who dispute the proposition pay a visit to St. Cloud on a Fête-day in summer. I can promise them they shall not repent of their journey, even though it should not solve a problem in morals. If happiness is not symptomatic of something else, it is at least contagious in itself, to a certain degree; and he who can witness the scene in question, and not partake in its joy, must be a philosopher at least, if not something worse.—But if one would join in this scene to any good effect, he must not be a mere spectator; for such a one cannot enter into, and therefore cannot feel, the true spirit of it. And he must not be a critic of forms and rules, lest he should be shocked by finding them forgotten or violated at every turn. Least of all must he affect the *gentleel*; for the persons among whom he will find himself are all below the middle class, and moreover they do not understand even the word, to say nothing of the thing; it does not exist in their language—I mean in our sense of it. The French are the genteelest people in the world, without knowing it. It is the only good quality they possess that they do not over-rate themselves upon; and their unconsciousness of this makes up for all their failings on the score of vanity and self-conceit.—But to our Fête—one glance at the reali-

ties of which is better than all the mere reflections that can be made to arise out of it. That we may lose no part of the scene, and its characteristic appurtenances, let us join the partakers in it early in the day, as they are setting out, in couples or companies, from that grand starting point in the race of Parisian pleasure, the Place de Louis Quinze. The splendid coup-d'œil, formed by the unrivalled collection of inanimate objects that surround us, must not be allowed to withdraw our attention from the living picture that we are about to form a part of. Yonder lies the road to St. Cloud, along the elevated bank of the river, and beside the great mass of trees forming the Champs Elysées. From every other point of entrance to this magnificent square, Paris is pouring forth her gay streams of pleasure-lit faces and trim forms, till here, in the midst, they cross and mingle with each other, like bees in the neighbourhood of their hive on a sunshiny day. Here, however, at the head of this long string of cabriolets, the din is not so harmonious as that of the scene to which I have just likened the one before us. It is caused by the drivers disputing with each other for the possession of the fares that keep arriving every moment, and of the fares themselves disputing for the price they shall pay—for a Parisian bourgeois thinks a sous saved is worth a century of words, even when pleasure is the purchase; and a Parisian cabriolet driver is not the person to lose a sous, if talking will gain it. Many have agreed for their fare (of from twelve to twenty sous each, according to the skill and patience of the bargain-maker) and are taking their seats, by the aid of that aged crone who presents her chair with an air of anxious politeness, and is content with a half-penny for assisting a whole party. Meanwhile, here rattles along the "chaise and one" of a substantial tradesman of the Rue St. Honoré, containing himself, his spouse (his cabriolet is

the only place in which a Parisian tradesman may take precedence of his spouse) his three *petits*, and his *mouton*. "Gare!" issues at intervals from the noisy vehicle;—not to warn the pedestrians of their danger, but to apprise them of the approach of their betters, which, in the bustle of the scene, they might otherwise overlook. There lumbers along slowly and heavily, a clean tilted cart; we cannot penetrate its mysterious covering; but from the *éclats de rire* that burst from within at every jolt of the *pavé*, we may judge that it contains half a score of happy *soubrettes*; scarce more happy now while laughing at their play, than yesterday when singing at their work. If we could peep through that canvas curtain at the back, we might chance to see some of the prettiest faces that ever wore a mob-cap; for the waiting-maids are incomparably the prettiest women in Paris. We might amuse ourselves on this spot for half the day, but that a scene still more attractive awaits us. In passing to it by the side of the Seine, let us not forget to notice the defective taste of the Parisians in respect to water excursions. Their pleasant river winds gracefully through its rich banks to the very gates of the park of St. Cloud—the scene of the Fête; and yet scarcely fifty of the thousands that we shall meet there will have come by water. The truth is, the French are, by nature, the least courageous people in the world; and they are actually *afraid* of the water; at least it gives them an uneasy sensation of possible danger, which interferes with their pleasure, and alloys it. This being the case, they are wise to act as they do; but the fact, supposing it to be one, is curious. They are cowards advisedly, and on principle. When under the immediate influence of excitation, they are capable of the most rash and fool-hardy exploits; and under great circumstances they can "skew their courage to the sticking-place" till it impels them to the most heroic acts of

bravery and self-devotion. But left to themselves, and in the common concerns of life, they are cowards on the same principle as Falstaff was—namely, one of pure good sense. They are too happy in the possession of their life, and too fond of it, to tolerate the bare idea of risking it when they see no occasion. But when death comes, and there is no avoiding it, like Falstaff again they receive it graciously, and “babble of green fields” with their last breath. If their happy hearts do not prove them to be the most virtuous, they impel them to be the wisest people in the world, and perhaps the terms are nearly convertible. One thing I’m sure they are too wise as well as too happy to do—namely, to babble of wisdom and virtue in the midst of describing a Fête-day at St. Cloud—as I am doing now. But I’m an Englishman still, though writing under a foreign sky; and may easily be forgiven. Let me forget this, and at once transport myself and the reader to the bridge of St. Cloud. Here, after twelve o’clock, no carriage is allowed to pass. This regulation is established to prevent the confusion and danger likely to arise from the immense throng of vehicles, of different kinds, that would otherwise be collected in the village. The Fête being as yet scarcely commenced, let us make our way through these lines of booths on the outside of the park-gates, and leaving that to the left, take half an hour’s stroll through the splendid gardens of the Chateau. An abrupt descent, through an opening at one corner of the court-yard, brings us to a low level opposite the grand garden front of the Chateau, which is divided from the grounds by a circular sheet of water confined in a wrought marble bason. From this level you look up a lofty ascent of platform above platform, crowned by a circular tower at the top, and clothed in smooth green turf, studded by clipped box-trees in regular rows, and lined on each side by a lofty artificial wood. The

whole of this view, on a sunshiny Sunday (and I think *all* the Sundays are sunshiny in France) enlivened and ornamented as it is by groups of gaily dressed people, seated in circles on the slopes of turf, or wandering in couples among the trees, exactly resembles one of Watteau's pictures; and it cannot well resemble any thing more gay and characteristic in its way. Ascending these slopes to the terrace where the tower is placed, and mounting, if we please, the tower itself, we may gaze upon one of the finest views in existence, of an artificial kind. In front, immediately beneath the perpendicular height of the terrace on which we stand, and sloping from the very edge of it down to the borders of the river below, lay a mass of richly foliaged trees, over the flat tops of which we look to the plain beyond. In the midst of this plain, divided from the river by an interval of vineyards and corn-fields, lies Paris, its white walls stretching themselves into the distance on either side, and its innumerable spires, domes, and turrets, lifting themselves up as if to enjoy the air and the sunshine in which the whole seems basking. On one side, on the highest point of ground in the city, the grave Pantheon rises and overlooks its subject buildings, like a king on a watch-tower; and on the other side, the gorgeous dome of the Invalids flaunts and glitters in its gilded robes, like a queen at her coronation. To the left of the city the river stretches away windingly into the blue distance; and on the right, the noble hill on which the Chateau of St. Cloud stands, encloses the scene to a great extent, every where sloping its richly wooded sides into the plain below. Nothing can be finer than the striking contrast afforded to this richly varied scene in front, by turning for a moment to that which completes the circle behind. With the exception of the view down the gardens to the palace front, it consists entirely of an interminable mass of immense forest trees,

intersected at regular intervals by six narrow vistas which have been cut through them, and which are so long that, by the laws of perspective, they close up, like the points of a star, before the eye can reach to the end of them. I repeat, turning from this grand effect of art, to the scene I have described as forming the opposite view from the tower, the effect of each upon the other is altogether unique; and perhaps upon the whole it is as fine as that of any purely natural scenery that can be contemplated; for unquestionably what it loses in some respects by comparison with a view of the latter kind, it gains in others.

Let us now descend from our height (and perhaps it may be not amiss if we leave our high words at the top) into the heart-stirring scene that awaits us below. We will not plod back along the beaten road, but will follow those errant groups that are making their way down yonder acclivity, through the thick of the wood. We shall thus come upon the gay scene suddenly and at once.

Emerging from the wood, here we stand on the bridge which surmounts the principal water-works. From the fixed appearance of the orderly crowd below, and the happy anxiety that lights up all their faces, young and old, we may be sure that the waters are on the point of commencing their strange freaks. And see!—the gentle bubblings, that move at the same moment round the mouths of the thousand jets, “give note of preparation.” And now, in an instant, the waters rush forth from their secret prisons with a sound as of many winds; and, shooting their free sparkles into the sunshine, quiver and glitter for a moment above the tops of the highest trees, and then fall through the air in silver showers into the basin below. Meanwhile, after a momentary burst of delighted admiration, the till now motionless crowd move about in all directions, their gay attire shining

through the falling mist like notes in a sun-beam, and their happy voices blending with the music from the booths and the rushing of the waters.

Descending to the bottom of this sloping alley, containing the principal water-works, we shall find ourselves in the very heart of the scene that we have come chiefly to witness and partake in. Along this great line of smooth gravelled pathway, occupying the principal extent of the park, are erected on each side the booths of the players, the jugglers, the grimaciers, the exhibitors of wonders in nature and art, the games, sports, and in fact the usual accompaniments of a fair in England. But this, be it understood, is the sole point in which a Fête at St. Cloud resembles an English fair: the discordant din of noises, the confusion, the mobbing, the debauchery, the indecency, and the crimes of the latter, are all wanting; and in their place we have music and dancing, that would not disgrace a fashionable assembly—gaiety of heart that need not be repressed, because it never oversteps the bounds of decorum—and feasting and revelry that may safely be indulged in, because they never lead to riot or end in shame.

