Crayon Sketches

Theodore S. Fay

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Dedication

TO WASHINGTON IRVING, ESQ. −
MY DEAR SIR,

In early boyhood the charms of literature first broke upon me through the productions of your pen; gratitude, therefore, as well as respect and admiration, induces me to dedicate to you the following compositions of one who also warmly appreciates the treasures which you have added to the English language.

Believe me, my dear sir, Very gratefully and sincerely Your ob't servant,

THEODORE S. FAY.

New−York, − *June 10, 1833.*

PREFACE.

BY THE EDITOR.

The following essays and sketches originally appeared in the New−York Mirror, under the signature of C. In collecting them for publication, in the present form, the editor, if he may assume so dignified an appellation, is actuated by two motives: first, a desire to do justice to the abilities of a valued and long absent friend, whose reluctant consent has been yielded only to repeated solicitations; and, second, to furnish for the public a book marked by humor and originality of thought, and an agreeable companion for a dull hour.

The editor does not rely solely on his own estimation of their excellence, although he thinks the author, what some critic less appropriately called Milton, "a very good writer *very!*" Many of the articles have been extensively copied, and one in particular, after a tour through Great Britain, was, with a slight alteration of the title, transplanted into an American paper as a rare foreigner, and in that capacity gained a good deal of extra attention; just as a townsman, dwelling all his life in the midst of us, dependent only upon good sense and virtue,

may languish in obscurity, but, after a few years abroad, finds an Italian air and a pair of moustaches, a passport to the tables of the wealthy and great. The "Man of the Fly−market Ferry," "Passages in the Life of an Unfortunate," "The Epicurean," the "Biography of Jacob Hays," "Oysters," &c., are curious and amusing specimens of literary caricatures, completely and justly turning into ridicule a style of writing bombastically about nothing, too popular and common, especially among contributors to periodicals. They have been highly commended as satires, at once forcibly and felicitously drawn.

Another kind of essay will be found in the succeeding pages, which attract attention, and surprise one into merriment, by the novel views taken of hacknied subjects, and the sly pleasantry with which they advocate the wrong side of the question. Among them are the defence of "Idle People," the raillery against "Early Rising," and the address to the "Marriageable Ladies of the United States." No intelligent reader will believe that the author intends, in the last, seriously to discountenance temperance societies, which have certainly been productive of great benefits to the nation. It is a mere exhibition of the irony and talent for burlesquing, in which he is very successful.

No apology is deemed necessary for introducing the theatrical portraits, which appear in the second volume. Although they are of a transitory nature, most of the subjects are yet before the public; and, belonging to a profession, the members of which are known by their talents to large classes of people, and generally called to mind with pleasurable associations descriptions of them, like their pictures, are recognized with interest. Little need be said of them by the editor, except that the sketch of Fanny Kemble does no justice to her present improved talents and brilliant eminence, and that the badinage directed against Mr. Richings (who is, seriously, an excellent and useful actor) must be regarded as intended good−naturedly, and as merely the offspring of a merry mood. Mrs. Sharpe too has improved, in many respects, since our artist pencilled her features so rapidly.

There are several local allusions, and hits at passing events, which might have been expunged; but the author not being in the country, the editor was unwilling to alter the text, and it is hoped that the fact of the pieces' having been originally composed for a periodical, will be received as a sufficient explanation. If discrepancies, deficiencies, or tautologies be discovered, it will be recollected that the essays are not deliberately prepared, revised and corrected by the author, and put forth by him as specimens of his abilities; but that they are mere unpremeditated effusions, struck out in the heat of the moment, intended but for a careless, passing glance, and then to be thrown aside and forgotten. They were hastily furnished for the Mirror, at the solicitation of George P. Morris, Esq. a gentleman to whose discriminating zeal in the cause of American periodical literature they owe their existence. The editor trusts that, on this occasion, criticism will not be inconsiderately severe, but, instead of coldly repressing the talent here displayed, that it will encourage the youthful writer to more elaborate efforts.

TRAVELING. MENTALLY AND BODILY.

It is a wholesome thing to be what is commonly termed "kicked about the world." Not literally "kicked" not forcibly propelled by innumerable feet from village to village, from town to town, or from country to country, which can be neither wholesome nor agreeable; but knocked about, tossed about, irregularly jostled over the principal portions of the two hemispheres; sleeping hard and soft, living well when you can, and learning to take what is barely edible and potable ungrumblingly when there is no help for it. Certes, the departure from home and old usages is any thing but pleasant, especially at the outset. It is a sort of secondary "weaning" which the juvenile has to undergo; but like the first process, he is all the healthier and hardier when it is over. In this way, it is a wholesome thing to be tossed about the world. To form odd acquaintance in ships, on the decks of steam boats and tops of coaches; to pick up temporary companions on turnpikes or by hedge−sides; to see humanity in the rough, and learn what stuff life is made of in different places; to mark the shades and points of distinction in men, manners, customs, cookery, and other important matters as you stroll along. What an universal toleration it begets! How it improves and enlarges a man's physical and intellectual tastes and capacities! How diminutively local and ridiculously lilliputian seem his former experiences! He is now no longer bigotted to a doctrine or a

dish, but can fall in with one, or eat of the other, however strange and foreign, with a facility that is truly comfortable and commendable: always, indeed, excepting, such doctrines as affect the feelings and sentiments, which he should ever keep "garner'd up" in his "heart of hearts;" and also, always excepting the swallowing of certain substances, so very peculiar in themselves, and so strictly national, that the undisciplined palate of the foreigner instinctively and utterly rejects them, such as the frog of your Frenchman the garlic of your Spaniard the compounds termed sausages of your Cockney the haggis of your Scotchman the train−oil of your Russian.

He has but little of the ardent spirit of boyhood, or the mounting spirit of manhood in him, who can quietly seat himself by his father's hearth, dear though it be, until that hearth, by virtue of inheritance becomes his own, without a wish to see how the world wags beyond the walls of his native town. How mulish and uncompromising he groweth up! How very indocile and incredulous he becometh! To him localities are truths right is wrong and wrong is right, just as they fall in with or differ from the customs of his district; and all that is rare or curious or strange or wonderful or different from what he has been accustomed to, is measured by the petty standard of his own experience, and dogmatically censured or praised accordingly. Such men are incurable, and what is worse, legal nuisances they can neither be abated by law nor logic.

I like human nature of quite a different pattern. A boy, especially, is all the better for a strong infusion of credulity in his composition. He should swallow an hyperbole unhesitatingly, and digest it without difficulty. It is better for a juvenile to be ingenuous than ingenious. It is better for him to study Baron Munchausen than Poor Richard's Maxims. The Baron's inventions fertilize his imagination without injuring his love of truth; Poor Richard's truisms teach him nothing but that cold worldly wisdom he is almost sure to learn, and learn too soon. Strong drink is not for babes and sucklings; neither is miserly, hard−hearted proverbs "a penny saved is a penny earned" "a groat a day is a pound a year," and such like arithmetical wisdom. Keep it from them: it takes the edge off their young sensibilities, and sets them calculating their charities. They will learn selfishness soon enough without taking regular lessons. The good Samaritan, honest man, cared not a fig−leaf for such axioms, or he too would have "passed by on the other side."

Not that I mean to question the utility of arithmetical studies for children, or inculcate the neglect of worthy proficients or professors therein. Hutton, Tinwell, Bonnycastle, or more ancient Cocker; far from it, I have too severely ere now experienced the ill−effects of slighting the multiplication table and other loftier branches of arithmetic; but I could not then help it. I was a great traveler when a boy, though not in the body; in imagination I had circumnavigated the globe. A book of voyages and travels was to me better than a holiday, and I devoured the pages of Wallis, Cartwright, Byron, and other navigators with an appetite that now seems to me to have been really preternatural. How I used to trudge away, not unwillingly to school, if I had only Robinson Crusoe (which was then a most veritable and authentic document) smuggled away in my satchel amidst grammars, dictionaries, and other necessary and disagreeable productions. Then Cook's Voyages! What an ocean of pleasure to me were his ocean wanderings! How did they divide, or rather completely abstract my faculties from subtraction, multiplication, or division (short or long)! I was sailing far away, in the good ship Endeavor, over the illimitable Pacific, what were vulgar fractions to me? I coasted through the Friendly Islands and took no heed of decimals; and, as far at least as I was concerned, arithmetical progression became stationary. I might be ostensibly in practice; but my practice was to go on indulging in stolen sweets "from morn till noon, from noon till dewey eve," until the awful hour of retribution arrived, and I was called upon to exhibit the sum total of my day's industry. This generally consisted of one or more questions "cabbaged" or stolen from some of my precursors in those difficulties. Sometimes they passed muster; but oh! the opaque darkness the cheerless, hopeless, mental blindness in which I found myself enveloped whenever my worthy teacher requested me to "show how I came by the answer." How I came by it in one sense how improperly and feloniously I came by it, I knew full well; but as for establishing any legitimate claim to the product, as for showing by any given process how the answer could be correctly deduced from the premises, it was only a waste of his time and mine to request such a thing. Then poor left hand, came thy trial "not for thine own demerits but for mine," fell blows from supple cane or leathern thong right heavily on thee! Many a blush and bruise La Perouse and Captain Cook cost thee ill−used

member unfortunate extremity.

But I was incorrigible. Blows and admonitions were equally unavailable. I did not see or feel the moral justice of either one or the other; they were to me things of course necessities, not judicious punishments; inevitable consequences, which must be endured and could not be avoided, and the next day I was again amongst my old friends the islanders, tattooing warriors, roasting dogs and marvelling how such "strange flesh" would eat when cooked, or performing any other equally curious or ingenious operations. When not reading I was dreaming. From the hubbub of the school I could transport myself in a twinkling to some fair Otaheitan isle some speck of verdure that "lit the ocean with a smile," where summer, and gentle gales, and beauteous flowers, and odoriferous species were perpetual; and there, where "feathery cocoas fring'd the bay," would I lay myself down and watch the breaking of the waves upon the sparkling shore, until the tumbling of a slate or book, or the harsh growl of the master, startled me from my day−dream and brought me to a sense of things more immediate and material. But I possessed in a high degree the happy faculty of abstraction a faculty that can transplant you in an instant from the dullest scenes and company to the brightest and gayest and in a few moments I was again "all abroad" listening to the roar of Niagara scrambling over the blue mountains of Jamaica lolling in the orange groves of the Indies, until, after years of wandering I would fancy myself returning to anxious friends and old companions.

"When the flower was in the bud, and the leaf upon the tree, With the lark to sing me hame to my ain countree." What was the petty pain of a few blows (I never felt the disgrace) to such visions of delight? Nothing. And so I continued a boy inured to stripes, and utterly destitute of all marks or orders of merit the tail of my class the superlative degree of comparison for idleness and inability. No "specimen" of my proficency in the art of chirography was ever exhibited before company in the parlor of my parents; nor "When friends were met, and goblets crown'd," was I ever called upon, like other boys, to exemplify the beauties of the British Poets by my juvenile powers of recitation.

I have traveled much in reality since then, and beheld with the corporeal eye many of the scenes and places that looked so surpassingly fair to my inward vision in former times. I have become "familiar with strange faces," and have made friends and acquaintance in far−off countries. But time and the world have done their usual work with me as with others. I am changed vilely sophisticated; the smoke of cities is upon my soul, and innumerable trivial sensualities have imperceptibly clogged the elastic spring of the spirit within me. To enjoy the company of old mother nature now, I must have "all appliances and means to boot" be easy and comfortable, neither hungry nor athirst, instead of seeking her in every form and mood as of yore. But this is the way, more or less, with us all. As we grow up, we acquire an unconscious preference for art above nature we love the country less and the town more, and shady walks and "hedge rows green" are forsaken for wellpaved streets and public promenades. We muddle our brains with politics and political economy, and form attachments to newspapers and distilled and fermented liquors that it is often difficult to shake off. Oh the lamentable deterioration of human nature! We are the antipodes (to our disadvantage,) of even the despised caterpillar tribe. We do not expand from the grub into the butterfly, but degenerate from the butterfly into the grub. When boys or wingless butterflies, we disport in the free air and sunshine, clad in the hues of health, and as free from care or trouble as the lilies of the field. Every returning day brings animation and enjoyment "Flowers in the valley, splendor in the beam, Health in the gale, and freshness in the stream," until the remorseless usages of the world apprentice us to doctors, tailors, lawyers, merchants, shipwrights, sugar−bakers, &c. to be initiated into their respective mysteries; we grow up to be sallow, bearded men we herd together in cities we monotonously slink day after day from the dull obscurity of our dwellings through dirty lanes and dusky alleys to our strange occupations, and then crawl back again we snarl at and undermine each other we play with unbecoming zeal "much ado about nothing" for a few years we die some day just when we did not want to do so the living clod is resolved into the lifeless one, and we become a dream, a recollection, a dimly−remembered thing, of whom perchance, some singular custom or odd saying is recorded, at intervals, for a brief space of time, and then (to all worldly intents and purposes) we are as if we had never been!

There is, however, to counterbalance the many pleasures and advantages of traveling, one peculiar unpleasant sensation, which nearly all who have journeyed must have felt. It is, in passing away from any place where you have been warmly welcomed and hospitably treated where you have interchanged good offices, and eat and drank and held pleasant communion with kindly pieces of humanity the thought that you pass away for ever that you will see then no more! Their joys or sorrows, their smiles or tears, are thenceforward nothing to you you have no further portion in them you will know them no more! It is, in truth, a most unpleasant feeling; but a man had better suffer from it, than be without it. I do not, however, relish that easily excited, indiscriminating kindness, awakened on every occasion; that unvarying civility that ready−made sympathy so common in this world of ours. I dislike your polite smilers, on first acquaintance; fellows who will shake you by the hand, bow, and smile at meeting; and shake you by the hand, bow, and smile at parting, with equal indifference. Though not altogether to be commended, I rather prefer their opposites the race of unapproachables; persons of cloudy and uninviting aspects, who station themselves in the less frequented parts of steamboats, and odd corners of stage−coaches; who speak when they cannot help it, and with whom a civil sentence seems the prelude to suffocation. When the ice is once broken, when you *do* get acquainted with them, there is often much good fruit under the rough rind; and when the time for separating arrives, they look half sulky, half sorrowful, as they give you their hand as much as to say, "we *might* have been better friends, but your road lies that way and mine this, and so good−by." I would be bail for one of those personages; I would put my hand to a bond for him, (which I look upon to be the extreme test of human confidence,) but for your ever−ready smilers, they have, in general, no more heart than an infantile cabbage all leaves and husk, husk and leaves "let no such men be trusted."