But it is time that we partake in a little of this feasting ourselves; and for this purpose let us repair to one of yonder little trelliced alcoves looking on the principal avenue of the Park, and order our repast. But we must not be very fastidious. We are not at Beauvillier's now; as we shall soon find in more than one particular. But what we lose in one way we shall gain in another; so we must not complain. And besides, we have been in the open air all day; and plain fare and homely wine will perhaps content us as well as the best, and be more in keeping with the scene about us. We laid aside our gentility when we determined on coming here; and for my part I feel in no hurry to put it on again. It is

very pretty wearing in towns and cities, and is not without important uses on many occasions; but among trees and flowers it is not the thing; and, in a scene like this, it is a mere impertinence. So let us seat ourselves cosily at this vacant table, between this group of pretty *paysannes* and their *bons amis* on one side, and these trim Parisian *soubrettes* and *bonnes* on the other, and forget that there are such places as St. James's and the Chaussée d'Antin in the world. From this spot we can see all that is going on in the Park below; and a gay and busy scene it is. Observe; in that little turfed vale between the trees yonder, that group of "children of a larger growth," preparing to mount the hanging chairs and flying horses of that *round-about*, and engage in the game of Riding at the Ring. Father and mother, young men and lasses, girls and boys, *bonne* and all, enter into the sport with equal spirit and eagerness; for why should what pleases the one fail to please the other? and why should we refuse to seek pleasure where others can find it? So thinks the Parisian *bourgeois*,—and so he acts; and let none but those whose wisdom makes them more happy than his folly (as they may if they please call it) makes him, presume to laugh at him. Another group, of a similar kind, are taking their turns to shoot at a mark with a school-boy's cross-bow. It well becomes us, no doubt, to sneer at their harmless amusement; though we shall do well not to doubt that it is amusement to them: but what will it become *them* to do in return, if they should chance to meet *us* in the fields to-morrow shooting at the happy birds there? Listen to yon band of Savoyard musicians. You'll not easily meet, between this and the gates of Calais, with a more *piquante* figure than that singing girl. Her kerchiefed head, with the little insidious curl peeping out on each side—the trim *tourneure* of her waist, bound in by its black silk

apron strapped over the shoulders—the confidently modest air—the shrill sweetness of her out-of-door voice—and her *naïve* expression of the wild Tyrolean air she is singing—are, altogether, not to be resisted. And see—she’s coming up to us, with her little wooden waiter, to solicit payment for her song. We must not pay such prettiness with ugly copper; but must ensure another air, and a smile and courtsey to boot, by a little ten sous piece. Somehow I never touch one of these little pieces without feeling as if I wanted to give it away. I think they were made for the purpose—and for pretty Savoyard singers in particular. But here’s a character of a very different description; in some respects as distasteful and repulsive as the other was attractive. But as he represents a characteristic feature of a French fête, and as none ever take place without him, we must not let him pass by unnoticed. This is the celebrated *grimacier* whom they call *Le Marquis*. Observe how he skips about, like a parching pea. He seems to have borrowed Kehama’s power of ubiquity. He is here, there, and everywhere, at the same moment. This man is one of the most striking and remarkable persons I ever saw. In scenes of this kind he haunts you like a spectre. He *appears* before you, without your knowing how he came there—smirks and smiles as if to welcome himself—dances his jig—plays his tune on the violin—insinuates his paper of songs into your hand—and is gone again before you know where you are. He moves about as if the ground burned his feet. He is more like the Goblin Page grown old than any thing else. And yet you cannot fancy him to have ever been any younger than he is, or that he will ever grow older. There is a kind of rattlesnake fascination about this man’s look that is unaccountable; it unites the opposite principles of attraction and repulsion. I never see him, or lose sight of him, but I

am tempted to pronounce two lines in an old love song—“ Why did he come ? Why did he go ? ” And I'm obliged to repeat this twenty times in an hour ; for he's like the Irishman's passion—he no sooner comes than he goes—but then he no sooner goes than he comes again. He's a perfect Jack-a-lantern—a Will-o'-the-wisp. What is very extraordinary, his face is handsome and his person good, and yet the one gives you the idea of perfect ugliness, and the other of extreme deformity. This seems to arise from the tricks he is perpetually playing with them, and the distortions he throws them into. And yet they have that hard, cut, angular appearance, that they seem as if they could never move out of their present position, whatever that may be. His dress has a no less non-descript air than his person, and yet that too is perfectly regular and *in costume*; being an old worn-out court suit, ruffled, painted, and embroidered—dirty white stockings—large paste buckles to his shoes and knees—and a white flaxen pig-tailed wig, which lies on the top of his head; and covers scarcely any of his grey hairs. He never wears a hat.

The Marquis seldom addresses any one personally; and when he does, it is always in a fixed formula, directed to the *ladies* of the party. However often he may come in contact with the same party, he invariably offers them a copy of his songs. If it is received, he smirks, bows, skips away, and says nothing. If it is refused, he lays it down on your seat, or table, making a profound obeisance, and saying, “ *Jamais je ne manque au respect que je dois à la sexe.* ” I never heard him utter any words but these. He is never importunate for money. If, when he presents his little waiter, you give him any thing, he bows and is gone in a moment; if you give him nothing, he bows equally low, and is gone as soon.

This singular person is to me a perfect study—a never-failing source of reflection; and accordingly, I never meet him in a scene like this without his marring, for a moment, the careless gaiety that would otherwise entirely possess me. There is something in his air, look, and manner, no less affecting than it is repulsive. His perpetual smiles seem put on to hide the indications of a sick heart; and his ceaseless change of place seems an unconscious endeavour to escape from himself. This man would have made a figure in the world, if fortune would have let him. But perhaps it was in kindness to himself as well as the world that she prevented this; for there is that in his face which says that he is fit for any thing—for much that is good, but for more that is evil. The gossips of Paris say that *Le Marquis* is a spy of the Government; and one would not hastily contradict such good authority! But, if he is a political tool at all, I should take him to be intended as a walking libel on the old regime, started by the Liberals! But let us hope that he will not turn out to be either of these; for he's quite low enough in the scale of humanity already, considering that he was evidently intended to be higher.

Having finished our somewhat homely repast, let us again mingle with the crowd below, that we may have a better opportunity of observing the constitution of it; for it is this that gives the character to the scene. The *professional* part of it we need take little farther notice of; for shewmen and their shews are pretty much alike all over the world. And first let us admire that sweet knot of peasant girls. What can be a prettier antithesis than those gaudy silk aprons—blue, green, pink, and lilac—and those snow-white quaker-like dresses, and plain mob caps? They look like inhabitants of a rainbow, newly alighted on the earth! And their fresh unworldly faces, and sparkling eyes, do not belie the

fancy. See how they thread their way through the crowd, linked arm in arm, as if they did not belong to it! And now they are lost among the trees. But we shall meet them again anon. There are several of these groups in the Park; and the costume is the prettiest I have seen for many a day: a rich silk apron of some one gaudy colour, spread over a perfectly plain snow-white robe, without a single flounce, furbelow, or frill, of any kind whatever; with a white mob cap, equally devoid of ornament. There is no nation in the world in which the lower classes of the females have any pretensions to vie for a moment with the French, as to taste in dress. They display an infinite variety of costume, according to their different station, age, province, district, &c. but each is, generally speaking, curiously finished and perfect in itself, and appropriate to its wearer, without being in the slightest degree fantastical, affected, or *recherché*. The only one I remember, to which these latter qualities can be imputed, is the *cauchoise*, peculiar to a certain district in Normandy. And this, if it is something too gorgeous, glittering, and *outrée* (I speak of the *coiffure*) is altogether so grand in itself, and so becoming to the noble race of creatures who wear it, that it must by no means be made an exception to the rule. What, again, can be more exquisitely neat, simple, snug, and appropriate, than the dress of those fine hale-looking middle-aged dames, the wives of the small *propriétaires* in the neighbourhood?—the snow-white robe; black silk apron; small crimson kerchief, folded over in front, and coming down to a point at the waist behind; and the close-eared fly cap, trimmed with three or four rows of rich Valenciennes lace, and the whole stiffened and quilted into one invariable form, year after year, and from generation to generation. This is another admirable piece of taste in the classes of which I am speaking. They never are

the class above them, as *all* classes, except the very highest, do in England; but keep fixedly to their own mode and style: which has thus the double advantages of being exclusively *their own*, and of preventing "odious" comparisons and idle emulation.

By this time the dusk of the evening is beginning to draw on, and the dancing has commenced. This is another of the characteristics of these fêtes; and it is perhaps the pleasantest of all, and the most peculiar to them. A set of grooms and kitchen maids dancing quadrilles in the open air, in a style of ease, grace, and self-possession that would not discredit a fashionable ball-room, may be sought in vain elsewhere than in France; but there it almost universally takes the place of the drinking, quarrelling, and debauchery that are the natural and (as it would seem) the necessary finish to every festal meeting of the same class of persons in England and other countries. Under the lofty trees which line the grand avenue of the Park, orchestras are erected, filled with good musicians; lamps are suspended from the branches above; an open space is cleared on the sward or the smooth dry soil below; and numerous parties, consisting of the lowest classes of those who have been partaking in the fête during the day, finish the evening by dancing for two or three hours in the manner I have described. Those of the class above, who think their dignity would be compromised by joining in the dance with the mere *canaille*, do not, however, refuse to gratify their passion for it in imagination, by forming gay circles round the dancers, and attentively looking on.

This, then, is offered as a slight sketch of a few of the characteristic features of a Sunday's Fête at St. Cloud; and if it has given the reader a tenth part of the pleasure the

writer of it experienced the first time he partook in the delightful scene which it endeavours to depict, it will not have been made in vain. But if it has failed to interest him, the reader is welcome to attribute the deficiency (as he safely may) to any thing rather than a want of attractiveness in the subject matter itself.

APULEIUS.

ST. AUGUSTINE, Bishop of Hippo, one of the most illustrious fathers of the Church, in his celebrated book "of the Citie of God," which was "Englished by J. H. in 1610," has these words:—

"When I was in Italy, I heard such a report there, how certaine women of one place there, would but give one a little drug in cheese, and presently hee became an asse, and so they made him carry their necessaries whither they would, and having done, they reformed his figure againe: yet had he his humane reason still, as Apuleius had in his asse-ship, as himselfe writeth in his booke of the Golden Asse, be it a lie or a truth that hee writeth."

"Nam et nos cum essemus in Italia, audiebamus talia de quadam regione illarum partium ubi stabularias mulieres imbutas his malis artibus, in caseo dare solere, dicebant, quibus vellent seu possent viatoribus, unde in jumenta illico verterentur, et necessaria quæque portarent, postque perfuncta opera iterum ad se redirent: nec tamen in eis mentem fieri bestialem, sed rationalem humanamque servari, sicut Apuleius in libris quos Asini Aurei titulo inscripsit, sibi ipsi accidisse, ut accepto veneno, humano animo permanente, asinus fieret, aut indicavit aut finxit."

Upon which passage a learned Spaniard, named Ludovicus Vives, who, through the munificence of Cardinal Wol-

sey, was Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Oxford, has written a comment in Latin, which has been rendered by the same J. H. thus:—

“ Apuleius was a magician doubtlesse: but never turned into an asse. But Lucian before him wrote how hee, being in Thessaly to learne some magike, was turned into an asse instead of a bird: not that this was true: but that Lucian delighted neither in truths, nor truths’ likelihoods. This worke did Apuleius make whole in Latine, adding diverse things to garnish it with more delight, to such as love Milesian tales, and heere and there sprinokling it with his antiquaries’ phrases, and his new compositions, with great liberty, yet somewhat suppressing the absurdity of the theame. But wee love now to read him, because he hath said some things there in that new dexterity, which others seeking to imitate, have committed grosse errors: for I thinke that grace of his in that worke is inimitable. But Apuleius was no asse, only he delights men’s eares with such a story; as man’s affection is wholly transported with a strange story.”

Such uncommon praises extorted from one, who, as the admiring commentator on a Father of the Church, cannot be supposed to have entertained very friendly feelings towards the writings of a Pagan Philosopher, afford a valuable testimony in favour of Apuleius, and are alone sufficient to awaken some curiosity to be acquainted with a work, which we must love to read, and of which the grace is declared to be inimitable.

With respect to the passage cited from St. Augustine, the miscreancy of that reverend person is most striking; for, whatever allowances we may be disposed to make for the habits of credulity, or of bad faith, in which he may have

lived, it is extraordinary that the Bishop should have had the folly to believe, or the audacity to affect to believe, that Apuleius had really been changed into an ass.

As to the note, the appetite with which it is written is remarkable: the world has lost it's appetite, and it is with difficulty that we can now be stimulated even to pick a bit of any wholesome work.

The masses of volumes that we are daily devouring are unhappily no proofs of a healthy desire for food. We cannot conscientiously call that man a glutton, who, a stranger to the baker and the milkman, and having long abjured animal food, has renounced also the bloodless diet that depends upon fruit, vegetables, and puddings, because he can shew on his inhospitable table piles of pill-boxes, heaps of gally-pots, and stacks of empty phials. We can never allow a reputation for voracity to be authenticated by such documents as these. Let any honest man, who has ever read half a page of a good book, or eaten half a plate of good roast beef, decide, whether the literature, with which we are now drugged, most resembles nauseous Galenicals, or savoury kitchen physic.

We may perhaps be permitted, in the short vacation between the last exorbitant attack upon our patience and our pockets, and the next accraing imposition, to enquire a little into the history of Apuleius, and the nature of the Metamorphosis.

Lucius Apuleius lived in the second century of the Christian æra, under the Antonines: he was born of a good family at Madaura, a Roman colony in Africa; his father being one of the principal Magistrates of that city, and his mother, Salvia, a descendant of Plutarch of Chaeronea.

Having been educated from his earliest youth at Athens, the Greek was his native language; and coming afterwards to

reside in Rome, he there learnt the Latin (which was little known at Madaura) with painful labour, and without the assistance of a master; "*ærumnabili labore, nullo magistro præeunte:*" the *Metamorphoses* therefore commence with an apology, in case the rude use of any exotic or forensic expression should give offence.

He followed for some time at Rome the profession of an advocate; and for a person, who, amongst his numerous attainments, appears to have been a considerable Dandy, was remarkably successful.

An unusual advancement in the science of jurisprudence, and such a thorough knowledge of the nature of ample redress, and of substantial justice, even when backed by powerful private interest, and of the spirit of the law in general, as could only have been acquired by deep study and respectable practice, are clearly evinced in the narrative of a little adventure, which terminates the first book of the *Metamorphoses*.

We shall be pleased with it as a specimen of the style of a Dandy Advocate. We shall value it also as being a complete refutation of the absurd opinion, that it is impossible for a sound lawyer to find time for any more elegant or liberal studies: and those who are condemned to devote the principal part of their days to legal pursuits, will have no small consolation in reflecting, that one, who was all-accomplished, had as clear an insight into the fundamental principles of right, as any Jurisconsult ever attained to, who had bestowed on these subjects an exclusive and undivided attention.

The adventure is as follows:—

"Having settled these matters and put away my things in my bed-room, I set out for the bath, and, that I might first provide something to eat, I found out the fish-market, and

saw there a fine piece of fish exposed for sale. I asked the price, and being told that five-and-twenty pieces had been refused, I bought it up for twenty. As I was going gently from the market, Pytheas joined me, my fellow-collegian at Athens : after a short time he recognized me, and came to me ; having embraced and saluted me kindly, he said, " It is a long time, my Lucius, since I have seen you ; not surely since we left our master. But what is the occasion of this journey ? " " You shall know to-morrow," I said, " but what is this ? I wish you joy ; for I see attendants with wands, and your dress is altogether that of a person in office."

" I preside over the market," he said, " and fill the office of *Ædile* ; if you wish to buy any thing, I will assist you as far as I can." This I declined, as I had already provided a piece of fish quite sufficient for supper. But notwithstanding, Pytheas caught sight of the basket, and shaking up the fish, that he might see better, said, " What did you give for this trash ? " " With some difficulty I got the fishmonger to take twenty pieces." Upon hearing which, he instantly seized my hand, and hurrying me back into the fish-market, cried, " And from whom did you purchase this trumpery here ? " I pointed out a little old man sitting in a corner, when Pytheas immediately chiding him in a very severe voice, and with all the dignity of an *Ædile*, said, " So then you have no mercy at all even upon my friends, or upon foreigners ? What do you mean by selling so dear such wretched little fishes, and by thus making the flower of the land of Thessaly seem like a solitary rock in respect of dearth of provisions ? But you shall not escape ; I will let you know how, under my magistracy, rogues ought to be punished." Then overturning the basket in the midst, he ordered his officer to get upon the fish, and to tread them to pieces with his feet. My friend Pytheas being satisfied

with this noble severity of manners, informed me, that I was at liberty to withdraw. "It is enough for me, my Lucius, to have thus disgraced that old fellow." Astonished and struck dumb at these exploits, I betook myself to the bath; having been deprived both of my money and of my supper by the resolute wisdom of my sensible fellow-collegian."

"His actis et rebus meis in illo cubiculo conditis, pergens ipse ad balneas, ut prius aliquid nobis cibatum prospicerem, forum cupidinis peto: inque eo piscatum opiparem expositum video. Et percontato pretio, quod centum numis indicaret aspernatus, viginti denariis præstinavi. Inde me commodum egredientem continuatur Pytheas, condiscipulus apud Athenas Atticas meus, qui me post aliquam multam temporis amanter agnitum invadit, amplexusque ac comiter deosculatus: "Mi Luci," ait, "sat Pol diu est, quod intervisimus. At, Hercules, exinde cum a magistro digressi sumus. Quæ autem tibi causa peregrinationis hujus?" "Crastino die scies," inquam. "Sed quid istud? Voti gaudeo. Nam et lixas et virgas, et habitum prorsus magistratui congruentem in te video." "Annonam curamus," ait, "et Ædilatam geremus; et, si quid obsonare cupis, utique commodabimus." Abnebam; quippe qui jam cœnæ affatim piscatus prospereramus. Sed enim Pytheas, visa sportula, succoussisque in aspectum planiorem piscibus, "At has quisquillas quanti parasti?" "Vix," inquam, "piscatori extorsimus accipere viginti denarios." Quo audito, statim arreptâ dextrâ postliminio me in forum cupidinis reducens, "Et a quo," inquit, "istorum nugamenta hæc comparasti?" Demonstrò seniculum in angulo sedentem. Quem confestim pro Ædilitatis imperio voce asperrima increpans, inquit, "Tam jam nec amicis quidem nostris, vel omnino ullis hospitibus parcitis? Quid tam magnis pretiis pisces frivolos vinditatis, et florem Thessaliæ regionis instar solitudinis scopuli edulium cari-

tate ducitis? Sed non impune. Jam enim fano scias, quemadmodum sub nostro magisterio mali debeant coerceri." Et profusa in medium sportula, jubet officialem suum insuper pisces inscendere, ac pedibus suis totos obterere. Qua contentus morum severitudine meus Pytheas, ac mihi, ut abirem, suadens, "Sufficit mihi, O Luci," inquit, "seniculi tanta hæc contumelia." His actis consternatus, ac prorsus obstupidus, ad balneas me refero, prudentis condiscipuli valido consilio et numis simul privatus et cœna."