DEBATING SOCIETIES.

"There are many evils in the present state of society, which it is much easier to censure than eradicate."

Modern Moralist.

One of the most pernicious mischiefs of the present times, and one most pregnant with the seeds of individual discomfort and general unhappiness, is the rapid increase of Debating Societies; or, rather, societies for the annoyance of the community night−schools for the education of youth in flippancy and sophistry seminaries for the full developement of the organ of self−sufficiency arenas for the exposure of the weakness of the human intellect, and the depreciation of heaven's creatures in the opinion of all considerate people. These excrescences are springing into existence on every side, and are productive of the most lamentable consequences. When I see (as I have seen) a meek, diffident juvenile of eighteen or nineteen, of the right age to imbibe wholesome, quiet wisdom and nutritious instruction seduced from his darling books, and peaceful solitary chamber, to attend one of those pestiferous places, where, what they call "questions," are regularly discussed; when I see such an one led on, step by step, by a little empty applause, to exchange the modest diffidence that would gladly learn, for the misplaced confidence that would boldly teach, until he becomes, in the course of time, a confirmed, hardened debater, lost to all sense of shame and idea of propriety a perpetual torment to his more immediate relatives and connections, and an unceasing nuisance to all the other members of the great human family with whom he may be brought into juxtaposition, I confess I cannot but feel a strong distaste for those reprehensible nurseries for bad speeches and worse arguments.

Reader! didst thou ever misspend a few hours at a debating society? If so, then hast thou seen "pitiful ambition" in all its infinite varieties, and almost every stage and degree of folly, froth, and fatuity. How didst thou preserve thy serenity? Thou mightst have looked, indeed, with calm, contemplative benevolence on some piece of leadenheaded ignorance, who, after a week's cogitation, gravely and seriously set about building up a reputation by announcing that "virtue was its own and best reward," "vice eventually its own punishment," and other similar originalities; but there is a species of reptile to be met with in those congregations of raw intellects, that is, to me at least, peculiarly and distressingly repulsive. It is generally in the shape of a good−looking, smooth−faced, self−sufficient, young gentleman, the leader, the looked−up−to of the society, one skilled in quibbles, quotations,

and paradoxes; who thinks truth beneath his advocacy, and makes a point of taking what is called the "*difficult* side of the question," in order to show off his surplusage of uncommon qualities, by confuting his humble satellites, who ingloriously content themselves with a homely, obvious view of the matter in dispute. I am not naturally blood−thirsty; but still, when I have seen an unwholesome piece of mortality of this kind get up, all smirk, amiability, politeness, and complacency, to refute, in the most urbane manner, some truism lineally descended from Shem, Ham, or Japhet, or, it may be, antediluvian, I confess I have felt the destructive principle rising within me I have acknowledged my consanguinity to Cain I have but no man is bound to be his own accuser. "Our worser thoughts heaven mend."

Yet there are people who contend that these dens for the dislocation of grammar, for the maltreatment of metaphors, and the ill−usage of all tropes and figures whatsoever, these very debating societies, are not only perfectly innocuous, but positively beneficial; that they sharpen the tongues and faculties of young men; that they accustom them to view matters dispassionately, and examine both sides of a subject; that they keep them, in some degree, from theatres, taverns, billiard−tables, and other immortalities; and that, moreover, they are a sort of preparatory schools, wherein incipient legislators may perfect themselves in declamation, mystification, equivocation, and other indispensable requisites for wordy war in after life. Oh misjudging fathers of families! Is it more pernicious, think you, for your offspring to injure the coats of their stomachs by quaffing tumblers of brandy punch at a tavern, than to sully their immortal minds by nightly draughts of quibbles and sophistry? Is it worse to play a straight hazard at a billard table, than to learn habitually to undervalue truth, treating her like a play−thing a shuttlecock to be bandied to and fro as suits their convenience? Is it worse for them to sit in a theatre and hear the divine poetry of Shakspeare appropriately recited, than to be listening to the dull speculations, or inflated bombast of raw juveniles; or worse than that, perchance, being themselves actively engaged in damaging the English language, their vernacular, their respected maternal or mother tongue? Is the quarrel scene between Brutus and Cassius less to the purpose than a fiery altercation between Master Cicero Timkins and Master Demosthenes Simkins? Answer.

"But are these things so?" exclaims some unsuspecting, kind−hearted father, or some amiable mother, aroused, for the first time, to a sense of the danger of her darling child, who has recently joined one of those associations, and in whom she has latterly remarked, with sorrow of heart, unequivocal symptoms of obtrusiveness in company, and a rapid development of the organs of obstinacy and self−will. Trust me, dear madam, they are, and must of necessity be so. I am not trifling with you. I am no giddy boy, writing for a thimble−full of local notoriety, but am myself a parent (of some six weeks standing); and though of the more obtuse (where feeling is concerned) or masculine gender, know how to enter into a fond mother's fears on such an occasion. Trust me, where one boy is benefited by such societies, hundreds are injured in their intellects, their morals, or their tempers. Where one over−bashful youth is inoculated with a little becoming self−possession, hundreds acquire a degree of audacity, repulsive even in those who have arrived at whiskers, but perfectly shocking in persons of tender years; who, by the yet unstiffened down upon their cheeks and chins, are reasonably expected to be patterns of meekness and acquiescence.

But this is only a portion of the evils produced by such unwholesome hotbeds for the forcing of the intellect. The other natural consequences are overweening pride, inflated notions of self, together with contradictious, acrimonious, disputative habits, which irresistibly prompt the unhappy possessors to injure their friends, neighbors and acquaintance, by committing, as it were, moral assaults upon them; waylaying and deluding them, unawares, into out−of−the−way controversies, knocking them down with arguments or quotations, and then rifling them of their quietude and peace of mind, and otherwise maltreating and abusing them. Is such conduct commendable? Is it decent? My dear madam, if you would not have your son become a piece of unmixed impertinence an unamiability a flatulency an after−dinner annoyance and a tea−table curse, keep him away from debating societies.

After this affecting appeal, I think I see you turn to your first−born, and, with tears in your eyes, exclaim

"Oh, Ralph Nicholas, my love, go no more to *that* place it will not, and it cannot come to good."

Madam, hand this lucubration across the table to him, and conviction will stare him in the face; he will yet be saved; and in the words of some great moralist, "I will not have *written* altogether in vain."

"But to take," as the newspapers say, "a more enlarged and comprehensive view of the subject." These abominations are spreading themselves with awful rapidity over every section of the country. In cities they abound, and are of every degree, from bad to execrable. But worse than this: even in the most (apparently) calm and sequestered villages sanctuaries for retirement and contemplation and solemn thoughts the demon of debate has established a president's chair; and the propounding and discussion of questions are carried on by the rustics with a vigor and pertinacity that argue any thing but well for the peace and quiet of the neighborhood. Really, unless some remedial measures be adopted, habitual disputation may become general, and no man be safe. But what chiefly alarms me, who partly believe in the transmission of peculiar qualities of mind, as well as body, from generation to generation, is, that this disease this moral blotch of wrangling and debating, becomes rooted in the system; that what in our children is only an acquired habit, may, in their children, and their children's children, be a natural propensity! I will be gathered to my fathers long ere that, and therefore, cannot be supposed to be influenced by any personal feeling in speaking thus; but, good heavens! should it become hereditary! Then, indeed, may the peaceable and well−disposed of afteryears those who have escaped the taint be emphatically said to have "fallen on evil days," and then will they exclaim, in the agony of their outraged quiet, "Oh, for a lodge in some vast wilderness! Some boundless contiguity of shade!" But, perhaps, I am mournfully anticipative. Providence grant it may be so. But no means should be left untried to check the evil.

I will apostrophize; perchance it may act as a dissuasive.

Oh, tender, callow youth, of sixteen and upwards, listen! A voice from the olden time, even that of the wisest among men, calleth unto thee "my son, get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding;" and that thou may'st do so, discountenance those talking, turbulent, truculent associations for the effusion of the froth and scum of oratory; eschew hot and bitter disputation seek not for truth amid wrangles, and quibbles, and disingenuous paradoxes consort not with such as deal in them; but hie thee to thy silent chamber and choose thy companions from the immortals, from the demigods of thy "land's language." Look now, in this small room, what a goodly company hast thou assembled around thee. What a congregation of wits, sages, poets, and philosophers; and all willing to be known to thy poor self. Insignificant as thou art, how familiar may'st thou be with Shakspeare, if it so please thee! John Milton will not refuse thy acquaintance. Here is Swift, too, divested of his rudeness; and Pope of his pettishness; and "glorious John;" and Ben Jonson and Sam Johnson, who take no offence whatever at the unceremonious abbreviation of their baptismal cognomens. If you wish to laugh, here are Butler and Smollett, two right pleasant fellows, who will speedily furnish you with an occasion; if you are more attuned unto the "melting mood," here are Gray and Collins similarly disposed; and if you are so unreasonable as to desire to laugh and cry in the same breath, you can be accommodated, for here is Laurence Sterne; and here, too, are witty Farquhar, and wittier Congreve; and kindly−hearted Oliver Goldsmith; and meek, melancholius Cowper; and blithe, honest, ill−used Robie Burns; and I know not how many more true−hearted, sound−headed fellows, "merry and wise," such as the "antique Roman" or the Greek, or all that lived before the days of "good Queen Bess," never had the honor of keeping company with. If you are ambitious of an acquaintance with the leading literary characters of your own times, here are Scott Rogers, Campbell, Moore, &c. ready to waive the ceremony of a formal introduction in your favor.

Are all these advantages these opportunities of "keeping the best of company," to be lightly slighted? Neglect them, and you will walk through the world an idealess biped; cultivate them, and when you go forth amid the mass of mortals, you will see with eyes that they see not with, and hear with ears that they hear not with; and, whether in the crowded city or the solitary plain, the glittering ballroom or the smoky cabin; amid the tumult of society or the silence of nature, you will, at all times, and on all occasions, have it in your power to reap "The harvest of a quiet eye, That broods on its own heart!"

RESPECTABILITY.

Respectability! Mysterious word! indefinite term! phantom! Who will presume to say authoritatively what thou art? What metaphysician or mental chemist will analyze thee, and expound to the world the curious substance or essence of which thou art composed? Where is the lexicographer gifted with powers, subtle and fine as the spider's thread, to define thee accurately, satisfactorily, so that the general voice shall cry aloud, "that *is* the meaning of the word;" and every individual whisper to his neighbor, "that was *my* meaning." As for the explanations of the existing race of dictionaries, they are mere evasions of the question.

About the boldest and most decided opinion concerning this particle of the English language that I am acquainted with, was that given by a witness in a swindling transaction, who, on being asked by the judge his reason for affirming that the defendant was a respectable man, replied, "that he kept a gig." There is something in the unhesitating and undoubting confidence of this answer, that carries weight with it. The witness was well acquainted with the defendant's moral obliquities; he knew that he had long been worthy the attention of the laws of his country; he knew, moreover, that he was only enabled to maintain this two−wheeled vehicle by a constant infringement of the right of *meum* and *tuum*; he knew, in short, that he was rich by good management and unhanged by good luck; but still, there was no getting over the simple fact he kept his gig; and so long as he *did* keep it, nothing could impugn his respectability in the mind of the witness. Yet, before we unthinkingly laugh at this man's tenacious adherence to his *beau ideal* of respectability, let us cautiously examine our own thoughts on the subject. A gig *is* respectable. A curricle may be dashing a phaeton stylish a carriage genteel, lofty, magnificent but a gig is respectable *par excellence*. Yet, of itself, and independent of other circumstances, it does not wholly and safely constitute respectability, and here lies the difficulty. It is not all in all "there's the rub," or the question might be settled. Besides, its condition must be looked to. It may be badly lined, and worse painted; the shafts and wheels may be in ill−condition; it may, in fact, have a disreputable appearance rather than otherwise; it may be second−handed. All these apparently trivial, but in reality essential circumstances, are to be taken into account before we can definitively pronounce upon the respectability of the possessor; and it behoves us to be cautious; for, to a nice mind, ardently engaged in the pursuit of truth, a hair−breadth distinction is found, at times, more obstinately irreconcileable than a more manifest discrepancy.

Respectability! All−pervading power! like light and life, thou art everywhere; or, at the least, wherever civilization is, there art thou to be found, despotically ruling the minds of men of every grade and station, from the doctor to the dustman from the lawyer to the laborer. But of all the devotees, none, I think, worship thee with the fervor the intenseness of shopkeepers and small tradesmen. Thou art their idol their oracle! They consult thee in all they do or say, or in whatever in any shape appertains to them. Thou art ever uppermost in their thoughts, and there is no sacrifice too great for them to make no deprivation too severe for them to endure, rather than to be banished either in reality, or in the opinion of the world, from thy presence. But though this race of people are more peculiarly thine own, millions of others put in their claim of kindred to thee on some trivial pretext or other. Thou hast more distant relations than a Scotchman likely to do well in the world, even though his name be Campbell. And it is curious to mark the different ways in which thy multitudinous kith and kin infer a connection. Some are respectable by descent, some by dress, some by the situation of the dwellings in which they have temporarily located themselves. A man in very low circumstances, if he has no better claim, is consanguineous on the strength of a hat with a brim, or a stocking without a hole " two precious items in a poor man's eye;" the spruce mechanic's dapper coat, or his wife's silk gown, leave no doubt in his own eyes at least, how closely he is allied; the small tradesman's snug house, tiny flower−spot before the door, and neat green railings, distinctly mark him for thine own; while the more aristocratical storekeeper in the wholesale or large retail way, getting above business, successful ship−brokers, cotton−speculators, lottery−office keepers, and other anomalies, forgetful of all thou hast done for them, look above thee, and creep into the back ranks of gentility and fashion, where they remain neither fish nor flesh genteel in their own estimation, simply respectable in that of their neighbors.