Apuleius enjoyed during his life a very high reputation for deep and various learning, which has been transmitted to the present time by the testimony of numerous and respectable writers in all ages. A slight acquaintance with his works will convince us, that this was obtained in the obsolete method of close application, by extraordinary diligence, patient accurate investigation, and a strict intimacy with learned men and their works; not in the more easy and more fashionable course of gaining a title to renown merely by occupancy. This title is thus described by the lawyers, and in speaking of an advocate, legal terms are the most proper: "Occupancy is the taking possession of those things, which before belonged to nobody.—When it was once agreed that every thing capable of ownership should have an owner, natural reason suggested, that he who could first declare his intention of appropriating any thing to his own use, and in consequence of such intention, actually took it into possession, should thereby gain the absolute property of it—*quod nullius est, id ratione naturali occupanti conceditur.*"

Upon these principles in this well-taxed land, and especially at the two Universities, where natural reason governs with uncontrolled and absolute dominion, if any person declare his intention of appropriating the sole knowledge of any subject whatever, unless it interfere with the prior claim of

some one else, which is rarely the case, the claim is immediately allowed, under a tacit agreement, which might be thus expressed:—CLAIMANT. “I understand this subject better than any other man.” UNIVERSITY. “Take your reputation, and welcome, only do not talk to us about it: for God’s sake! do not compel any of us to know any thing.”

If some confirmed sceptic ventures to doubt the reality of such practices, he may satisfy himself by an easy experiment, and readily bring the question to a fair trial: let him only arrogate to himself the exclusive or superior knowledge of any science, language, or author whatever, and, if the world refuses to concede it, his doubt is well founded.

It may be truly said that Apuleius was an universal genius: there are but few subjects which he has not handled. He translated the *Phædo* of Plato, and the *Arithmetic* of Nicomachus: he wrote a treatise *de Republica*; another *de Numeris* and one *de Musica*. His *Convivales Questiones*, his *Proverbs*, his *Hermagoras* and his *Ludicra*, are quoted. We have still his *Metamorphoses*, or the *Golden Ass*; his *Apolo-gy*; some treatises of *Natural Philosophy*; of *Moral Philosophy*; *de Interpretatione*; *de Deo Socratis*; *de Mundo*; and his *Florida*.

He was not more distinguished by his learning, than by an insatiable curiosity to know every thing, which induced him to enter himself in several religious fraternities, and to spend his whole fortune in travelling; insomuch, that having a desire to dedicate himself to the service of Osiris, he was in want of money to defray the expense of the ceremonies incident to his reception, and was compelled to pawn even his clothes to make up the necessary sum.

As a listless indifference is the invariable characteristic of dull sluggish minds, and of ages of darkness and of barbarism, so an active, enterprising, and even rash curiosity, is

the constant indication of genius in the individual, and is a most conspicuous quality in periods of liberality and refinement. This curious disposition was doubtless one of the principal causes of his prodigious acquirements; but in order duly to appreciate his motives for desiring to be initiated in the religious mysteries, it is necessary briefly to consider the nature of those institutions.

To countenance any species of superstition is, it must be admitted, beneath the dignity of a philosopher; yet we must remember, that the mysteries were not only of great antiquity, and had been effectually shrouded in impenetrable secrecy (so effectually indeed, that we are now perfectly ignorant of their purport) but, that they were not like the greater part of prevailing superstitions, a farrago of absurd and contradictory dogmas, which inculcate such doctrines as tend to enslave and degrade the soul, which are celebrated by sordid and puerile rites; which can captivate the minds of the lowest vulgar only, and mislead none but the grossest of the ignorant.

The ancient cultivation of the Divine Being was enriched with all that is dazzling in the higher departments of philosophy, and comprehended many unpublished stores of traditionary lore; it was taught in a language unparalleled, and had every decoration of music, perhaps superior to any thing that we can conceive, of painting, most probably, far surpassing the masterpieces of modern artists, and of sculpture and architecture manifestly transcendant and inimitable. The whole was exalted by a chastening taste, the value of which we are now most unfortunately little capable of estimating; and secured by a liberty of thought and speech, of which, could we once more thoroughly feel the worth, we should have again in our power the key to unlock the treasury of all good things.

It is obvious then that there was enough in the mysteries to attract the attention of an ardent mind; the very secrecy alone must have inflamed even ordinary curiosity.

The Golden Asse has been supposed by credulous alchemists to contain the secret of the philosopher's stone; and to its author, as well as to all other persons, who have had the smallest pretensions to distinction, the power of working miracles was attributed by the multitude.

Apuleius was admired for the qualities of his body as well as for those of his mind: his person was well proportioned; he was active and graceful. His face, which has been preserved to us on gems, is exquisitely beautiful: the hair and beard, as in the portraits of Pythagoras and Numa, are smooth and flowing; the attire of the head the same, a plain fillet tied behind, the ends hanging down. The whole countenance overflows with the fine old Platonic hilarity, which we view with astonishment, when found petrified in an onyx or a jasper; the organic remains of some earlier period, when the intellect and morals grew with antediluvian vigour to a gigantic stature.

A certain little modest widow, not unaptly named Pudentilla, had lived thirteen years in a solitary state, sorely against her will and to the great injury of her health, when the advocate came to lodge in her house; her disorder, which during that long-protracted Lent had been continually increasing, accidentally attained its crisis some little time after this arrival; she then found that she must either die or marry somebody, and she had no insuperable objections to her guest.

Her son Pontianus, to whom she had imparted without scruple her delicate situation, and whose filial piety could not bear to witness the anguish of a mother, then above forty years of age, pining for the want of those little conjugal

endearments, which were the more precious, as they were not likely to be lasting, besought his particular friend and fellow collegian, by all that is holy in friendship and sacred amongst men, to soothe his afflicted parent; the lady was neither young, nor beautiful, nor rich; but, for a more disinterested motive, Apuleius generously consented to marry her.

We are told that Pudentilla was a literary character, and was qualified to assist her husband, which some maintain to be a probable reason for his marrying her, as it is said that she used to hold lights to him while engaged in his studies; which expression a dull critic takes literally, and wonders how she could stand by him all night with a candlestick in each hand. Be this as it may, they were united; and considering that children are good things, and that it is good to have children, and being free from all prior and less philosophical intentions, to effect this quiet purpose more quietly, they retired together into the country.

The intercourse of refined minds and of congenial tastes, whether in town or country, is truly delightful. Miss Anna Seward and Dr. Darwin amused themselves in the Doctor's study, as scandal says, but perhaps falsely, by a course of experiments on equivocal generation; by their joint efforts they nearly made a baby.

They had mingled veal broth and mashed potatoes in a glass vessel according to art, and in due time the lady had her reasons for expecting shortly to taste the delicious transports of a mother; but in her eager haste she shook the gravid bottle, and the germ was dissolved into its parent broth. They repeated the process again and again, with every variation that the fertile invention of a poetess could devise; but without success; and, sad to say, the baby-linen still lies by in lavender without a claimant.

However unequivocal the rural occupations of Pudentilla may have been, her happiness was soon broken in upon by a most extraordinary accusation, which roused the amiable pair from the warm bride's favourite covert, the long grass under some shady elm.

The accusation seems to have been almost as bad as a Chancery suit, in demanding the same cruel exposure of family secrets, and the same unfeeling violation of domestic privacy, in drawing matters into court, which are not fit subjects for the jurisdiction of any tribunal; it was less dilatory, but nearly as ruinous and expensive.

Sicinus Æmilianus, the brother of Pudentilla's first husband, accused Apuleius of Magic, and of having gained the affections of his wife by charms and enchantments. On which occasion he pronounced before Claudius Maximus, Proconsul of Africa, his celebrated Apology; a most eloquent oration, which is still extant, and is only less engaging than the Golden Ass. The orator gives many amusing particulars of his own life; exposes admirably, and at great length, the absurdity of the accusation and the malice of his accusers. He must be allowed to have many of the faults, and much of the false eloquence of the age; but it is certain that the speaker possessed in a remarkable degree the criterion of true eloquence, in carrying along with him the feelings and passions of his hearers, and in exciting an intense interest in his favour. He was in consequence triumphantly acquitted. Some writers pretend, that he was tried before Christian judges; but in fact, as the event of the trial alone would lead us to believe, the Proconsul was by religion a Pagan.

It is difficult to imagine what could have occasioned this opinion, unless it be that he was accused, amongst other enormities, of cleaning his teeth. "I saw some time since,"

says the Apology, "that many could scarcely refrain from laughter, when that orator charged me so vehemently with washing my mouth, and spoke of tooth-powder with more indignation than any other man ever spoke of poison."

"Vidi ego dudum vix risum quosdam tenentes, cum mundicias oris videlicet orator ille asperè accusaret, et dentifricium tanta indignatione pronunciaret, quanta nemo quisquam venenum."

There appear likewise to have been counts in the information for combing his hair. This was not the first time that neatness gave offence, for even Socrates, as Ælian relates, was charged with being curious and nice about his house, and his couch, and his fine slippers.

We cannot help feeling a wish, on reading the defence, that the prosecutor's speech had been preserved; for it seems hardly possible to believe that the principal circumstances from which he sought to infer the undue influence of magic, were, that Pudentilla had consented to marry after thirteen years of widowhood, and that an old woman had not refused a young man; to which it is answered, that the real wonder is that she remained a widow so long; and that there was no need of magic to induce a female to marry a man, a widow a bachelor, an old woman a young man.

"Igitur hoc ipsum argumentum est, nihil opus magiæ fuisse, ut nubere vellet mulier viro, vidua cœlibi, major juniori."

Let the reflection that, even in these days, we have accusations quite as monstrous, supported by no better evidence, but with results much less satisfactory, serve to mitigate our curiosity.

One of the proofs, if generally admitted, would convict all the world of magic; it is this: "Apuleius has something at home, which he worships in secret." "Habet quiddam

Apuleius domi, quod secreto colit." Who then would be safe? who does not stand confessed a wizard? who has not something at home which he worships in secret?

Amongst the ethical writings of Plutarch, in the Nuptial Precepts sent with his good wishes to Pollianus and Eurydice, we read, that the natural Magic of Love had been before confounded with the Black Art; but that the good sense of the royal rival herself could distinguish between the effects of the power of light and of the powers of darkness. "King Philip," says the tale, "loved a Thessalian woman, and she was accused of having given him a love-potion. His wife, Olympias, therefore endeavoured to get the person in her power. But, when she came into her presence, and appeared comely in aspect, and conversed with gentility and prudence, "Farewell accusations," said Olympias, "for you have the love-potions in yourself." "Wherefore (infers Plutarch with his exquisite *bonhomie*) a lawful married wife becomes something quite irresistible, if, placing all things in herself, dowry, and gentility, and love-potions, and the very cestus of Venus, she works out affection by good manners and virtue."

If the sculptured face of Apuleius be a faithful copy of his countenance; and, more especially, if his conversation were as engaging as his writings, a female more attractive than his bride might well exclaim with Olympias, "You have the love-potions in yourself!" The highest authority in the world, that of the divine Plato, in his masterpiece the Symposium, might be cited, if it were necessary to adduce authorities to shew the sovereign influence of conversation in affairs of the heart: the passage is worthy of attention as a marvellous specimen of the antique simplicity, although we do not need proof where it is impossible to doubt:—

"In Elis," says the Divine, "and amongst the Bœotians, and in every other Grecian state where the arts of speaking

flourish not, the law in such places absolutely makes it honourable to gratify the lover; nor can any person there, whether young or old, stain such a piece of conduct with dishonour: the reason of which law, I presume, is to prevent the great trouble they would otherwise have in courting the fair, and trying to win them by the arts of oratory, arts in which they have no abilities."

The advantages of a good face are perhaps a little underrated in a popular anecdote of the facetious John Wilkes, whose excessive squint and whimsical ugliness have been passed on by Hogarth to the laughs of the nineteenth century; and whose estimate of beauty tradition has preserved, to teach humility to the handsome, and confidence to the unhappy plain.

"You say such a one is a good-looking fellow," observed the gallant patriot, "and such a one is an ill-looking fellow: I think nothing of looks. Between the finest face I ever knew and my own, I never found more than half-an-hour's difference with any woman." The patriot did not know the value of half-an-hour in a case of life and death: Sappho, although ugly, was, perhaps, not more ugly than Wilkes, and perhaps Phaon relented half-an-hour too late; had the Lesbian girl been gifted with a better face, she might have found some remedy less alarming than the lover's leap.

There are many editions of the *Metamorphoses*; old and new, but principally old; large and small, but chiefly large; with and without notes, but commonly choked up with piles of animadversions. We sometimes see one, or two lines of text at the top of a full quarto page, like the chimnies and roofs and battlements of a town rising above a flood; sometimes only a dreary waste of waters, when the Ruhnken and the Wower, the Oudendorp and the Elmenhorst have broken their banks, and laid the smiling face of the

text under commentary: then the blank of paper above and the blank of annotation below meet in one uniform line; and the weary eye seeks in vain along the dull Dutch horizon an object to repose upon. In a barn some proportion is observed between the quantity of the grain and the bulk of the chaff and straw; there is some proportion too in their relative value; but in the classics there is none between the edited and the editor, between the expounded and the expositor.

An old edition is prized by collectors for its wood-cuts, which have more merit than is usual with these antique productions; they are ugly and barbarous, but not altogether without spirit.

The *Metamorphoses* have been translated into all the languages of Europe; the translations are principally old ones. Boiardo, who published an abridged version in Italian, in 1544, concludes his work with a pleasant sort of index; he reckons up all the pretty little *novelle*, which he makes to be twenty-four, in a table at the end of the volume.

At the revival of letters the antient authors were read for some time with enthusiasm, but they soon became suspected, and it seemed better to those who govern our bodies and our minds, to discourage these studies. In order to provide substitutes for such restless spirits, as even the drunkenness of a college life cannot stupify, they restored, in some instances, the old logic of Aristotle, with a dash of divinity; in others, they waste the ingenuity of the youthful mind upon the most subtle analytics. The one side say: "Did they not live very well in the middle ages without knowledge? Can we not do so now? We eat, we drink, and we sleep; we abstain from treading upon the grass: what more did they in the twelfth century?" The others, to justify themselves, enquire: "Do you wish for modern discoveries; for the

latest improvements? Here they are; here is the last, the most modish French *Calculus*. We teach what is new; the newest of the new; we expound last night's dreams." It is no wonder, therefore, that the Golden Ass is but little known: it is a vain attempt, with a few hands, to tow a heavy vessel against a strong wind and a strong tide; but it is as well to take hold of the rope; winds and tides have changed; and we owe all that is precious to vain attempts.

If the curiosity of one person only shall be excited to read the work by these remarks, the pleasure which he will derive from it will repay whatever labour the composition of them has demanded.

Some one, whose conversation is of the narrative order, was relating, at an agreeable dinner party, with unwelcome proximity, the story of his having attended, in the fields, a congregation of Ranters on the preceding Sunday, and that the sermon of the preacher contained a full description of the infernal regions, when the narrator was suddenly cut short by this question: "Well, Sir, did he describe the other place? what did he say of that?" A question actually full of exquisite wit, but, in this instance, most unintentionally so, as the intimate friends of the person who asked it all confidently asserted, and vehemently repelled such an imputation.

For who can describe happiness? With pain we are but too familiar. There is the same difficulty in conveying an idea of an interesting book; we can easily offer specific reasons to deter from the perusal of a worthless composition; but, when we would illustrate literary worthiness, we become vague and general. We ought not to expect that a man, who had just arrived from fairy-land, should be able to give a systematic account of all he had seen there: the poor fellow could only say that every thing was enchanted and

enchancing; he might, perhaps, name one or two of the most striking things that the fairies and their queen had shown him.

The story, as Vives says, is taken from Lucian, and is comprised by him in about sixty pages; it has been filled up and embellished by Apuleius, who has extended it to eleven books: the author, under the name of Lucius, is in both works the hero of the tale. Lucius is a handsome and accomplished young man, full of eager curiosity, who comes to Hypata, in Thessaly, the metropolis of Thessalian Magic. He there lodges with Milo, a rich miser, a pawnbroker and usurer, whose only servant Photis (Lucian calls her Palæstra, and says of her, that "the girl was a bold, saucy little thing, and full of grace;" σφοδρα γαρ ην ιταμον, και χριτων μεσση το κορασιον) soon captivates the foolish young man, who suspected no harm, and continues to captivate the more foolish reader, even after he has a full knowledge of the fatal consequences of such an indiscretion.

After some amusing adventures, Lucius familiarises himself with Photis; the familiarities are described too minutely, especially by Lucian of Samosata, but they may easily be passed over by the not impertinently curious. He learns from her, upon a promise "to remunerate the simplicity of her relation by the tenacity of his taciturnity," that her mistress is a sorceress, and he prevails upon the fragile fair to procure him a sight of her incantations. One night Photis gives him notice that Pamphile is about to change herself into a bird, in order to visit a supremely beautiful youth, whom she loved desperately, and beyond all measure. He accompanies her to the door of her mistress's bed-room; and peeping through a chink, sees Pamphile strip off all her clothes (the loved youth could not have seen more) and rub her body over entirely with an ointment, change gradually

into an owl, and fly hooting away. Man is an imitative animal; Lucius must copy the usurer's wife: he prevails upon the saucy girl to permit him to try the experiment; she gives him a box, he strips himself, and hastily rubs his body with the contents:

“And presently poisoning my arms with alternate efforts,” says he, “I was delighted at the thoughts of turning into a similar bird. But there are no little feathers, no little wings at all; my hairs are evidently thickened into bristles, and my tender skin is hardened into a hide; at the tips of both my hands and of both my feet, all my fingers and toes, their number being lost, are forced into one hoof; and from the extremity of my back bone a great tail comes forth. My face soon becomes disproportionate, my mouth wide, my nostrils gaping, and my lips pendulous. So also my ears stick up with immoderate increase. And whilst in despair I contemplate my whole body, I see that I am not a bird, but an ass.”

“*Jamque alternis conatibus, libratis brachiis, in avem similem gestiebam. Nec ullæ plumulæ, nec usquam pinulæ; sed planè pili mei crassantur in setas, et cutis tenella duratur in corium; et in extimis palmulis, perduto numero, toti digiti coguntur in singulas ungulas; et de spinæ meæ termino grandis cauda procedit. Jam facies enormis, et os prolixum, et nares hiantes, et labiæ pendulæ. Sic et aures immodicis horripilant auctibus. Ac dum salutis inopia cuncta corporis mei considerans, non avem me sed asinum video.*”

Nothing can equal the despair of Lucius, except the protestations of Photis, who assures him that he may be instantly restored to his human figure upon eating some roses: she regrets that it is too late to procure any that night, but promises to gather some early in the morning; he is per-

sueded meanwhile to be led off quietly to the stable; where he is most unceremoniously kicked out of the stall by his own white horse, and presently afterwards carefully beaten by his own slave with a huge green cudgel.

It is impossible not to pause here and reflect a moment.— The calamity was great; but let us hear his reason for wishing to be able to take the form of an owl at pleasure: he does not dissemble that it was to enable him, without suspicion, to pay nightly visits to certain married ladies in the neighbourhood, and to caress them without injury to their characters, and in spite of all the precautions of jealousy; a natural wish enough perhaps! but some heavy punishment as naturally follows presumption, even in thought. To the frequent practice of lovers calling upon their mistresses in this disguise, he attributes the custom of nailing to the wall of a house the bodies of such owls as have been killed in the vicinity, in order to scare away amorous visitants. The gibbetting is in full force in this virtually-represented nation, as the bodies of feathered malefactors every where testify; but the reason for these executions is not generally known, because the secret of these little misfortunes is better kept than love-secrets commonly are, or because lovers (which it is hard to believe) are no longer willing to be impaled.