Some men neglect their personal appearance, and concentrate their claims to respectability in a brass knocker, a

plate with their name engraved thereon, venetian blinds, or any other pretty additament to their domiciles; others are respectable by virtue of their connexions; others by going to the private boxes at the theatre; others by a pew next the parson at church; others by the people they visit; others by having every thing in season. Yet, difficult as it is for the mind of man to comprehend all these things, and to decide properly and justly, the women, taking advantage of their superior powers of penetration, and delicacy of discrimination, divide and subdivide respectability as easily as quicksilver. They have their "respectable *sort of* people very respectable highly respectable extremely respectable *most* respectable," which makes the thing about as difficult to understand or explain, as political economy or electro−magnetism. Indeed, there are some men, otherwise not deficient in intellect, who never have even a glimmering of light upon the subject. Think of the more than Egyptian darkness of Robert Burns, for instance mark his heterodoxies, "What though on hamely fare we dine, Wear hodden gray and a' that, Gie fools their silk, and knaves their wine, A man's a man for a' that." No, sir, *he* is not a man; he is only a poor devil. Or, grant that he is so by courtesy, what is a man in these times, unless he is respectable according to *some* of the floating laws and regulations on the subject? "Oh, better had he ne'er been born!" for, as the Persian sage justly remarketh "he shall drink of the waters of bitterness all the days of his life, and his bread shall be as ashes in his mouth; his face shall be near unto the earth, and he shall be so small that his friends will look over his head and see him not, even though the day be light and his shadow shall be less than the shadow of a dog, or of a Russian, whom God destroy!"

Respectability is in and over all things. There are respectable substances to eat, and drink, and wear; there are respectable towns and streets and situations for men and houses. There is a shade of respectability in colors. A black coat is more respectable than a brown one a white handkerchief decidedly more so than a red one. Why this is we cannot tell, we only know that it is so.

One of the immutable laws of nature is, that doctors and lawyers shall wear black coats and white handkerchiefs, and perhaps to this, in a large degree, is owing the respectability which is so generally conceded to those bodies. I speak not here of lawyerlings and doctorlings boys with scarcely a tinge of their profession, who are injudiciously abandoned in those matters to their own weak judgments and perverted tastes, and who consequently go abroad in josephean garments "of many colors," but of full−grown responsible men of law and physic. Who would trust a life or a lawsuit of any importance to one of either profession in a pea−green coat, fancy waistcoat, and colored handkerchief? the idea is preposterous. There is more in those black and white habiliments than the unthinking dream of.

A FEW OF THE INCONVENIENCES OF SEEING SHAKSPEARE ACTED.

In the mass of miscellaneous reading that is constantly meeting the eye and passing from the memory, you occasionally meet with a remark or odd saying of an adhesive quality like a burr "it will stick." It is long ago since the following came in my way; so long, indeed, that I have forgotten the precise form of words in which the meaning was couched, but the purport of the sentence was "that Shakspeare lost by representation in the same proportion that others gained by it; that the one was like a spruce apprentice set off by his Sunday clothes the other like Apollo tricked out by a tailor." I dare say the same thought has struck many a man after reading or seeing Shakspeare, and been illustrated by many men in many modes before this time; still, let the reapers and gleaners go ever so carefully over the field, there are always some few stray ears to be picked up by a straggler patches, remnants of the bounteous harvest that has already been gathered in by the first in the field. Nevertheless, that is no good reason why a poor plodder in the stubble should be discouraged. Let him gather together as he best may what others have passed by, and see that it be sound and wholesome neither blighted nor mildewed; let those laugh that have little better to do at his unostentatious handful.

In speaking of the inconveniences of seeing Shakspeare acted, let us pass by, in quiet resignation, the more purely imaginative of his plays his "Tempest," and "Midsummer Night's Dream." These wild and delicate pieces of fancy were never intended for the hard handling and business calculations of stage managers and their underlings.

A summer's day would be all too short to detail the strange wrong, the mutilation, the degradation they suffer on the stage. Their delicious poetry should be for the hours of privacy alone; and even then, a man should not trust himself to read some of the passages in the latter play (or dream) aloud; they are of too fine a texture for the harsh human voice, and should be imbibed and conveyed to the senses by the eye alone. But to hear them in a theatre! To have them remorselessly bellowed forth from the foot−lamps by the lumps of clay who do the scavenger work of the drama, is absolutely terrible! It is worse than assassinating Handel or Mozart with a bagpipe, or playing Hadyn's symphonies on a hurdy−gurdy! And yet, what will not mortals attempt? The most of us have actually heard a stage *Bottom* issue such directions as these to some silly, fat, flobby child in white or green "Monsieur Cobweb; good monsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red−hipped humble bee on the top of a thistle; and good monsieur, bring me the honey−bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and good monsieur, have a care that the honey−bag break not; I would be loth to have you overflown with a honey−bag, signior;" while Moth, Peas−blossom, Mustard−seed, and the other elves who "Creep into acorn cups and hide them there," have been represented by the brothers and sisters of Cobweb, the juvenile produce and property of some industrious matron connected with the establishment. This is as bad as Snout, the joiner, representing the wall. And with all our vaunted improvements in stage decoration, how much worse off was the poor Athenian company for their lion, and wall, and moonshine, than the unfortunate modern scene−painter or property−man, who is called upon by the text to furnish a bank as per order?

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"I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where ox−lips and the nodding violet grows;
Quite over−canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk roses and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania."
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No! there are scenes and materials about the "Tempest" which may, in some slight degree, excuse its introduction on the stage, and atone for the manifold barbarities committed upon it when there; but never let the "Midsummer Night's Dream" that fine film that pure abstraction that delicate fret−work of an ethereal imagination, have a tangible existence.

Let us pass to the common acting plays Macbeth. You are sitting by the fire on a winter's evening, "wrapped" in the perusal of this masterpiece of nature's masterpiece, preparatory to visiting the theatre to see it played. In your mind's eye you perceive the "blasted heath," the scene of Macbeth's temptation, sterile and wild, covered with masses of primeval and "herbless granite," and untenanted save by the lonely plover or shy and solitary moorcock. Beside some rude cairn are clustered the weird sisters, "posters of the sea and land," recounting their exploits, and holding devilish consultation; in the distance is the army of Macbeth. There is a bleak and gloomy grandeur in the picture you have drawn, and you hasten to the theatre to have it realized. Does not your enthusiasm receive a shock? Before you is some old, confined "wood−scene" used on all occasions, with Macbeth and Banquo, the three beldames, and divers illdrilled supernumeraries huddled together in most unseemly proximity; while the hags, "so wither'd and so wild in their attire," are generally represented (for what reason managers only know) by three low comedians, for the most part hearty, plump, oleaginous personages, with whom all sorts of odd, out−of−the−way associations are connected, in patched red and tartan petticoats, and stationed in the full glare of the gas−lamps! True, some of this cannot be remedied; but much of it might, were a tithe part of the money and attention directed towards it that is wasted on some gaud or pantomime; and much that is now vulgar, common−place and ridiculous, might, by the aid of a little liberality and common−sense, be rendered grand and impressive. But the managers think that Shakspeare may be used and abused after any fashion; that he has stamina for any thing; and they think right, though they act wrong. "Scenery, machinery, dresses and decorations," however, *may* be amended, "that's comfort, yet;" but alas! what mental millwright what skilful machinist, will put in order and wind up the talking machines that "do" the subordinate parts about the theatre to the true Shaksperian pitch, and set them a−going for the night! Is the schoolmaster yet abroad ordained to shed a ray of light upon their benighted understandings concerning the meaning of the author, or make them sensible of the simple but important fact, that blank verse is not prose, and ought to be spoken differently? Here it is where our great dramatic poet principally suffers. The exuberant genius of Shakspeare could not stoop to petty

calculations. It never entered into his thoughts what unimaginative pieces of mortality would, in after times, give utterance to the glorious poetry that is scattered indiscriminately over his pages. Small occasion had he to play the niggard, and carefully apportion out his sweet fancies and rare conceits to those who would be likely to give the most effect in the representation; and hence it is that the "Goodmen Dulls" of the theatre the honest plodding gentlemen with small salaries and corresponding capacities, who, in other authors, have language admirably adapted to their modes of thinking and expression put into their mouths, have frequently, when doing their work in subordinate characters in Shakspeare, to utter passages redolent with beauty, which they do in a way that very satisfactorily shows these "imperfect speakers" have little occasion to thank the gods for having made them "poetical."

Of all Shakspeare's characters there are not any so systematically ill−used as these same witches in Macbeth. It has been thought by many who know something of the matter, that there are a wildness and sublimity in the character and attributes of those malignant hags, that are perfectly inapproachable by any one below Shakspeare's calibre. And, be it noted, they are not only of wondrous import of themselves, but the mainspring of all the principal events in the great drama to which they belong. The talent and intellect of the greatest ornaments the stage has produced, would not be misapplied in *endeavoring* to give an adequate idea of these strange and fantastical creations. Yet what are they at present? Three old women, absolute objects of mockery and laughter to the audience. Nay, this seems, in some degree, to be now their legitimate purpose; for it is not unfrequently the case, that when the spectators are more decorous than usual, some of the witches, by a grotesque action or ridiculous intonation, appeal to them for the customary tribute a hearty laugh! But it is not always the actors who are in fault. There is one thing which has always especially moved my admiration. It is the marvellous small provocative to laughter which people require when congregated together in large bodies, and when it is quite clear they should do any earthly thing rather than laugh. Here, for instance, where the most solemn attention and breathless anxiety should pervade the house

First Witch.

Look what I have!

Second Witch.

Show me! show me!

Third Witch.

Here I have a pilot's thumb Wreck'd as he did homeward come.

Second Witch.

A drum! a drum! Macbeth doth come

Upon this hint, if it be a favorite actor that is expected, a universal uproar or *row* commences, which lasts until Macbeth comes swaggering and bowing down the stage. If it be not any great or novel favorite that personates the hero, the scene proceeds in the following lively manner:

Third Witch.

The weird sisters, hand in hand, Posters of the sea and land, Thus do go about, about, Thrice to thine.

Here the first witch, as a part of the incantation, bows or nods her head thrice, and a general smile instantly suffuses the faces of a majority of those present, in boxes, pit, and gallery, which indisputably proves that nodding

the head thrice is essentially and exquisitely comic. The second witch continues "and thrice to thine," suiting the action to the word, upon which a general titter ensues. But when the third witch, in obedience to the line, "and thrice again to make up nine," nods thrice more, the great merriment of the audience can no longer be contained, and "Peace! the charm's wound up," is uttered amid a roar of laughter. "By day and night, but this is wondrous strange." Certes, it would be a merry treat for Voltaire, the blasphemer of Shakspeare, to see many parts of Macbeth acted.

On the stage, in the garbled selection designated Richard III. how much do we miss, or rather, what a one−sided view is presented to us of the hero. There is no relief in the character, it is scarcely Shaksperian, for it is unmixed evil. All the darker shades are deepened, and brought prominently forward: and the lighter and more agreeable tints sedulously excluded from the picture. We have the "hunchback," the "bottled spider," the subtle tyrant, the hypocrite, and the murderer, at full length; but we miss the lively animated Richard, the blunt, quick−witted soldier, the accomplished courtier, the "princely Gloster," such as he is to be found in Shakspeare. We miss all his bitter, though pleasant and not altogether unmerited gibes and jeers at King Edward, his wife, and her relations "We speak no treason, man; we say, the king Is wise and virtuous; and his noble queen Well struck in years; fair, and not jealous: We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot, A cherry lip, A bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue; And the queen's kindred are made gentlefolks: How say you, sir; can you deny all this?" and twenty other similar passages, and we lose that respect for him which, maugre his bad qualities, his energy, his fiery courage, his constancy, generalship, and intellectual superiority to those around him, extort from us through the three parts of Henry the Sixth. During the long and bloody wars of the roses, he is almost the only prominent character who is not at the same time as weak as wicked.

But of all the acting plays, King Lear undoubtedly suffers most. Sins of omission and commission are here too numerous to be pointed out. There is a radical unfitness too, in the exposure of the infirmity and imbecility of the aged monarch through five long acts, that it is scarcely possible for genius, even of the highest order, to overcome. The pity produced by an exhibition of physical decay for any lengthened period, is nearly allied to contempt; and contempt is by no means the feeling with which either the mental or bodily weakness of Lear ought to be regarded. In the closet, we think of him with natural reverence, as "a poor, despised, weak, and infirm old man," "fourscore and upwards;" on the stage, the repulsive infirmities attendant on this condition, shaking, coughing, tottering; or worse than that, the awkward imitations of them by the actor, who is constantly obtruding them on us to show his knowledge of and attention to, the part, repel our sympathies. Besides, the madness of Lear is too subtle and refined, almost too sacred, for the stage. The superhuman touches of pathos and passion are too exquisitely fine and delicate for the atmosphere of a theatre. We get too deeply interested to endure the thought that it is but counterfeit "well−painted passion" we are looking on; and, in the excited state of our feelings, applause becomes impertinence, and the other noises of a playhouse loathsome. Whenever other writers for the stage have failed, it has been from lack of means from an inability to conceive or express what the passion or situation required; but Shakspeare has done more than succeed; in the exercise of his immortal powers, he has at times risen to a pitch that has rendered it impossible for mortals of more limited faculties, even in their happiest moments of inspiration, to give other than a poor and imperfect illustration of his meaning. Of all his characters, this is most conspicuous in Lear. In these latter days, no man, save Kean, has succeeded in giving even a faint idea of the craz'd monarch; all other attempts have been little better than pitiable. I do not say this dictatorially. There are many, I doubt not, better qualified to judge than myself, who think differently. I quarrel with no man's opinion, but claim the right of expressing and retaining my own. Those who are much in the habit of attending the theatre, get inured to dramatic butchery of all sorts, and can sit and see, even with a smile on their countenance, Othello, Richard, Hamlet, Macbeth, and other of their acquaintance, "savagely slaughtered;" but even the most seared and case−hardened play−goer must feel that an ill−judged attempt in Lear is little better than profanation.