Whilst the long-eared platonist is brooding over the injuries which his leathern coat has just sustained, and is expecting that the dawn will bring Photis and roses, a band of robbers plunder the miser's house, enter the stable, load the philosopher with the spoil, and drive him off, in company with his own horse, to their cave. To just such a cave as we were all confined in, when school-boys, with *Gil Blas de Santillane*. Then follow adventures innumerable, in a series and long order, each that succeeds more engaging than

the last; in short, the book cannot be laid down until finished. It must be drunk at one draught. It must be taken up at sunrise on the feast of St. Barnabas, the longest and the brightest day, that the sun may not go down upon the metamorphosed Lucius, but that just before sunset he may eat his roses and become a man.

When young, we all read the Adventures of a Guinea, of an Atom, of a Sopher, of a Silver Penny, and of a thousand other things; we have not now a very distinct remembrance of what any one of these books is about, we have only a general recollection that we experienced pleasure in the perusal: it is an agreeable mode of stringing together adventures, and the Golden Ass is beyond comparison the best work of the kind.

There is moreover in this book something quite peculiar, of which we see no vestige elsewhere: it excites an expectation even from the commencement, a breathless curiosity, an anticipation of the marvellous so intense, that we feel prepared for whatever happens; it seems to be no more than we expected, however strange, new, or incredible. These feelings are in some degree described in what Lucius experienced the morning after his arrival at Hypata, the city of Magic.

“ I saw nothing in that city which I could believe to be what it really was, but I felt that every thing had been changed into another form by some fatal whisper, so that even the stones which I trod upon had been hardened out of men, and the birds which I heard had been feathered in the same manner, and the trees which surrounded the walls had thus been covered leaves, and that the fountain streams were but flowing human bodies. I expected that the statues and images would presently begin to walk and the walls to speak, that the oxen and cattle would utter some divination, and that from the heavens and the circle of the sun an oracle

would suddenly descend. Being thus confounded, nay, rather benumbed by an excruciating desire, and unable to find any commencement, or even the least trace of what I sought, I wandered about every where."

"Nec fuit in illa civitate, quod aspiciens, id esse crederem quod esset, sed omnia prorsus ferali murmure in aliam effigiem translata, ut et lapides quos offenderem, de homine duratos; et aves, quas audirem, indidem plumatas; et arbores quæ pomerium ambirent, foliatis similiter, et fontanos latices de corporibus humanis fluxos crederem. Jam statuas et imagines incessuras, parietes locuturos, boves et id genus pecua dictura præsagium; de ipso vero cœlo, et jubaris orbe subito venturum oraculum. Sic attonitus, immo verò cruciabili desiderio stupidus, nullo quidem initio vel omnino vestigio cupidinis meæ reperto, cuncta circuibam."

In some parts of England, as the Western district of Yorkshire, they prepare a sauce for boiled meat, generally for veal, in great measure, if not altogether, of sorrel. The leaves are placed in a wooden bowl, and upon them a large stone ball, like a cannon-ball; the lady-cook, seating herself upon a low stool, takes the bowl between her knees, and by well-timed motions, persuades the stone to roll about, until the sorrel is reduced to a smooth pulp. However incredible it may appear to some, that any effect produced in this manner can be agreeable, the sauce is certainly most delicious; it tastes of the veriest freshness of the spring. Those who have witnessed this singular culinary operation will be forcibly reminded of it by a passage, where Lucius finds Photis preparing, not sorrel-sauce, but some kind of minced-meat, in an attitude nearly similar.

"She was dressed neatly in a linen tunic, with a bright red sash tied rather high under her bosom, and was turning the bowl round and round with her rosy little hands, often

shaking it up gently whilst it revolved, and moving her limbs softly, with her loins just quivering, and her flexible back quietly stirring, she waved it gracefully."

"Ipsa linea tunica mundulè amicta, et russea fasciola prænitente altiusculè sub ipsas papillas succinctula, illud cibarium vasculum floridis palmulis rotabat in circulum; et in orbis flexibus crebra succutiens, et simul membra sua leniter illubricans, lumbis sensim vibrantibus, spinam mobilem quatiens placidè, decenter undabat."

Apuleius seems to have been an enthusiast in hair, and ardently to have admired an elegant head dress; this is not inconsistent with the beauty of his own tresses: he is eloquent and impassioned when he speaks of those of Photis, yet what he says is of too heating a nature to be admitted into a composition of cool criticism, and must therefore be passed over.

But is not the whole work of a somewhat licentious cast? It is a common complaint that novelists always write about love: this is true—but what else have they to write about?—that they write too warmly: this is also true—they do write too warmly; but such as they are we must read them, until some one descends from heaven, at once calm and readable.

The most objectionable part of the Golden Ass is an allegorical satire on the female sex, which it is impossible to justify; but at the same time it is so clever, that it is equally impossible for either man or woman to be outrageously angry. On the other hand, the story of Cupid and Psyche is not only one uniform piece of loveliness, but is so delicate (even in the modern and least estimable sense of the word) that it might be read at school by a class of young ladies. This episode is entirely the invention of Apuleius; it fits

more than two whole books, and is replete with erudition and pleasure.

The Emperor Severus professed to despise what he called the Punic tales of Apuleius;—the censure of an Emperor may recommend them to some readers.

Macrobius, in his Exposition of the *Sannium Scipionis* of Cicero, says:—

“Fables that delight the ear, like the comedies which Menander and his imitators wrote for representation, or stories full of the feigned adventures of lovers, in which Petronius practised much, and Apuleius sometimes amused himself to our great surprise” (and to the sorrow of consular men like myself, who cannot afford to be jocose) “all fables of this kind, which profess only to delight the ears, wisdom banishes from her sanctuary to the cradles of nurses.”

“Auditum mulcent, velut comedix, quales Menander, ejusve imitatores agendas dederunt: vel argumenta fictis casibus amatorum referta: quibus vel multum se Arbiter exercuit: vel Apuleium nonnunquam luisse miramur. Hoc totum fabularum genus, quod solas aurium delicias profitetur, e sacrario suo in nutricum cunas sapientix tractatus eliminat.”

If the use of such books only as they can read without delight be permitted to the wise, we the foolish shall almost doubt, whether it is not better to lie in the cradle with the nurse, than to sit in the sacristy with the philosopher.

A person who would take the pains and had the requisite qualifications, and he must have a great many, might draw up a very curious and instructive commentary on this romance, which contains many uncommon words, worthy of explanation, as being intimately connected with the history and manners of the second century. The last book

is singularly interesting, and indeed *unique*; it is elegant and erudite, and comprehends many of the more secret doctrines of philosophy and of the ancient religion of Egypt; a learned and copious description of certain sacerdotal ceremonies, and of the initiation into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris.

By patient research and diligent investigation, many facts respecting the mysteries, now buried in unopened volumes, might be brought to light: the enquiry, as well as the results, would afford no common pleasure; whether leisure and opportunity for these pursuits will always be wanting, for the present, at least, it is impossible to determine.

There are barbarisms, there is bad taste, there is false eloquence in the Golden Ass; there are all these faults and many more: but nevertheless let him who has read it read it again; let him who has never read it, all other business being omitted, suddenly read it; and, if he cannot procure a copy on easier terms, let him, Apuleius-like, sell his coat and buy one.

All that now remains, is to call the attention of the learned world to the conclusion of the Apology, in which the author warns all men against marrying a widow, for this plain reason, "because she can have nothing *impossible* about her:" the passage is as follows:—

"Virgo formosa, etsi sit oppidè pauper, tamen abundè dotata est. Adfert quippe ad maritum novum animi indolem, pulchritudinis gratiam, floris rudimentum. Ipsa virginitatis commendatio jure meritòque omnibus maritis acceptissima est. Nam quodcumque aliud in dotem acceperis, potes cum libuit, ne sis beneficio obstrictus, omne ut acceperis retribuere; pecuniam renumerare, mancipia restituere, domo demigrare, prædiis cedere. Sola virginitas, cum semel accepta est, reddi nequitur; sola apud maritum

ex rebus dotalibus remanet. Vidua autem qualis nuptiis venit, talis divortio digreditur; nihil adfert impossibile.”

The authority is weighty, and the Philosopher did not speak without experience: but if any one, notwithstanding, shall have the hardihood to despise this caution, let him accept, as a nuptial benediction, the phrase in which Photis used to say “Good night!”

QUOD BONUM FELIX ET FAUSTUM.

MINOR PIECES.

TO A SPIDER RUNNING ACROSS A ROOM.

THOU poisonous rascal, running at this rate
O'er the perplexing desert of a mat,
Scrambling and scuttling on thy scratchy legs,
Like a scared miser with his money-bags ;
Thou thief—thou scamp—thou hideous much in little,
Bearing away the plunder of a spital,—
Caitiff of corners,—doer of dark deeds,
Mere lump of poison lifted on starv'd threads,
That while they run, go shuddering here and there,
As if abhorring what they're forc'd to bear,
Like an old bloated tyrant, whom his slaves
Bear from the gaping of a thousand graves,
And take to some vile corner of a court,
Where felons of his filthy race resort,—
I have thee now ;—I have thee here, full blown,
Thou lost old wretch, benighted by the noon !
What dost thou say ? What dost thou think ? Dost see
Providence hanging o'er thee, to wit, me ?
Dost fear ? Dost shrink with all thine eyes to view
The shadowing threat of mine avenging shoe ?
Now, now it comes ;—one pang,—and thou wilt lie
Flat as the sole that treads thy gorg'd impurity.

Yet hold:—why should I do it? Why should I,
 Who in my infidel fidelity,
 Believer in the love, though not the wrath,
 Have spared so many crawlers o'er my path,—
 Why should I trample here, and like a beast,
 Settle this humblest of them all and least?
 The vagrant never injured me or mine,
 Wrote no critiques, stabb'd at no heart divine,
 And as to flies, Collyer himself must dine. }
 Flies may be kill'd as speedily as mutton,
 And your black spider's not your blackest glutton.
 The vermin's a frank vermin, after all;
 Makes no pretence to a benignant call;
 Does not hold up a hideous white hand,
 To tickle grandams to his promised land;
 Nor pulls white handkerchiefs from out his blackness,
 To wipe the tears,—that give a surfeit slackness.
 He's not the Laureat, not my turn'd old Bob;
 Not Bull the brute, nor Gazetteer the grub:
 He does not “ profess Poetry,” like Mill;
 Music, like Buzby; nor, what's higher still,
 “ Moral Philosophy,” like wicked Will.
 He swells, I grant, and 'tis with poison too;
 But not, toad-eating Muddyard, like you:
 He plunders, and runs off; but not like Theod.,
 To make amends by slandering for King Ehud:
 He skulks; but 'tis not as “ dear Ally” does, }
 To pry and pounce on females, and keep close }
 At fingers only that can pull a nose.
 Honest the rogue is, in his way,—hey, Groly?—
 And does not call his snares and slaughters “ Holy;”
 Nor like the Russian that insulted Spain,
 Cry “ Mannert,” and affect the gentleman.

He holds to what he is, like her that bore him,
 A spider, as his father was before him.
 'Twas Cowl, not he, that by old Gizzard's fire,
 Born of a man, turn'd reptile and mere liar,
 And chang'd his shape with his own fright, as mothers,
 Their tender burthen incomplete, change others.
 And have I spared the very worst of these
 A thousand times, and all for their own ease,—
 Let them crawl on, and wink'd at Gizzard's self,
 To tread out thee, poor emblematic elf?
 Thee, whose worst vice is, that thy hang-dog looks
 Remind us of his face, not of his books,
 For all the poison, clubb'd from all thy race,
 Could not do that: you're safe from that disgrace.
 Have I, these five years, spared the dog a stick,
 Cut for his special use, and reasonably thick,
 Now, because prose had fell'd him just before;
 Then, to oblige the very heart he tore;
 Then, from conniving to suppose him human,
 Two-legg'd, and one that had a serving-woman;
 Then, because some one saw him in a shiver,
 Which shewed, if not a heart, he had a liver;
 And then, because they said the dog was dying,
 His very symptoms being given to lying?
 Have I done this? Have I endur'd e'en Murrain,
 Whom even his own face finds past enduring,
 Trying to slip aside from him, and cut him,
 When honest men ask questions that don't suit him?
 Have I let strut, behind their dunghill screens,
 All the brisk crowsers in Scotch magazines,
 Who take for day their crackling Northern Lights,
 And scream, and scratch, and keep it up o' nights,
 Braggarts with beaten plumes, and sensual hypocrites?
 Him too who feeds them, and in whom there run

All Curll's and Osborne's melted brass in one,
 (Blackguard, thought wrong by the young trade, but wronger
 By those whose consciences have eaten longer)
 Have I spared him, when, with a true rogue's awe
 Not of the truth or justice, but the law,
 He lay before my feet, and proffer'd me
 His rascal money for indemnity?
 In scorn I let him go, just taught, it seems,
 How to call people more ingenious names;
 For which, I own, I merit the reproofs
 Of all the world, but those who read his huffs.

Go, you poor wretch,—I mean the spider; go,
 And take care how you bite Sir Hudson Lowe.

SOUTHEGONY,

OR THE BIRTH OF THE LAUREAT.

Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem.—VIRG.

Laugh, if you can; but one way or another,
 Do pray, old boy, begin to know your mother.

WE'VE all of us read, in some poet or other,
 That Pallas was born without ever a mother;
 And 'tis equally certain, or more certain rather,
 That Mars was produc'd without ever a father:
 For as to old Jupiter's pain in his brows,
 The reason for that might still lie with his spouse;
 And as to his getting the thing in his head,
 It's what many men do, who are not brought to bed:
 Whereas that a son should be born of a lady,
 And none know the father, not even the Cadi,
 Or rather, that there's been no father at all,
 (For it couldn't be Peter, and couldn't be Paul,

And then, as the village says, "Who *could* it be?")
Is a point on which doctors of all sorts agree.

Be this as it may, the immortals above us
Were talking of these things, and saying "Lord love us!"
When Jupiter, coming from council upon 'em,
(You'd have thought that the sound of his step had undone 'em,
But luckily he had escap'd their descriptions)
Said, "What do you say there about my conceptions?"
Conceive, if you can, a strange creature I've thought on,
For bard to the era about to be brought on,—
A jumble, a Janus, a Jack-of-all-trades,
A prostitute pen, yet the prince of old maids;
The ghost of a rhyming Inquisitor's rack;
A crack on the crown, and a crown on the crack;
A "Honi soit" zealot for Liberty's charms,
Subsiding in softness beneath the King's Arms;
The vice contradiction; the virtue in it;
A weathercock image, so solemn and stiff,
Who first holds up one hand, and then holds up t'other,
As pompously fierce for one wind as another;
A mind, like his visage, by nature intended
For something, but left till too late to be mended,
That promises strength, but retreats in weak dudgeon,
The nose of a hawk, and the mouth of a gudgeon;
In short, a grotesque, any thing but a true thing,
Part human, part brutal, part flowery, all nothing;
That begins like a man, but possessing no substance,
Runs flourishing off, like the figures on hob-stands,
And foams at a creature that guards t'other side,
To wit, it's own self, and identical pride.
"I want such a being," said Jove in conclusion,
"To put, with his praises, his friends in confusion,

And furnish crown'd heads with a shabby phenomenon,
Fit for some certain disasters then coming on."

"I cannot conceive such a being," said Juno:
"Don't mention," said Venus, "such *juncto in uno!*"
"It's much beyond us," cried the whole of the goddesses,
Bridling, and settling their several boddices.

"Well," cried a damsel, who kept Juno's peacock,
"It seems now as easy to me as *hic hæc hoc*:
Good lord! sure my mistress is joking. Why I
Could conceive twenty such, or I'd like to know why.

Now the damsel who thus indiscreetly took on her,
By poets on earth is yclept Mrs. Honour:
But in heav'n, for her airs and her "pompous inanity,"
Gods name her rightly, and call the jade Vanity.

"Do," said Jove laughing. He took from a shelf
The work of a bard who was big with himself,
And throwing it at her, the girl, as they say,
Seem'd struck of a heap, and look'd down, and said "Hey!"

A ludicrous gravity roll'd in her eyes,
She looks pregnantly vacant, and foolishly wise,
And picking her skirts up, sail'd off through the skies. }
You'd have thought all the Gods would have split 'em for
laughter,
To see her waist first, and herself coming after.

That very day nine weeks, if gossips be right,
My Southey, with green and grey head, came to light;
And 'tis said, that before he had found out his legs,
The rogue taught his grandmother how to suck eggs.

LINES OF MADAME D'HOUTETOT.

Jeune, j'aimai. Le temps de mon bel age,
 Ce temps: si court, l'amour seul le remplit:
 Quand j'atteignis la saison d'être sage,
 Toujours j'aimai: la raison me le dit.
 Mais l'âge vient, et le plaisir s'envole;
 Mais mon bonheur ne s'envole aujourd'hui,
 Car j'aime encore, et l'amour me console;
 Rien n'aurait pu me consoler de lui.

When young, I lov'd. At that delicious age,
 So sweet, so short, love was my sole delight;
 And when I reach'd the season to be sage,
 Still I lov'd on, for reason gave me right.
 Age comes at length, and livelier joys depart,
 Yet gentle ones still kiss these eyelids dim;
 For still I love, and love consoles my heart;
 What could console me for the loss of him?

TALARI INNAMORATI.

DEAR Molly, who art the best comingest lass,
 With a foot not so big as the slipper of brass,
 Or as her's, whom a wag, strangely gifting with wrong clo'es,
 Calls, most unbecomingly, Ninon de Long-clo'es,
 (Of whom 'tis recorded, that in a ragoût
 Some young men of fashion once toss'd up her shoe),
 Take a story that came in my head t'other day,
 As writing a libel, all careless I lay,
 So good-natur'd am I, and soon carried away.

You must know, that 'twas after a day of much flight,
 The feather'd god Mercury got home one night:
 He took off his winged hat, flagging with dews,
 And shook off as quickly his two winged shoes:
 And ringing for Hebe, said, "Starlights and nectar;
 And go and tell Venus, you rogue, I expect her."
 So saying, he threw his light legs up together,
 And stretched, half-reclin'd, on his couch of dove's feather,
 And taking his lute up, and thumbing, and humming,
 Was about to sing something to hasten her coming,
 When lo! the two shoes that I spoke of, instead
 Of departing, as usual, like pigeons, to bed,
 Began flutt'ring and making genteel indications
 Of delicate feelings and nice hesitations,
 And then walking forward, stood still, rather wide,
 When the one drew his heel to the other's inside,
 And suggesting a bow (for it well may be said,
 You can't make a bow without having a head)
 Told the god with a sigh, which they meant to go through him,
 That they had, if he pleas'd, a small prayer to make to him.

"How now!" said the God; "what, my shoes grown pathetic!

This indeed's a new turn of the peripatetic.

What's the matter, my friends? Why this bowing and blushing?

Has Ganymede giv'n you too careless a brushing?

Do you ache yet from Jupiter's tread on your toes,

When I spoke, before Juno, of Chloris's nose?

Or does she keep charge of his pen and ink still,

And force him to borrow another new quill?"

"No: nothing of all this, dear master," said they;

'But the fact is,—the fact is—' "Well, what is it, pray?"