I am by no means contending that Lear should never be played, but have only been endeavoring to point out some of the difficulties and disadvantages attendant thereon: yet I had almost forgotten the principal drawback. On the stage, the *Fool*, (so called) the best and wisest, if not the wittiest, of Shakspeare's fools, is altogether omitted. All his pithy sayings his scraps of doggerel, with a deep meaning in them his shrewd commentaries on the folly of

the king, and the ingratitude of his daughters all gone "at one fell swoop." We miss him sadly, for he is not only the most sensible, but best hearted of fools; and there is something peculiarly touching in his unflinching adherence to the fortunes of his master, at the same time that he has judgment to see his interest lies the other way, and shrewdness to give such keen and bitter counsel as this for the desertion of fallen greatness "Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again. I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it." He seems too, to have a quicker insight than any around as to "how the world wags;" for when Kent asks, "How chance the king comes with so small a train?" he chides his dullness of perception by answering, "An thou hadst been put in the stocks for asking that question, thou hadst well deserved it." In the last extremity, when the poor monarch is "unhousel'd, " and exposed to all the fury of the elements, we still hear of poor Motley

Kent.

But who is with him?

Gent.

None but the Fool; who labors to outjest His heartfelt injuries.

What a picture is presented to the imagination by these few words "none but the fool" of fallen greatness on the one hand, and unswerving fidelity on the other. It is gratifying to know that this affection is at least reciprocated; for Lear, even after his "wits begin to turn," exclaims "Poor fool and knave! I have one part in my heart That's sorry yet for thee!"

But we might pursue this subject to "the crack of doom;" or at least, to speak more prosaically and sensibly, we might continue it to a most tiresome and unreasonable length. The gist of what we have been endeavoring to show, is, not that Shakspeare should be played less, but that he should be read more; to point out to those who are contented to become acquainted with him for the most part through the medium of the stage, how much they lose by such a procedure; and to prove that some of his plays, from their high and peculiar nature, are fitted for the closet alone; and to expose a few of the drawbacks upon the pleasure of seeing him acted, occasioned by the carelessness or incapability of those who have the charge of dramatic entertainments.

MONEY.

Alas! what a thing is Poverty Among the fallen on evil days: 'Tis crime, and fear, and infamy, And houseless want; in frozen ways Wandering ungarmented; and pain, And worse than all, that inward stain, Foul self−contempt, which drowns in sneers Youth's starlight smile, and makes its tears First like hot gall, then dry for ever!

"Riches are not happiness," say many old prosers generally "well−to−do" in the world granted; neither is Poverty directly and absolutely misery; but if she be not, she is near akin she is "mother of miseries," and has, in truth, as swarming and illfavored a progeny, of all shapes and sizes, as can well be conceived, from full−grown evils down to small, petty nuisances. As it often happens, the junior portion of her offspring are the worst to be endured. They have not the deadly stings and matured malignancy of the elder evils, but are more fretful, teazing, irritating, and annoying; and are that set of imps that are perpetually pestering men in middling circumstances, or rather, on the borders or confines thereof, but whom an increasing deficiency of, and an increasing necessity for, the circulating medium, is gradually dragging down to that class of "despisable vagabonds," as Cooper's housekeeper calls them the poor. Be not afraid, ye men of millions, am not about to make any drafts upon your sympathy, I am not about to attempt to draw, *a−la−Banim*, any fearful, loathsome, haggard picture of poverty and its effects. Such

pictures do little good, and much harm. They have the tendency to sere and render callous the feelings rather than excite pity, or open the well−springs of divine charity. Besides, the superlative is not my line; the positive or comparative is quite high or low enough for one who neither deals in celestial bliss nor ineffable woe, but am content to peddle in the small ware of mere human troubles and inconveniences.

To want money is to want "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends;" it is to want respect and sympathy, and the ordinary courtesies of society, besides, occasionally, victuals. The possession or non−possession of it makes the difference whether life has to be an enjoyment or a task; whether it has to be a walk over a smooth, verdant lawn, amid fragrant flowers, and aromatic shrubs, and all things that minister pleasure to the senses; or a wearisome up−hill journey through thorns and briars, and other disgracious impediments. It makes the difference whether you have to go bounding exultingly along like the free, full−blooded courser, or wend your way wearily and slow like the laden and despised pack−horse.

To want money, in a high state of civilization, is to be a kind of slave; it is, at least, to be dependent on the whims and caprices of others, instead of indulging in all the pleasant eccentricities or originalities to which your temperament may prompt you; it is to have to rise soon when you wish to lie late, and go to bed early in order to be enabled so to do; it is to have to eat indiscriminate provender, instead of making a judicious selection from the "delicious juices of meats and fishes;" it is to have to live in unwholesome and anti−respectable neighborhoods, and mix in daily communion with people whose ways are not your ways; it is to be a drudge, a hack, a machine, worked for the profit and advantage of others until the springs are broken; it is to be omitted in family celebrations, and roam about invitationless at Christmas; it is to have to put up with equivocal nods and recognitions in the streets to have your friends look into print−shop windows as you approach, and suddenly bring their admiration of the engraver's skill to a period as soon as you have passed by; it is to feel all delicate sensibilities, all free generous feelings, all ardent and aspiring thoughts checked and crushed within you by a petty but overbearing necessity; it is to have to suffer at once the greatest misfortunes and the most contemptible vexations; to have family affections and social friendships uprooted and destroyed, and to be obliged to be uncomfortably careful of coats, hats, and other habiliments. It is to live "a man forbid;" or it is to become an exile from your native land an outcast, a wanderer in foreign and unhealthy climes, hunting for the yellow indispensable, until you are of the color of the metal you are in quest of; until the temper becomes soured, the feelings deadened, the heart indurated, and the liver in an improper state. How beautifully has Leyden portrayed his own fate and feelings, and those of thousands of others, in that pure gem of poetry, the "Address to an Indian Gold Coin" "For thee for thee, vile yellow slave! I left a heart that lov'd me true; I cross'd the tedious ocean wave, To roam in climes unkind and new; The cold wind of the stranger blew Chill on my wither'd heart the grave, Dark and untimely, met my view And all for thee! vile yellow slave!" To lack money is to lack a passport or admission ticket into the pleasant places of God's earth to much that is glorious and wonderful in nature, and nearly all that is rare, and curious, and enchanting, in art; or if you do travel about in a small way, it is to have that most miserable, rascally, intrusive, and disagreeable of all traveling companions economy, yoked to you; to be under a continual restraint from his presence; to feel unable to give your mind cheerfully and freely up to the scene before you; and in the contemplation of a magnicent view, or a piece of hoar antiquity, to have the wretch whisper in your ear the probable cost of your pleasurable sensations; it is to have a continual contest carried on in your sensorium between pleasure and prudence; it is to submit to small inconveniences and petty insults at inns for the accommodation of travelers, where, above all places on earth, the men of money shine out with the most resplendent glory, and the unmonied become the most truly insignificant; it is, in fact, to have all your enjoyments diminished and annoyances aggravated; to have pleasure almost transmuted into pain, or at least, to have "such shadow of vexation" thrown over it as materially to change its complexion; and when all is over journey done and expenses paid it is to feel a sort of mean remorse as you reckon up your past expenditure, and ponder over the most probable remedial ways and means for the future.

The two things most difficult of discovery, next to the passage round the north pole, are talent in a poor man and dullness in a rich one; therefore, to want money, is to want wit, humor, eloquence, in fact capacity of every kind, or, at the best, if they be not altogether denied, to have such a duty levied upon them such an oppressive

drawback that the rich man with inferior wares, is able to beat the poor one whenever they come into competition. For instance, the most casual observer of men and manners must have noticed that in company a joke from a man of 5000*l*. per annum, elicits more admiration, and produces infinitely more hilarity and good humor, than ten equally good from a man worth 500*l*. Oh! it is perfectly wonderful the raciness and point that an abundance of temporalities impart to a rather dull saying. Besides, a jest from a man in the receipt of a contemptible income, by some strange fatality invariably changes its nature, and becomes little better than sheer impertinence. It is that sort of thing which grave gentlemen and prudent matrons designate by the word "unbecoming." Now all this, though visible to the meanest capacity, might puzzle a philosopher; he would be as unable to comprehend it as he would the curious sympathy which evidently exists between sterling wit and superfine cloth, that mutually assist and set off each other. Many a quaint conceit and rare piece of pleasantry has altogether lost its effect and fallen pointless in consequence of the speaker's garments not being of that texture, or possessed of that freshness which is altogether desirable. The moral, good reader, to be deduced from all this is that you be not petulant and acrimonious because these things are so, but that, if endowed with a "money−making disposition," you assiduously cultivate it, and then you will not need care whether these things are so or not.

The want of money too, I am inclined to think, produces physical changes which have not as yet been sufficiently noticed by the faculty. It causes a gradual and considerable accumulation of bile, which lies lurking in the system, until the incivilities of friends, or the importunities of creditors, cause it to become completely vitiated or inspissated; after which a man, especially one predisposed to melancholy and contemplation, looks at every thing on earth through a pair of yellow spectacles. The unhappy patient becomes saturated, body and mind, with jaundice; he shuns the society of his fellow men, buttons his coat up to his chin, pulls his hat over his eyes, deposits his hands in the pockets of his small−clothes, and takes extraordinary long walks into the country. But even the fair face of nature becomes changed; the barrenness of his pockets throws a corresponding sterility over the landscape, deducting "the glory from the grass and splendor from the flower." The blossoming of the earth is no longer pleasant to his sight, or the music of the merry warblers of the woods delightful to his ear. His "heart is out of joint," and all nature seems to be filled with unpleasing comparisons between his own state and hers. He stalks about with lowering brow and upturned lip, an unpleasant discord amid the universal harmony and fitness of things. At this juncture, let intelligence arrive of a heavy legacy left him by some appropriately defunct distant relative and lo! the change! It is as a dark cloud passing from the sun. Monsieur Il Penseroso becomes L'Allegro in a twinkling. He draws his hand from the extensive vacuum in which they have been dangling, takes the yellow spectacles from his eyes, raises the hat from his brow, unbuttons his coat, and turns, with a feeling of leisurely enjoyment, to welcome the fresh spring breeze. The song of birds and the odour of flowers are again grateful to his senses. The rivulet tinkles once more pleasantly in his ear, and the cheerful song of the lark finds a corresponding echo in his own bosom. He indulges no longer in speculations on the vanity and insufficiency of things, but hies homeward cheerful, free, enfranchised, independent. He orders an approved cookery book, lies a bed and studies it, and marvels, in a short time, how melancholy ever gained a footing in this mighty pleasant world. Oh money, money! marvellous indeed are the changes thou canst produce. Would that I were a bank director!

AN HUMBLE ADDRESS TO THE MARRIAGEABLE LADIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

Note. The following paper was suggested by seeing it repeatedly stated in American papers, that Societies had been formed in different parts of the Union, wherein young ladies pledged themselves to discourage the addresses of all young men who were known to have used spirituous liquors; some excluded wine, and I think if they were right in the one case they were right in the other; for whether a man absorbs wine or spirits in sufficient quantities to produce intoxication, is very immaterial. But, indeed, as all wines contain an admixture of spirit (more or less), they come under both the letter and spirit of the prohibition.

"2dly. *Resolved*, That from this time forward we will not encourage or admit the addresses of any gentleman who shall be known to be in any way concerned in the consumption of ardent spirits, (except as a medicine.") *American Paper*.

Amiable young ladies! Is this thing so? Has the decree indeed irrevocably gone forth, that throughout the United States bachelor and brandydrinker shall henceforth become synonymous terms; that the cup of wedded bliss shall never be quaffed by him who quaffs of any other cup (tea and coffee excepted) that an eternal line of separation shall be drawn between those ancient friends, Hymen and Bacchus and that the nursery and the cellar shall never more be found conjoined under the same roof? What nest of malevolent spinsters, cut off themselves from all maternal hopes; or what congregation of thin, dyspeptic, water−drinking youths has persuaded you to the adoption of this suicidal course, destructive alike of your own comfort and happiness, and the comfort and happiness of numerous worthy, hearty fellows, I am lost in conjecture. Can the holders of shares in the Manhattan and other water companies have any concern in the getting up and promulgation of this unnatural resolution this "sharp, biting statute?" But let who will be concerned, I will never believe that such a resolution will or can become universal, or ever attain to the firm texture of the laws of the Medes and Persians, which alter not. What! have all the bright eyes, blooming cheeks, and warm hearts of the damosels of the western continent, to be in future monopolized by cold, watery, fish−blooded young men, incapable of a glass or two, or occasionally upwards; and has all hilarity, good fellowship, decent conviviality, with their concomitants, toasts, songs, and sentiments, to be prohibited under penalty of being the sole occupant of a four−post or other bedstead? My dears, you could never have given the thing a thought when you vowed yourselves members of such a cruel and barbarous association. You have been led away by morbid and exaggerated descriptions of bloated intemperance, and the madness of intoxication of neglect and poverty and misery of sitting sorrowfully by the lonely fire, listening to the dull ticking of the clock, until some brute, whom you have dignified by the name of husband, reels homeward from his nightly debauch; and these horrid fancies have haunted your imaginations until you have come to the conclusion that there is a much more intimate connexion between virtue and cold water than really exists. Trust me, a man may drink seven tumblers *per diem* of the pure fluid, and be no saint; and another may take his social glass, enjoy his bottle and his friend, and on high festivals get merry, mellow, comfortable, elevated, sublimated, or whatever the word is, without at all forfeiting his general claims to sobriety, or trespassing upon the duties of a husband or a father. And here is the radical defect of temperance or abstinence societies generally; the line of demarcation is too strongly drawn there is no neutral ground. It is "touch not, taste not," or else a very undeserved opprobrium (especially in small villages), is attached to him who either touches or tastes, thus rendering him careless and reckless from a sense of the severity and injustice of the stigma attached to perhaps no very censurable degree of self indulgence. According to the homely proverb, "a man may as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb;" and he that gets no credit for moderation, is very apt to plunge into excess.

But you, gentle ladies, have improved upon this unjustifiable severity. What are the fulminations of any body of he−creatures to your terrible Malthusian determination your fearful resolution to put a stop either to the consumption of ardent spirits, or to any increase in the census? The legislature ought to look to it: the only comfort is, that reasonable doubts may be entertained of the practicability of your scheme; for it scarcely "stands within the prospect of belief" that hearts will be torn asunder and deep−rooted affections dissevered upon the discovery of the swain's having incautiously taken off a tumbler of brandy and water! It is barely possible that you will have the firmness of nerve to really discard him for evermore for such a transgression, giving him mournful occasion to exclaim with the poet "Alas! how slight a cause may move Dissension between hearts that love! A something light as air a look, A word unkind or wrongly taken Oh! love that tempests never shook A *glass of brandy−punch* has shaken! Bethink you, too, what a glorious inquisitorial system you will establish for the amusement of maiden aunts and bosom friends, who will be for ever on the alert to crush your schemes of happiness in the bud by instituting unceasing and unrelenting inquiries for the purpose of establishing the important fact of your beloved having swallowed improper compounds. And what a truly original foundation you will lay for the exercise of the talents of the future native novelist, who, in copying real life, will doubtless frequently have to detail such scenes as the following:

"Henry unexpectedly entered the room, and to his utter surprise and dismay found Laura literally steeped in tears. Her eyes, which were red with weeping, formed a curious contrast to the ashy paleness of her cheeks; and, although it was long past the hour of dinner, she had yet her morning gown on, her hair was still in paper, and every thing about her spoke of sorrow and desolation and utter disregard of personal appearances.

"Henry approached, and by a regular series of tender solicitations and delicate assiduities, sought to win from her the cause of her distress. But vain and fruitless were his manifold endeavors. For a quarter of an hour she spoke not listened not, to him whose every word had heretofore been a charm a spell to hang and dwell upon. At length her grief found vent in an audible torrent of exclamations and interrogatories

" `And can you, Henry you who are the sole author of my misery, pretend ignorance? you, who have blighted all my young hopes of happiness; you, who have betrayed my trusting affection you who have '

" `Me!' exclaimed the now really alarmed youth, `what the deuce have I done?'

" `And do you ask? you who have created an insuperable barrier to our union, you who have placed a chasm between us that can never be overleapt a bar that can never be taken down a '

" `Good heavens! what *have* I done?'

" `You have,' sobbed the agitated girl, almost choked with contending emotions, `you have drunk a gin−sling!'

" `I know it; and what of that?'

" `Unthinking, cruel man! by so doing you have wrecked my peace of mind for ever, and lost yourself the most affectionate and devoted of wives. Did I not tell you answer me Saturday fortnight, that I had become a member of the Auxiliary Branch Anti−marrying−young−men−who−drink−ardent−spirits Society that I have vowed,' " &c.

Then what a climax will the reconciliation scene be

" `And you solemnly promise that you will never hereafter drink a mint julep?

" `Never!'

" `Or brandy−punch?'

" `Never!'

" `Or whiskey−toddy?'

" `Never, never!'

" `Or a gin−sling?'

" `Oh! never!'

" `I am satisfied! We may yet be happy!' "

And seriously, my dears, do you expect that any rational, sensible, spirited man any man in fact worth having, is going to submit to have his judgment impugned, and his discretion and self−command rated so low, as to be

required to bind himself by oaths and vows to refrain from what he does not consider wrong? But I submit it to your candor and good sense, whether the moderate and occasional use of stimulating liquors is so dangerous and pernicious as it is the fashion to think, or affect to think, they are. I include wine, of course; for the non−prohibition of wine by temperance societies is one of their most objectionable features; it is a partial and one−sided exemption to gain the countenance of the wealthy and influential. The rich man seeks the stimulus within his reach the poor man does no more; the aim and end of both is excitement, and the difference in the means and effect is so trivial in taking a general view of the subject, that it is scarcely worthy consideration. But if the rules and regulations of such societies lean favorably towards the rich and affluent, there are higher and more impartial authorities which do not. "It is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those who be of heavy hearts." I do not here wish to cast the slightest imputation of hypocrisy, or impute unworthy motives to the friends and organizers of temperance societies. I believe many of them to be just and good men, ardently desirous of promoting the happiness of their fellow−creatures; but I do think that they in many cases mistake the means, and in all attempt too much. At the same time, doubtless, there are many amongst them, who, from a natural distaste, for wine or spirits, or from possessing a weak or debilitated constitution, which imperatively forbids their indulging therein, make a virtue of necessity, and take credit to themselves for an enforced forbearance. And it is a curious feature in human nature, that those very persons are generally more intolerant than those who really make a sacrifice by abstaining from what they relish. But so it is.

Leaving, however, these matters to be debated by others, let us, ladies, take a quiet, reasonable, worldly, common−sense view of the question. We will all, I dare say, agree that there is not under the sun a more degraded creature than a drunkard a sot a sponge that absorbs indiscriminately all quantities and qualities of liquors that come in his way; a fellow like a desert sand, "that drinks, and drinks, and still is dry" a bond−slave to a pot and glass. Neither will we disagree in our estimation of another very common and unamiable species of animal, to wit the noisy, coarse young man who is continually hanging about taverns drinking juleps, smoking cigars, canvassing the merits of plays and players, or wrangling and disputing about southern nullification a mixture of ruffianism and puppyism; the sort of person who is continually *enjoying* himself by getting into what he calls "famous sprees" or "duced good larks," which means committing gratuitous impertinences and getting well kicked, beaten, and put into the watchhouse therefor; liquor only calls forth and fully developes the natural rankness of the thoughts and feelings of such a creature; and the sooner it kills him the pleasanter for society. But thee is another class more worthy of your attention, who have not altogether foresworn the use of stimulants. Men who from keeping generally sober, are the more keenly alive to a little pleasurable elevation on particular occasions, their faculties and capacities for enjoyment being fresh and unworn neither starved by total abstinence nor blunted and cloyed by habitual indulgence. In this class are to be found some of the choicest specimens of humanity; the wit, the poet, and the philosopher, the unobtrusive student and the gay lively man of the world. Such persons seldom or never become drunkards they have too much good taste; and is it not uncharitable in you, or any one else, to attempt to affix a stigma on them because they sometimes, on festive occasions, seek relief from the wearisome monotony of the world in a bumper? I take it for granted that nearly all men like excitement, and women too. True there are some schemes of quiet and rational happiness which omit this article entirely; but then they are generally so *very* quiet and rational, that people are apt to fall asleep in the enjoyment of them. Your sensibilities, ladies, are quicker and finer than ours, and the desired sensation is more easily obtained; for instance, company, a cup of delicate green tea, and a modicum of harmless scandal, cause your eyes to sparkle, adorn your cheeks with smiles and dimples, set your tongues a−going, and induce precisely that state of body and mind which gentlemen experience after a glass or so. Suppose, in the midst of your sipping and chatting, the warm, comfortable tea−urn was to be removed, and a pitcher of cold water substituted in its place! "Will you take another cup?" Ah! how your teeth chatter at the mere thoughts of such a thing, and what a piece of wanton barbarity you consider the exchange. Well, ladies, suppose a few decent, inoffensive gentlemen seated round a table, each with a glass of sparkling wine, or, why mince the matter, whiskey−punch before him. The good liquor begins to do its office; the "flow of reason and the feast of soul" commence; the jest, the song, the anecdote go round the petty carking cares of business are forgotten, and the tangible evils of life gradually fade away into thin, unsubstantial vapors. Their glasses are out fill them again. Suppose at this stage of the business

some spare, dissatisfied man conveyed away unobserved the pleasing liquids which they had been drinking, replenishing at the same time every glass with the choicest spring water. "Gentlemen," says he, "I will give you a toast Temperance Societies, and success to their endeavors." What is the result? Why several worthy gentlemen that were about to be very happy, become suddenly uncomfortable, go home in a bad humor, and quarrel with their wives about small domestic grievances. How much is virtue into pocket by this?

At public dinners (such an one as was given some time since to our gifted townsman, Washington Irving,) would you excommunicate wine and spirits? Would you have all generous toasts and sentiments washed down with cold water? What an agreeable fervor would pervade the company! At patriotic celebrations, too, think, oh think, of the "immortal memory of George Washington" in pure spring, or the "American fair," in a bumper of the best rock, Manhattan, or other waters of local notoriety! Is such a scheme feasible; and, if it were, is it desirable? Have the lords of the creation to follow the example of the cattle of the fields and other inferior animals? Then why was a discriminating palate given to man? Water is highly commendable and agreeable in many respects. It is useful in poetry, and poetical in reality. In a landscape, for instance, what life and animation does it impart to the prospect; how sweetly it gurgles and tinkles in a rivulet; and into what a resplendent blaze of beauty it heightens a fine sunset! But when presented to the eye on a small scale, that is, in a tumbler it becomes insignificant and contemptible, and altogether unworthy the notice of any person pretending to rationality. Oh ladies, ladies, rescind your resolutions; but at the same time beware beware of men that drink alone, and of those who drink standing at the bars of taverns; such persons drink for the gross love of liquor; beware of gluttons, sots and habitual tipplers; but also beware of unadulterated water−drinkers.

BULWER AND WALTER SCOTT.

This is the age of discoveries of wonderful and astounding discoveries. A spirit of fermentation and free inquiry has got abroad, and put that restless little animal man into a state of preternatural disquietude, insomuch that he has adopted for the sober rule of his conduct Shakspeare's hibernicism, "We will strive with impossibilities, Yea, get the better of them!" and he lightly projects schemes and broaches doctrines that would have made the hair stand on end upon the heads of his respectable ancestors. The world never saw such times. Science and quackery have become so intermixed, that worthy though obtuse people are puzzled to discover the difference, and hence spring those two large parties the innovators and the anti−innovators that keep society fermenting like a barrel of ale at midsummer. In the eyes of the former, nothing is good but what is new; they are for turning the poor old world topsy−turvy, for shaking religion, poetry, law, learning and common sense out of it, and governing it hereafter by steam, mathematics, and a sublime code of morals calculated for use when the era of human perfectibility commences. The anti−innovation faction are ridiculous in another way: they are good fat sort of people, full of beef, beer, and prejudice, who are continually "perplexed with fear of change;" who think that time and custom sanctify all things, and that whatever has been, ought to be. Their ranks are headed by grave, solemn old owls, who shut their eyes to the light in a very owlish manner, while the recruits of the other are, for the most part, pert, prating jackdaws, dressed out in the borrowed robes of philosophy and philanthropy, and their cackle is worse than the croak of their opponents, inasmuch as it is more intrusive and presuming, the one being active ignorance, the other only passive. Thank heaven, a third party with knowledge of their own, unite the zeal of one faction with the caution of the other.

Such being the state of things, the number of sublime and ridiculous discoveries daily made in physics, metaphysics, law, government, and literature, are scarcely to be wondered at. But the most notable discovery of modern times is, undoubtedly, the one recently made, that Edward Lytton Bulwer is a writer equal to Sir Walter Scott! The author of Pelham, Devereux, and the Disowned, equal to the author of Waverley! And this is in strict accordance with the spirit of the age, which is characterized by nothing so much as mutability and love of change. The Athenians grew tired of always hearing Aristides called "the just," and a section of the literary world are tired of hearing Sir Walter styled "the great," and have therefore set up this opposition idol, whose claims, they say, have been weighed in the balance and not found wanting. It has long been the fashion to estimate men of genius

after the manner of "Plutarch's Lives," by their comparative rather than their positive merits, and some singular, and it is now confessed, outrageous comparisons, have been instituted. By many of the writers of his own time Shakspeare was adjudged to be *inferior* to Ben Jonson; but with this solitary exception, the hardihood of the preceding assertion has perhaps never been equalled. To be sure, for some time past, Sir Walter Scott, like the Bay of Naples, has been a standard for small comparisons; and the several admirers of all the second and third−rate novelists have been endeavoring to exalt their particular favorites by insinuating that "the northern magician would have to look well to his laurels," or that "the great unknown must be content to bear a rival near his throne," and such half−way phrases; but this is the first time a direct claim of *equality* has been put in nay, some have asserted Mr. Bulwer's superiority, but that appeared to be carrying the joke a little too far. These valuable and extraordinary critics have for the most part been content to make known their opinions to the public, without stating the grounds and causes on which they are based. Like persons who have resolved on committing a rash action, they at once bolt forth their assertion of equality, and then, as if aghast at their own temerity, dare not approach the question a second time, coolly to give their reasons for what they have advanced.

The admirers of the author of Waverley may quietly and calmly invite comparison, and they can afford to do it in a spirit of the utmost candor and liberality, for there is little occasion to exalt their favorite (if that were possible) by the depreciation of any writer whatever. Render unto Mr. Bulwer all that can reasonably be claimed for him, (and he has proved that he has many noble qualifications for an author,) yet what does that all amount to in comparison with the merits of Scott? Mr. Bulwer is a man of talent if not of genius, a fine thinker and a ripe scholar; his mind is rich in classical lore and philosophic reflection; his style is polished and nervous, impassioned and harmonious, and he has produced three works of great and varied merit, Pelham, the Disowned, and Devereux; but is this to put him at once on an equality with the man who has conceived and executed those glorious and imperishable series of works known by the name of the "Waverley novels" a world within themselves, teeming with living, breathing characters, stamped with nature's impress abounding in descriptions as vivid and magnificent as ever poet fancied or painter drew, and filled with humor and pathos that flow from a source as prodigal and inexhaustible as the widow's cruise; a "new edition of human nature," as it were, in its most picturesque forms? To place him on a level with one who has done more for literature, both in quantity and quality, with the single exception of Shakspeare, than any man since Noah left the ark? As Othello says, "'tis monstrous!"