“Why, you know, Sir, our natures partake of the dove,
And in fact, Sir,—in short, Sir,—we’ve fallen in love.”

“In love! and with what, pray? With Rhodope’s shoes?
Or with Rhodope’s self?” cried the god at this news.*
“I have heard of shoes ‘doated on,’ during a fashion,
But never of any returning the passion.”

“We beg, Sir,” said they, “that you wouldn’t chagrin us:
Who, or what could it be, but the feet of your Venus?
To see them, to touch them, and yet be heart-whole,
How could we, yet have understanding and soul?
When we heard, t’other day, that dog Momus object,
For want of a fault in ’em, that her shoes creak’d,
We could fairly have jump’d at the rascal, and kick’d: }
And so, Sir, we have to request, that whenever
We’re not upon duty, you’ll do us the favour
Of letting us wait on those charmers so little,
To which Thetis’s silver are surely queen’s-metal.
The soft-going sandals of Rhetoric’s god
Will make her move always as loveliness should;
Will put a perfection, Sir, into her shoc-tye,
And give the last lift to her exquisite beauty.”

* Rhodope, or Rhodopis (Rosy-face) the most romantic of the courtezans of antiquity. She began with falling in love with her fellow-servant Æsop; and ended with consecrating a number of costly spits in the temple of Apollo at Delphos, some say with erecting one of the pyramids of Egypt. She inspired a violent passion in Charaxes, the brother of Sappho, who takes upon herself, in Ovid, to complain of it. There is a pretty legend of her, in which those who are fond of tracing every thing to the ancient world, may find the origin of the Little Glass Slipper. Ælian says, that as she was bathing, an eagle carried away one of her sandals, and flying with it over Memphis, where Psammetichus, king of Egypt, was sitting in judgment, dropped it in the monarch’s lap. Struck with its extraordinary beauty, he had the owner found out, and married her.

“ Be it so,” replied Hermes ; “ but take care, you rogues ;
Don’t you keep her from me, or I’ll turn you to clogs.”

“ We cannot, we cannot,” cried they, “ dearest master ;
And to prove it at once, she shall come to you faster.”

So saying, they rose, and skimm’d out of the door,
Like a pair of white doves, when beginning to soar :
They met her half-way, and they flew to her feet,
Which they clasp’d in a flutter, the touch was so sweet ;
And they bore her in silence, and kiss’d all the while
The feet of the queen of the beautiful smile ;
And lo ! in an instant, redoubled in charms,
The soft coming creature was pitch’d in his arms.

RHYMES TO THE EYE,

BY A DEAF GENTLEMAN.

I LONG’D for Dublin, thinking there to *laugh*
With jolly tipplers o’er their *usquebaugh* ;
For I’ve a merry heart, and love that *juice*,
Which London hath not good at any *price*.
Thither I went ; but once (’twas at the *Plough*)
Some time uncounted after I’d *enough*,
I sallied forth, and in the street, *alas* !
I plunged into a horrible *fracas*,—
So horrible, that all my bones did *ach*,
And I was forced to ride home in a *couch*,
Entreating *Dora* to achieve a *pot*
Of salve from the Chirurgical *Depot*.*

* I am aware this rhyme may be carped at. However, Pope rhymed “ way” and “ away” together, and that is good authority. For my part, I think “ pot” and “ pot” rhyme very well together.—*Note by the Deaf Gentleman.*

Truly I cannot boast of such *eclat*
 As could my friend, whose sword, this way and that,
 Brandish'd through Islington and Highgate thorns,—
 For he belongs unto the *Light Horse Corps!*
 Next morn I had a great mind to indict
 The bludgeoneers, but could not well convict;
 And fain was I to take their promises
 Of good behaviour touching many bruises.
 But if again they catch me in that region,
 (Well-named *Ire-land*) since I am not a lion,
 The world may call me fool, and I'll say—"yes,"
 For I don't like bones batter'd and black eyes.
 No! rather would I to *Constantinople,*
 Although the Turk's-men are a strange people,
 And I've no predilection for the plague,
 Than drink in a continued fearful *ague.*

 LINES TO A CRITIC.*

HONEY from silkworms who can gather,
 Or silk from the yellow bee?
 The grass may grow in winter weather,
 As soon as hate in me.

* We have given the stupid malignity of the Investigator a better answer than it is worth already. The writers must lay it to the account of our infirmity, and to a lurking something of orthodoxy in us. But in these "Lines to a Critic," the Reverend Calamniator, or Calumniators, will see what sort of an answer *Mr. Shelley* would have given them: for the beautiful effusion is his. Let the reader, when he has finished them, say which is the better Christian,—the "religious" reviver of bitter and repeated calumnies upon one who differs with him in opinion, or the "profane" philanthropist who can answer in such a spirit?

Hate men who cant, and men who pray,
 And men who rail like thee;
 An equal passion to repay,—
 They are not coy like me.

Or seek some slave of power and gold,
 To be thy dear heart's-mate,
 Thy love will move that bigot cold,
 Sooner than me, thy hate.

A passion like the one I prove
 Cannot divided be;
 I hate thy want of truth and love,
 How should I then hate thee?

THE MONARCHS,

AN ODE FOR CONGRESS.

WHEN Congress (heav'nly maid!) was young,
 While scarcely yet Rossini sung,
 The Monarchs oft, to flesh the sword,
 Throng'd around the festive board;
 Exulting, carving, hobbing, nobbing,
 Possess'd of what they'd all been robbing.
 By turns they felt each other's crown,
 Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, pull'd down;
 Till once, 'tis said, when all were maudlin,
 Fill'd with Rhenish, flouncing, twaddling,
 From the supporting statesmen round
 They snatch'd the first pens that they found,
 And as they once had learnt apart
 Sweet lessons of the pot-book art,

Each (for madness rul'd the hour)
 Would prove his own didactic power.

First Fred. his hand, it's skill to try,
 Upon the foolscap wilder'd laid,
 And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
 At the remarks himself had made,

Next Alec. rush'd; his eyes, on fire,
 In wanderings own'd their secret stings;
 In one plain word, he play'd the liar,
 And wrote the hurried hand of kings.

With woeful scrawl came poor old Frank;
 Low stupid things his grief beguil'd;
 A solemn, strange, and mingled crank;
 'Twas sad in *Ps*, in *Qs* 'twas wild.

But thou, old boy, with pies so rare,
 What was thy delight, Des-Huitres!
 Still it whisper'd—"Spain—they'll beat her!"
 And bade the bully boys at distance hail:
 Still would his munch the fish prolong,
 And still from creams, and cakes, and ale,
 He cull'd a finish still, although 'twas wrong:
 And where his tiddest bit he chose,
 Soft Montmorency's voice came blessing through the nose,
 And old Des-Huitres smil'd, and waiv'd the chaplain's prayer.

And longer had he din'd; but with a groan
 The Duke came saying "Oh!"
 He threw his blood-stain'd sword in wonder down,
 And with a withering look,
 The war-dénouncing trumpet took,

And shook a shake so drear of head,
 Was ne'er pacific skull so full of No!
 And ever and anon he beat
 The devil's tattoo with curious heat;
 And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
 Dejected Duncy at his side,
 Her man-subduing voice applied,
 Yet still he kept his sad and alter'd mien,
 While each gulp'd oath and curse seem'd bursting to be said.

Thy numbers, Armament, to nought were fix'd,
 Sad proof of thy distressful state;
 Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd,
 And now it call'd "To Arms!" now raving said,
 "No,—wait."

With eyes up-turn'd, as one amaz'd,
 James Monro sat aloof, and gaz'd;
 And from his calm sequester'd seat,
 (A place by distance made more sweet)
 Sent through the newsmen's born his free-born soul:
 And dashing oft from kindred ground
 Doubling journals join'd the sound:
 Through courts and camps the better measures stole,
 Or in some patriot's themes, with fond delay,
 Round an awful calm diffusing,
 Love of peace, and letter'd musing,
 Their useful murmurs plied away.

But oh! how finished was the happy tone,
 When brave San Miguel, Spaniard good and true,
 (His No! to all the monarchs flung,
 His face on fire, yet laughing too)
 Read that inspiring Note, with which the Cortes rung!

The freeman's truth, to freemen only known!
 Portugal sped it's chaste-eyed Queen;
 Writers and Liberty-Boys were seen
 Peeping their prison-bars between;
 Brown Italy rejoic'd to hear,
 And courts leap'd up, and seiz'd their hats for fear.

Last came Greece's crowning trial:
 She, by painful steps advancing,
 Had first to foreign lands her pray'rs address'd;
 But soon she stood upon her own denial,
 The noble voice fair Freedom lov'd the best.
 They would have thought who heard the sound,
 They saw in Marathon her ancient men
 Crushing the turban'd slaves again,
 For all their mighty pomp and prancing;
 While as the flying Turks kiss'd their steeds' manes,
 Russ left with Pruss their strange, fantastic ground:
 Free were our presses seen, our trade unbound,
 And Frank, amid their frolic play,
 As if he knew no longer what to say,
 Shook heaps of powder from his head and brains.

O Freedom, self-defended maid,
 Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid,
 Why, goddess, why, so long denied,
 Bid not these idler's stand aside?
 In the Old World, in the New,
 You've shewn us what your will can do,
 And why then longer waste a thought
 On full-grown boys, that *won't* be taught?
 Where is thy native, simple heart,
 Devote to virtue, fancy, art?

Arise, as in that elder time,
Self-sufficing, pure, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording children's page :
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest friends could more prevail,
And talk'd in Greek of finer things,
Than all which charms the ear of kings,
Aye, all together, meek and slaughterly,
Bob, Chateaubriand, and the Quarterly.

O bid their vain endeavours cease ;
Complete the just designs of Greece ;
Return in all thy simple state,
And clip the tails that kings think great.

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