But to come to particulars. Much has been said of the qualifications Mr. Bulwer possesses, though but scant mention has been made of those in which he is deficient. His first great point of inferiority to Sir Walter is lack of dramatic power he is a descriptive, the other a dramatic portrayer of men and manners. Sir Walter introduces his personages in some gipsy encampment, old change−house, or ancient hostelry, hits off their costume and personal appearance, and then leaves them to make their acquaintance with the reader in their own way. Mr. Bulwer describes his characters their actions and their motives for those actions, at full length, before he allows them to open their lips, fearful, it would seem, that their identity might be mistaken, like the painter who wrote under his productions the necessary and significant information, "this is a horse" and "this is an ass." Hence it is, that one *creates* characters, while the other merely *describes* them. In the hands of the one they become instinct with life and animation; with the other they are but pictures, which owe their value to the skill and coloring of the artist. After perusing Bulwer, who remembers and quotes the language of his characters as they do those of Meg Merrilies, Dirk Hatterick, Rob Roy, Helen Macgregor, Effie Deans, or any of the thousand creations that "live and move and have their being" in the pages of the Scotch novelist? The studied denunciations of a Sir Reginald Glanville, though invested with all the power and energy of the writer, will, somehow or other, slip from our minds; but who ever forgets the threats of old Meg Merrilies to Godfrey Bertram, or the homely yet wild and picturesque language in which they are clad? The one does without effort what the other with all his efforts cannot do; the sayings and doings of Mr. Bulwer's personages wax vague and indistinct almost as soon as the volume is closed, while those of Scott are stamped upon our memory, and pass not away.

In the pathetic, though strenuous exertions are made, the powers of Mr. Bulwer are evidently limited, at least in comparison. He writes page after page of description, filled with dashes, italics, adjectives and epithets, but it will

not do. There is nothing to touch the heart in the wrought−up description of the sufferings of his Gertrude Douglas compared with the simple history of Effie Deans, and the affecting picture of the interviews between her and her sister Jeanie in prison. After reading them over, we feel that we would not part with the novel which contains them for all Mr. Bulwer has written, or is likely to write. That gentleman is very fond of similes and very skilful in their selection and application, but when did he ever equal the following in simple and appropriate beauty, or clothe it in language so perfectly but that is not it when did he ever write a single passage impregnated with such a gush of natural feeling as this, where "puir Effie," the withered lily of St. Leonard's, thus speaks of herself? "And what am I," said she to Jeanie, "but a poor wasted wan−thriven tree, dug up by the roots, and flung out to waste in the highway, that man and beast may tread it under foot? I thought o' the bonny bit thorn that our father rooted out o' the yard last May when it had a' the flush o' blossoms on it; and then it lay in the court till the beasts had trod them a' in pieces with their feet. I little thought when I was wae for the silly green bush and its flowers, that I was to gang the same gait mysel!" Yet this is but one stroke from a pen that has scattered thousands of similar passages, like wild flowers, over his works.

On this ground the shadow of equality cannot be claimed. But take any other take that on which Mr. Bulwer has been thought to excel. There are few things he appears to have bestowed more pains upon than the history of Sir Reginald Glanville; he has striven to impart to it all the effect of which he was capable, and the sufferer, in language energetic and profuse, pours forth the detail of his wrongs, his blighted hopes and withered feelings. But does this make an equal impression on the reader with the reckless, careless account given of himself by Nanty Ewart, the smuggling captain of the Jumping Jenny? Yet all the advantages are on the side of the former; he is a gentleman, and undebased by low and vulgar associations, while the other is a drunkard, an outcast, and a vagabond; yet, strange to say, Nanty Ewart with his low−life confessions is a much more interesting personage than the baronet with his elegant distresses. And why is this, but because of the reality of the picture? The one tells you of his woes, and that enjoyment and hope have passed away, but you do not realize that such is the fact; the other asks no sympathy, but his snatches of old songs, his reckless levity and desperate jocularity, make you feel that a ruined and broken−hearted man is before you. It may be added, that the one has been frequently quoted as a choice specimen of Mr. Bulwer's powers, while the other has never been noted as marked with more than the ordinary talent of Scott.

But if the author of Pelham is deficient in the pathetic, his attempts at humor are melancholy in the extreme. In the worst passages of the worst novelists can any thing more meagre or miserable be picked out than his Mr. Morris Brown or Dr. Bossleton? The *humor* of the former consists in being clad in garments the color of his name, and talking about a Mrs. Minden; the latter in repeating the termination of every sentence twice, only reversing the order of the words; yet notwithstanding this slender stock in trade, the author seems to take an absolute pleasure in the introduction of Mr. Brown, and spins him through many a tedious page. When the reader does meet with a paragraph provocative of a smile, it is the descriptive talent of Mr. Bulwer in sketching an absurd character, and not the humor belonging to the character itself. For instance, the description in Pelham of Monsieur Margot's person is very good; but when he brings him to act in what he intends for a laughable situation, as in the affair of the basket and Mrs. Green, it is lame and labored in the highest degree, and the end of the chapter becomes a "consummation devoutly to be wished."

From these abortive attempts turn to the pages of the author of Waverley, and what a mine of humon is to be found in every volume! How rich is the vein, how varied, and how inexhaustible! You have it in every shape the humor of description, of situation, and of the words and actions of the characters in the scene. And how spontaneous, how perfectly natural and appropriate is the kind with which each character is imbued. It is no patch−work business no continued iteration of a quaint phrase, that might be put into the mouth of one person as well as another not a habit, a trick of custom, that can be got rid of, like a cold, by a little care but real, genuine, hearty humor, as much a part of the personages in whom it is invested, as their appetites and animal affections. Nothing can be more distinct than the humor of Cuddie Headrigge the ploughman and Ratcliffe the thief and thieftaker, of Edie Ochiltree and Jonathan Oldbuck, of Captain Dalgetty and Dominie Sampson, of Caleb Balderstone and Bartoline Saddletree, or of Baillie Nichol Jarvie and the Laird of Dumbedikes. And this quality is

made to bear compound interest when two of these worthies are brought into collision, and their peculiarities exhibited in the strongest light by their different ways of viewing and expressing themselves on a particular subject, like the antiquary Oldbuck and the old gaberlunzie Edie Ochiltree holding discourse about the Roman fortifications. Some of the scenes in which these and other characters figure, are as rich as any thing in English literature as natural and marked with the same profound insight into character and attention to minutiæ as those of Fielding, but more highly colored, and as broad and ludicrous as Smollett's, but without their coarseness. There is the fine scene in Old Mortality where the soldiers come to the miser Milnwood's house and seize Henry Morton. What a group is there what a glorious subject for a painter! The spare, pinched form and features of the old miser Milnwood, his gallant and handsome nephew (worth all Mr. Bulwer's speech−making, compliment−making, diplomatic heroes,) the fine old housekeeper Alison Wilson, the prim, scraggy, puritanical Mause, groaning in spirit, and "nursing her wrath to keep it warm," the solid−looking and apparently stupid Cuddie, and the bold, profligate Bothwell. What interest in the action and contrast in the faces, and expression of the faces! It would make the fortune of any artist who could do this scene justice. And then the dialogue: old Mause testifying against the proceedings of Bothwell and his dragoons, and uplifting her voice in order that "by her means Master Henry might be delivered like a bird from the net of the fowler!" and Cuddie's expostulations with his mother "anent" her testifications, and the fine contrast between her spiritual aspirations and his longing after homely temporalities; then the account of Mause and the Rev. Gabriel Kettledrummle's being carried into captivity by the men of Belial; and again, Dominie Sampson and all the transactions in which he is concerned, particularly his manoeuvre to recover Lucy Bertram from her fainting fit by the application of scalding water; and Caleb Balderstone's contrivances; and the matrimonial dialogues between Mr. and Mrs. Saddletree, and so on, *ad infinitum*. It is dangerous to commence quoting from those novels, for there is no knowing where to stop. Perhaps the best way to make manifest Sir Walter Scott's superiority over every other novelist, would be to merely give the titles of his works and enumerate the characters contained in them; the appeal of so many old acquaintances to the recollections of the public would be irresistible.

To "copy nature," is a general and indiscriminate piece of advice more applicable to a painter than an author, though addressed to either it is looked upon as a pithy and profound injunction. Now to copy nature in her every−day forms, is neither difficult nor desirable. To report the slip−slop conversation of a tea−table is to copy nature, and the more literal the copy the less the skill required; but to be *true* to nature to anticipate her, and make human beings in extraordinary situations and agitated by strong and conflicting passions, act and speak as she would make them act and speak in such situations to make them do and say that which the reader has no conception of beforehand, but which, the moment he has read it, flashes upon him as the only thing they ought or could have done and said, is a power that few mortals are gifted with, and it remains to be shown that Mr. Bulwer is one of them. His characters have none of the flippant prittle−prattle of common conversation put into their mouths; on the contrary, they are in the opposite extreme, and many times talk and act as men and women never talk and acted before. They harangue, first one a speech, and then the other a speech, by the page together, and are by far too didactic and declamatory. The following is *one* instance of this author's infelicitous adaptation of the language and actions of his personages to time, place, and circumstances. The scene is a midnight assassination, where Algernon Mordaunt falls by the hand of the conspirator Wolfe. Clarence Linden catches him as he falls, and with his murdered friend in his arms, and the murderer standing beside him, gives vent to his feelings in the following pertinent and appropriate interrogation: "Oh where where when this man the wise, the kind, the innocent, almost the perfect, falls thus in the prime of existence, by a sudden blow from an obscure hand unblest in life, inglorious in death oh! where where is this boasted triumph of virtue, or where is its reward?"

Would nature or Sir Walter Scott have made any man prate after this fashion under such circumstances? True, the author endeavors to soften down the absurdity by saying that Linden was unconscious of the presence of the assassin, but it is easier for the reader to be told so, than for him to believe it. A maiden in such a situation with her lover, or a mother with her child, might be unconscious of any thing save the object they were hanging over but men and politicians common friends, and the surviving friend cool and collected enough to question the decrees of fate "in good set terms" for such a one to forget the murderer at his elbow, is one of those remarkable instances of abstraction that very seldom occur, except in a French tragedy; and it may be very good

French−tragedy nature, but that is about all. If Linden had seized the assassin and called the watch, it would have been a more natural sort of proceeding, and much more in accordance with Mr. Bulwer's utilitarian principles.

The forte of this writer appears to be eloquent declamation melancholy, fervid, or despairing, but still declamation. (The terms "melancholy" and "despairing" declamation may sound strange, but perhaps they are not inapplicable to some passages in Mr. B.'s works.) In Mordaunt it is calm, me lancholy, and philosophic; fervid and impassioned in the republican Wolfe; desperate and despairing in the villain Crauford; and by turns bitter and enthusiastic in the painter Warner This is an imposing but not very difficult kind of writing, and the real talent employed in it generally passes for more than it is worth. This author's is of the best description, and though certainly the "passion sleeps," it cannot be added that the "declamation roars;" it often softens down into moralizing reflection, in which the similes and images employed are frequently beautiful, and the language in which they are clothed flowing and melodious, and, when occasion demands, nervous and vigorous; but it is not all this no, nor judiciously introduced classical allusions and quotations nor ingenious refutations of common−place maxims and opinions nor brilliant and antithetical aphorisms, that is to elevate a man to an equality with the author of the Scotch novels, to say nothing of the English ones. But it in no way detracts from Mr. Bulwer's reputation as a fine writer, to say that Walter Scott is immensely superior to him; after that wonderful man he is undoubtedly the most popular novelist of the day. He may, in the novelty and excitement attending his debut be both over and under−rated, but "Time at last sets all things even," and he will doubtless find his proper level, which we think will be far above the mass of his contemporaries a little higher than the writer of the O'Hara tales, and some degrees below the author of Anastasius.

But for thee, good Sir Walter! the time is yet to come when thou wilt receive the fulness of thy fame. The present generation admire and applaud thee, the future will feel a deeper and holier reverence for thee; and the language in which thou hast immortalized thyself is one that is fast spreading in every quarter of this habitable globe. Over the illimitable regions of this continent wilt thou be read and worshipped; in distant India and the yet untrodden wildernesses of Australasia will thy name be known; and the time may come when the British Isles will be but as specks of earth to the boundless countries that will speak their language and treasure up their glorious literature. Then will the halls of Abbotsford become "pilgrim shrines," and every decayed memorial that speaks of thee a relic. And when the tide of population shall have poured over the mountain barrier, filling every highland glen with cotton factories and "weavers, spinners and such mechanical persons" erect their looms in the very country of Rob Roy, the wild warriors and plaided chieftains that once trod those rugged glens and heathery hills will still live in thy undying page, and thou wilt be the connecting link between a present and a past age the chronicler of the "tales of the times of old, and deeds of the days of other years." What strange and savage customs what deadly feuds what wild legends what furious passions and fierce fidelity lay concealed behind those mountains that gird the highlands, and which, but for thee, would have passed unrecorded to oblivion; but as the prophet of old smote the rock and the waters gushed forth, so didst thou, with thy magic wand, touch those highland hills, and the whole billowy scene lay disclosed to view! Then the bloody lowland and English wars, what an historian would they have missed; and though upon the border side, "The glaring bale−fires blaze no more," and the "gallant Gordons" and thieving Armstrongs and Elliotts keep honest snuff and tobacconist shops in Kelso and Jedburgh, yet shall not the bitter feuds and midnight forays of their lawless, fearless ancestors be forgotten. And when time shall have made a brick and mortar land of England when some future Manchester or Birmingham perchance stands reeking and smoking where the merry forest of Sherwood stood, still will its verdant glades once "clad in England's fadeless green," and its strong and towering oaks look fresh and unwithered in thy pages. How will the future dwell upon the courtly pageantries of Kenilworth and the knightly chivalry of Ivanhoe and the ridings and onslaughts of the border barons and the gatherings of the clans in the seventy−six; and thy native humor will brighten many an eye, and thy touches of homely natural feeling thrill in many a bosom yet unborn. Thousands will laugh and weep with thee in thy works when the kind heart and capacious head that conceived them are clods of the valley; and "As long as the thistle and heather shall wave" will thy memory be worshipped and thy name treasured up in the hearts of posterity.

A WALK IN BROADWAY.

Reader! gentle or ungentle! if thou for a moment supposest that I, in placing this or any other forthcoming paper under the same title as the essays of Samuel Johnson, have the slightest intention of being as grave, as learned, as wise and as eloquent as the worthy doctor, be not alarmed: read but to the end of this lucubration, and thou wilt be convinced that no such outrage against the prevailing taste of the times is intended. I do not say but that I could be all this, if it so pleased me; but I hope I have too much discretion, as well as too strong a desire to be read, to harbor the smallest thought of gravity or wisdom in an age when startling paradoxes have such a decided advantage over sober truths. Antiquated authors like Steele, Addison, Goldsmith, or Johnson, who are now, indeed, fast falling into deserved oblivion, but whose *names* may possibly be remembered by a few of the most erudite of this generation, wrote to instruct; their wiser descendants aim at the higher province of amusement; and a writer that is now detected attempting to be useful, is justly looked upon as no better than he should be. If any instruction is to be administered, it must be as pills are to children smothered in sweetmeats. The grand secret of composition now−a−days (except among the highest,) is to be flippant, fantastical, and unfeeling, together with the judicious use of notes of exclamation and interrogation, and a copious admixture of dashes and asterisks. But this is foreign to the matter in hand.

I have been a wanderer for the major part of my sinful life in different parts of the globe, and among other places have frequently wandered up and down Broadway, a street situated on a small island between the East and North rivers in the state of New−York, and which the inhabitants of the said small island boast of as being the finest promenade in the United States, much to the discomfort of the mild and equable citizens of the neighboring city of Philadelphia, who, upon the hearing of such an assertion, wax exceeding wrothful, and straightway commence talking, with great energy and animation, of butter and water. At first I could not perceive the connexion; but was afterwards given to understand, that as Broadway and business were the boast of New−York, so were pure water and excellent butter the distinguished attributes of Philadelphia; and that the one was invariably used as a set−off against the other! (In what strange ways, and after what strange fashions, will not men claim distinction!) Nay, to such a height has this frantic lust of pre−eminence been carried, that blood has been spilt, and the peace of families wrecked, upon the butter question; and a New−York merchant tenderly attached to, beloved by, and upon the brink of marriage with, a Philadelphia heiress, after a three years' struggle against numerous rivals and difficulties, actually lost the lady at last by audaciously and pertinaciously affirming, that "the butter was good enough, but nothing to make a noise about!"

Broadway, however, is a very fine street, the longest, it is said, in a direct line, in the world. There is not any thing particularly splendid in it, and the stores, in general, are neither large nor elegant, with an unseemly disproportion of lottery−offices among them; but the almost unbroken line of respectable houses, neatly painted, and shaded by lofty trees, gives it an air of substantial comfort, and at the same time of lightness and freshness, highly desirable. It is pleasant to stroll along it; or, indeed, the principal street of any large city. What a motley group of beings alike, yet how different are daily pressing and hurrying over its pavements! What a multiplicity of hopes, and fears, and petty plans, and lofty schemes, are unceasingly fermenting in the bosom of every individual that moves along the narrow footwalks! Yet it is not the variety of human passions that makes the wonder, for joy and sorrow, love and hate, pride, vanity, interest, and ambition are common to all; but the endless combinations formed by those passions according to the different degrees in which they preponderate and act on different individuals, and on the same individuals in different situations. Take up an arithmetic, and ten simple figures form the ground−work; yet how many million combinations, and no two alike, can be created by these ten figures. So it is with man and his concerns. And still, despite the individual variety, what a general sameness prevails. The hopes, and cares, and joys, and sorrows of one day are like the hopes, and cares, and joys, and sorrows of the next; and the same drama that is hourly felt and acted in the streets of New−York, is playing with equal animation amid the wealth and smoke of London, and the sunshine and poverty of Naples the gravity of Madrid, and the gaiety of Paris. Two thousand years ago, the "eternal city" had her belles and beaux, her flirts and dandies (a Roman dandy!) and two thousand years hence, or less time, will the cannibals of New−Zealand have eschewed

war dances and raw victuals, and have their blue−stocking tea−parties, biscuit and lemonade *soirees,* French cooks, and fashionable quadrilles, as well as anybody. All is still "The everlasting to be, that hath been;" and the probability is, that the antediluvians wrote poetry, told lies, wore whiskers, and cheated their neighbors, just as we do now.

It is also pleasant, as well as curious and profitable, in roaming through a large city, to contrast its present with its former situation to compare what it has been with what it is, and to speculate on what it may be. New−York, to be sure, is not rich in historical recollections, for she is comparatively a thing of yesterday. In walking her streets we do not feel as in the ancient capitals of Europe, that our footsteps, perchance, fall on the very places where those of the mighty dead have fallen before us. In the older streets of London, we know that we are walking where Richard, Duke of Gloucester, "high−reaching Buckingham," or Harry Hotspur, actually walked, and that Shakspeare and Milton familiarly trod even where we then tread; or the High−street of Edinburgh where the Leslie and the Seyton, the Gordon and the Douglass, were wont foolishly and gallantly to stab and dirk each other for the "crown o' the causeway." True, all is now common−place and familiar; the merchant plods homeward with his umbrella under his arm, instead of his rapier by his side. But great as the change is there from the past to the present, it has still been gradual. Step by step have they toiled their way from barbarism to civilization. Here, it has been as the shifting of the scenery in a play, rather than sober reality. It is but as the other day when the forest flourished where now "merchants most do congregate," and the streamlet murmured where the gin−shop stands. The council−fires blazed and the sachems spoke to their young men where now the honorable Richard Riker and the honorable the corporation hold "long talks" about small matters. The wigwam sent its tiny wreaths of smoke into the clear air, where now the bank coffee−house pours forth volumes of odoriferous steam to mingle with the masses of vapor that overhang the city like a cloud; and its tables groan with "all the delicacies of the season" where the deer from the wood and the fish from the stream, were cooked and eaten without the aid of pepper and salt two of the greatest blessings of civilization.

And not more different than the scenes were the actors concerned in them. Step aside, good reader, and mark them as they now pass along Broadway. The first is one but little known to Indian life one who lives by the folly and roguery of the fools and rogues around him a lawyer. He is clad in solemn black, as if that were ominous of the gloom which follows in his train. What would the Indian, with his untaught natural sense of right and wrong, think of this man's "quiddets, his quillets, his cases, his tenures and his tricks;" and of "his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers and his recoveries?" Alas! the poor Indian has but too deeply felt his power and the power of his brethren in the modern "black art." They conjured away his pleasant haunts "under the greenwood tree," his silver streams teeming with life, his beautiful lakes and fair hunting grounds, all "according to law," and left him a string of beads and a bottle of fire−water, a bruised heart and a broken spirit in their place. Here comes another product of the present times, neither rare nor valuable, indigenous to Broadway, and flourishing there in peculiar rankness; a modern Sir Fopling Flutter, of whom it may well be said with the poet, "Nature disclaims the thing a tailor made him!" Mark with what affected effeminacy the full−grown baby lounges along, and the air of listless indifference or slightly awakened surprise with which it is his pleasure to regard a fine woman; but what, indeed, are all the women in the world to this caricature of manhood, in comparison with his own sweet self? Anon, another variety of the same genus appears, quite as contemptible, not so amusing, and a great deal more disagreeable. This is your ruffian−dandy; one who affects a dashing carelessness in his dress and deportment, wears good clothes in a very ill fashion, and has generally a checked shirt, a sailor's hat, or some other article of dress sufficiently different from the ordinary costume of those around him to render him an object of notoriety. Mark the easy dignity of that swagger as he rolls along, staring impudently at all the women and frowning valiantly at all the men, as if he expected every moment to be insulted, and was afraid his courage might not be screwed up "to the sticking place." A sort of personage not unlike Mike Lambourne in Kenilworth, allowing for the modifications of the times. But lo! what comes next dame nature's loveliest work, a woman; but, heaven and earth! how the mantuamaker has spoiled her! Why, what frippery have we here? Silks and lace, ribbons and gauze, feathers, flowers, and flounces! Not but that these are all excellent things in their way, when judiciously used; but to see them all clustered, as in the present instance, on one woman at one time, is what the proverb states to be "too much of a good thing," or what the poet terms "wasteful and

ridiculous excess." Then look at those sleeves in which her arms are lost, and that acre of hat upon her head, with a sufficiency of wheat ears and flowers on it, were they real, to feed a family or stock a garden. And see! as far as the eye can reach it rests on colors as varied and fantastical as the butterflies in summer or the leaves in autumn, in which the *dear* creatures have arrayed themselves. Oh, matrimony, matrimony! thou art indeed becoming a luxury in which the rich and opulent alone will be able to indulge. Nine small children might be supported, but to deck out one of Eve's daughters in this fashion three hundred and sixty−five days in the year, is what nothing but a prize in the lottery or a profitable bankruptcy is equal to. Still on they pass in throngs: the grave and thoughtful student, abstracted from all around, building up his day−dream of fame, fortune, and beauty, and then in love with the cunning coinage of his own brain; and the rich old merchant, not in love with any thing but still in raptures, for cotton has risen an eighth. On they pass, the whiskered Don, the sallow Italian, the bulky Englishman, and the spare Frenchman, all as eager (as a professed moralist might say,) in the pursuit of business and pleasure, as if enjoyment were perpetual and life eternal: and all this where, but a little while ago, the wolf made his lair, and the savage his dwelling−place. Verily, as a profound German philosopher acutely though cautiously observed "let a man live long enough, and it is probable he will see many changes."

STEAM.

I had a dream, which was not all a dream.

Byron

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Modern philosophy, anon,
Will, at the rate she's rushing on,
Yoke lightning to her railroad−car,
And, posting like a shooting star,
Swift as a solar radiation
Ride the grand circuit of creation!
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Anon

I have a bilious friend, who is a great admirer and imitator of Lord Byron; that is, he affects misanthropy, masticates tobacco, has his shirts made without collars, calls himself a miserable man, and writes poetry with a glass of gin−and−water before him. His gin, though far from first−rate, is better than his poetry; the latter, indeed, being worse than that of many authors of the present day, and scarcely fit even for an album; however, he does not think so, and makes a great quantity. At his lodgings, a few evenings ago, among other morbid productions, he read me one entitled "Steam," written in very blank verse, and evidently modelled after the noble poet's "Darkness," in which he takes a bird's−eye view of the world two or three centuries hence, describes things in general, and comes to a conclusion with, "Steam was the universe!" Whether it was the fumes arising from this piece of "written" vapor, or whether I had unconsciously imbibed more hollands than my temperate habits allow of, I cannot say, but I certainly retired to bed like Othello, "perplexed in the extreme." There was no "dreamless sleep" for me that night, and Queen Mab drove full gallop through every nook and cranny of my brain. Strange and fantastical visions floated before me, till at length came one with all the force and clearness of reality.

I thought I stood upon a gentle swell of ground, and looked down on the scene beneath me. It was a pleasant sight, and yet a stranger might have passed it by unheeded; but to me it was as the green spot in the desert, for there I recognised the haunts of my boyhood. There was the wild common on which I had so often scampered "frae mornin sun till dine," skirted by the old wood, through which the burn stole tinkling to the neighboring river. There was the little ivy−covered church with its modest spire and immoveable weathercock, and clustering around lay the village that I knew contained so many kind and loving hearts. All looked just as it did on the summer morning when I left it, and went wandering over this weary world. To me the very trees possessed an individuality; the branches of the old oak (there was but one) seemed to nod familiarly towards me, the music of the rippling water fell pleasantly on my ear, and the passing breeze murmured of "home, sweet home." The balmy

air was laden with the hum of unseen insects, and filled with the fragrance of a thousand common herbs and flowers; and to my eyes the place looked prettier and pleasanter than any they have since rested on. As I gazed, the "womanish moisture" made dim my sight, and I felt that yearning of the heart which every man who has a soul feels let him go where he will, or reason how he will on once more beholding the spot where the only pure, unsullied part of his existence passed away. Suddenly the scene changed. The quiet, smiling village vanished, and a busy, crowded city occupied its place. The wood was gone, the brook dried up, and the common cut to pieces and covered with a kind of iron gangways. I looked upon the surrounding country, if country it could be called, where vegetable nature had ceased to exist. The neat, trim gardens, the verdant lawns and swelling uplands, the sweet−scented meadows and waving corn−fields were all swept away, and fruit, and flowers, and herbage, appeared to be things uncared for and unknown. Houses and factories, and turnpikes and railroads, were scattered all around, and along the latter, as if propelled by some unseen, infernal power, monstrous machines flew with inconceivable swiftness. People were crowding and jostling each other on all sides. I mingled with them, but they were not like those I had formerly known they walked, talked, and transacted business of all kinds with astonishing celerity. Every thing was done in a hurry; they eat, drank, and slept in a hurry; they danced, sung, and made love in a hurry; they married, died, and were buried in a hurry, and resurrection−men had them out of their graves before they well knew they were in them. Whatever was done, was done upon the high−pressure principle. No person stopped to speak to another in the street; but as they moved rapidly on their way, the men talked faster than the women do now, and the women talked twice as fast as ever. Many were bald, and on asking the reason, I was given to understand they had been great travelers, and that the rapidity of modern conveyances literally scalped those who journeyed much in them, sweeping whiskers, eye−brows, eye−lashes, in fact, every thing in any way moveable, from their faces. Animal life appeared to be extinct; carts and carriages came rattling down the highways horseless and driverless, and wheelbarrows trundled along without any visible agency. Nature was out of fashion, and the world seemed to get along tolerably well without her.

At the foot of the street my attention was attracted by a house they were building of prodigious dimensions, being no less than seventeen stories high. On the top of it several men were at work, when, dreadful to relate, the foot of one of them slipped, and he was precipitated to the earth with a fearful crash. Judge of my horror and indignation on observing the crowd pass unheeding by, scarcely deigning to cast a look on their fellow−creature, who doubtless lay weltering in his water, and the rest of the workmen went on with their various avocations without a moment's pause in consequence of the accident. On approaching the spot, I heard several in passing murmur the most incomprehensible observations. "Only a steam man," said one. "Won't cost much," said another. "His boiler overcharged, I suppose," cried a third, "the way in which all these accidents happen!" and true enough, there lay a man of tin and sheet−iron, weltering in hot water. The superintendent of the concern, who was not a steam man, but made of the present materials, gave it as his opinion that the springs were damaged, and the steam−vessels a little ruptured, but not much harm done, and straightway sent the corpse to the blacksmith's (who was a flesh−and−blood man) to be repaired. Here was then at once a new version of the old Greek fable, and modern Prometheuses were actually as "plentiful as blackberries." In fact, I found upon inquiry, that society was now divided into two great classes, living and "locomotive" men, the latter being much the better and honester people of the two; and a fashionable political economist, of the name of Malthus, a lineal descendant of an ancient, and it appears rather inconsistent system−monger, had just published an elaborate pamphlet, showing the manifold advantages of propagating those no−provender−consuming individuals in preference to any other. So that it appeared, that any industrious mechanic might in three months have a full−grown family about him, with the full and comfortable assurance that, as the man says in Chrononhotonthologos, "they were all his own and none of his neighbors."

These things astonished, but they also perplexed and wearied me. My spirit grew sick, and I longed for the old world again, and its quiet and peaceable modes of enjoyment. I had no fellowship with the two new races of beings around me, and nature and her charms were no more. All things seemed forced, unnatural, unreal indeed, little better than barefaced impositions. I sought the banks of my native river; it alone remained unchanged. The noble stream flowed gently and tranquilly as of yore, but even here impertinent man had been at work, and pernicious railroads were formed to its very verge. I incautiously crossed one of them, trusting to my

preconceived notions of time and space, the abhorred engine being about three quarters of a mile from me, but scarcely had I stepped over, when it flew whizzing past the spot I had just quitted, and catching me in its eddy, spun me around like a top under the lash. It was laden with passengers, and went with headlong fury straight towards the river. Its fate seemed inevitable another instant and it would be immersed in the waves, when lo! it suddenly sunk into the bosom of the earth, and in three seconds was ascending a perpendicular hill on the opposite bank of the river. I was petrified, and gazed around with an air of helpless bewilderment, when a gentleman, who was doubtless astonished at my astonishment, shouted in passing, "What's the fellow staring at?" and another asked "if I had never seen a tunnel before?"

Like Lear, "my wits began to turn." I wished for some place where I might hide myself from all around, and turned instinctively to the spot where the village ale−house used to stand. But where, alas! was the neat thatched cottage that was wont so often to "impart An hour's importance to the poor man's heart?" Gone! and in its place stood a huge fabric, labelled "Grand Union Railroad Hotel." But here also it was steam, steam, nothing but steam! The rooms were heated by steam, the beds were made and aired by steam, and instead of a pretty, red−lipped, rosy−cheeked chambermaid, there was a cursed machine−man smoothing down the pillows and bolsters with mathematical precision; the victuals were cooked by steam; yea, even the meat roasted by steam! Instead of the clean−swept hearth "With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay," there was a patent steam−stove, and the place was altogether hotter than any decent man would ever expect to have any thing to do with. Books and papers lay scattered on a table. I took up one of the former; it was filled with strange new phrases, all more or less relating to steam, of which I knew nothing, but as far as I could make out the English of the several items, they ran somewhat thus:

"*Another shocking catastrophe*. As the warranted−safe locomotive smoke−consuming, fuel−providing steam−carriage Lightning, was this morning proceeding at its usual three−quarter speed of one hundred and twenty−seven miles an hour, at the junction of the Hannington and Slipsby rail−roads it unfortunately came in contact with the steam−carriage Snail, going about one hundred and five miles per hour. Of course both vehicles with their passengers were instantaneously reduced to an impalpable powder. The friends of the deceased have the consolation of knowing that no blame can possibly attach to the intelligent proprietors of the Lightning, it having been clearly ascertained that those of the Snail started their carriage full two seconds before the time agreed on, in order to obviate in some degree, the delay to which passengers were unavoidably subjected by the clumsy construction and tedious pace of their vehicle."

"*Melancholy accident.* As a beautiful and accomplished young lady of the name of Jimps, a passenger in the Swift−as−thought−locomotive, was endeavoring to catch a flying glimpse of the new Steam University, her breathing apparatus unfortunately slipped from her mouth, and she was a corpse in three quarters of a second. A young gentleman, who had been tenderly attached to her for several days, in the agony of his feelings withdrew his air tube and called for help; he of course shared a similar fate. Too much praise cannot be given to the rest of the passengers, who, with inimitable presence of mind, prudently held their breathing−bladders to their mouths during the whole of this trying scene," &c.

A Liverpool paper stated that "The stock for the grand Liverpool and Dublin tunnel under the Irish channel, is nearly filled up." And a Glasgow one advocated the necessity of a floating wooden rail−road between Scotland and the Isle of Man, in order to do away with the tiresome steamboat navigation. I took up a volume of poems, but the similes and metaphors were all steam; all their ideas of strength, and power, and swiftness, referred to steam only, and a sluggish man was compared to a greyhound. I looked into a modern dictionary for some light on these subjects, but got none, except finding hundreds of curious definitions, such as these:

"*Horse, s.* an animal of which but little is now known. Old writers affirm that there were at one time several thousands in this country."

"*Tree, s.* a vegetable production; once plentiful in these parts, and still to be found in remote districts."

"*Tranquillity, s.* obsolete; an unnatural state of existence, to which the ancients were very partial. The word is to be met with in several old authors," &c. &c.

In despair I threw down the book, and rushed out of the house. It was mid−day, but a large theatre was open, and the people were pouring in. I entered with the rest, and found that whatever changes had taken place, money was still money. They were playing Hamlet by steam, and this was better than any other purpose to which I had seen it applied. The automata really got along wonderfully well, their speaking faculties being arranged upon the barrel−organ principle greatly improved, and they roared, and bellowed, and strutted, and swung their arms to and fro as sensibly as many admired actors. Unfortunately in the grave scene, owing to some mechanical misconstruction, Hamlet exploded, and in doing so, entirely demolished one of the grave−diggers, carried away a great part of Laertes, and so injured the rest of the dramatis personæ that they went off one after the other like so many crackers, filling the house with heated vapor. I made my escape, but on reaching the street, things there were ten times worse than ever It was the hour for stopping and starting the several carriages, and no language can describe the state of the atmosphere. Steam was generating and evaporating on all sides the bright sun was obscured the people looked par−boiled, and the neighboring fisherman's lobsters changed color on the instant; even the steam inhabitants appeared uncomfortably hot. I could scarcely breathe there was a blowing, a roaring, a hissing, a fizzing, a whizzing going on all around fires were blazing, water was bubbling, boilers were bursting when, lo! I suddenly awoke and found myself in a state of profuse perspiration. I started up, ran to the window, and saw several milkmen and bakers' carts, with horses in them, trotting merrily along. I was a thankful man. I put on my clothes, and while doing so, made up my mind to read no more manuscript poems, and eschew ginand water for the time to come.

BIOGRAPHY OF JACOB HAYS.

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He is a man, take him for all in all
We shall not look upon his like again.
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Shaks.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to introduce to your acquaintance, Baron *Nabem*, a person who has a very *taking* way with him.

Tom and Jerry.

Perhaps there is no species of composition so generally interesting and truly delightful as minute and indiscriminate biography, and it is pleasant to perceive how this taste is gradually increasing. The time is apparently not far distant when every man will be found busy writing the life of his neighbor, and expect to have his own written in return, interspersed with original anecdotes, extracts from epistolary correspondence, the exact hours at which he was in the habit of going to bed at night and getting up in the morning, and other miscellaneous and useful information carefully selected and judiciously arranged. Indeed, it is whispered that the editors of this paper† intend to take Longworth's Directory for the groundwork, and give the private history of all the city alphabetically, without "fear or favor love or affection." In Europe there exists an absolute biographical mania, and they are manufacturing lives of poets, painters, play−actors, peers, pugilists, pick−pockets, horse jockeys, and their horses, together with a great many people that are scarcely known to have existed at all. And the fashion now is not only to shadow forth the grand and striking outlines of a great man's character, and hold to view those qualities which elevated him above his species, but to go into the minutiæ of his private life, and note down all the trivial expressions and every day occurrences in which, of course, he merely spoke and acted like any ordinary man. This not only affords employment for the exercise of the small curiosity and meddling propensities of his officious biographer, but is also highly gratifying to the general reader, inasmuch as it elevates him mightily in his own opinion to see it put on record that great men ate, drank, slept, walked, and sometimes talked just as he does. In giving the biography of the high constable of this city, I shall by all means avoid descending to undignified

particulars; though I deem it important to state, before proceeding further, that there is not the slightest foundation for the report afloat that Mr. Hays has left off eating buckwheat cakes in a morning, in consequence of their lying too heavily on his stomach.

Where the subject of the present memoir was born, can be but of little consequence; who were his father and mother, of still less; and how he was bred and educated, of none at all. I shall therefore pass over this division of his existence in eloquent silence, and come at once to the period when he attained the acmé of constabulatory power and dignity by being created high constable of this city and its suburbs; and it may be remarked, in passing, that the honorable the corporation, during their long and unsatisfactory career, never made an appointment more creditable to themselves, more beneficial to the city, more honorable to the country at large, more imposing in the eye of foreign nations, more disagreeable to all rogues, nor more gratifying to honest men, than that of the gentleman whom we are biographizing, to the high office he now holds. His acuteness and vigilance have become proverbial; and there is not a misdeed committed by any member of this community, but he is speedily admonished that he will "have old Hays [as he is affectionately and familiarly termed] after him." Indeed, it is supposed by many that he is gifted with supernatural attributes, and can see things that are hid from mortal ken; or how, it is contended, is it possible that he should, as he does, "Bring forth the secret'st man of blood?" That he can discover "undivulged crime" that when a store has been robbed, he, without stop or hesitation, can march directly to the house where the goods are concealed, and say, "these are they" or, when a gentleman's pocket has been picked, that, from a crowd of unsavory miscreants he can, with unerring judgment, lay his hand upon one and exclaim "you're wanted!" or how is it that he is gifted with that strange principle of ubiquity that makes him "here, and there, and everywhere" at the same moment? No matter how, so long as the public reap the benefit; and well may that public apostrophize him in the words of the poet: "Long may he live! our city's pride! Where lives the rogue, but flies before him! With trusty crabstick by his side, And staff of office waving o'er him."

But it is principally as a literary man that we would speak of Mr. Hays. True, his poetry is "unwritten," as is also his prose; and he has invariably expressed a decided contempt for philosophy, music, rhetoric, the *belles letters*, the fine arts, and in fact all species of composition excepting bailiff's warrants and bills of indictment but what of that? The constitution of his mind is, even unknown to himself, decidedly poetical. And here I may be allowed to avail myself of another peculiarity of modern biography, namely, that of describing a man by what he is not. Mr. Hays has not the graphic power or antiquarian lore of Sir Walter Scott nor the glittering imagery or voluptuous tenderness of Moore nor the delicacy and polish of Rogers nor the spirit of Campbell nor the sentimentalism of Miss Landon nor the depth and purity of thought and intimate acquaintance with nature of Bryant nor the brilliant style and playful humor of Halleck no, he is more in the petit larceny manner of Crabbe, with a slight touch of Byronic power and gloom. He is familiarly acquainted with all those interesting scenes of vice and poverty so fondly dwelt upon by that reverend chronicler of little villany, and if ever he can be prevailed upon to publish, there will doubtless be found a remarkable similarity in their works. His height is about five feet seven inches, but who makes his clothes we have as yet been unable to ascertain. His countenance is strongly marked, and forcibly brings to mind the lines of Byron when describing his Corsair: There was a laughing devil in his sneer That raised emotions both of hate and fear; And where his glance of "apprehension," fell, Hope withering fled, and mercy sighed, farewell! Yet with all his great qualities, it is to be doubted whether he is much to be envied. His situation certainly has its disadvantages. Pure and blameless as his life is, his society is not courted no man boasts of his friendship, and few indeed like even to own him for an intimate acquaintance. Wherever he goes his slightest action is watched and criticized; and if he happen carelessly to lay his hand upon a gentleman's shoulder and whisper something in his ear, even that man, as if there were contamination in his touch, is seldom or never seen afterwards in decent society. Such things cannot fail to prey upon his feelings. But when did ever greatness exist without some penalty attached to it?

The first time that ever Hays was pointed out to me, was one summer afternoon, when acting in his official capacity in the city−hall. The room was crowded in every part, and as he entered with a luckless wretch in his gripe, a low suppressed murmur ran through the hall, as if some superior being had alighted in the midst of them. He placed the prisoner at the bar a poor coatless individual, with scarcely any edging and no roof to his hat to

stand his trial for bigamy, and then, in a loud, authoritative tone, called out for "silence," and there was silence. Again he spoke "hats off there!" and the multitude became uncovered; after which he took his handkerchief out of his left−hand coat pocket, wiped his face, put it back again, looked sternly around, and then sat down. The scene was awful and impressive; but the odor was disagreeable in consequence of the heat acting upon a large quantity of animal matter congregated together. My olfactory organs were always lamentably acute: I was obliged to retire, and from that time to this, I have seen nothing, though I have heard much of the subject of this brief and imperfect, but, I trust, honest and impartial memoir.

Health and happiness be with thee, thou prince of constables thou guardian of innocence thou terror of evil doers and little boys! May thy years be many and thy sorrows few may thy life be like a long and cloudless summer's day, and may thy salary be increased! And when at last the summons comes from which there is no escaping when the warrant arrives upon which no bail can be put in when thou thyself, that hast "wanted" so many, art in turn "wanted and must go,"

"Mayst thou fall Into the grave as softly as the leaves Of the sweet roses on an autumn eve, Beneath the small sighs of the western wind, Drop to the earth!"

LOVE OF CHANGE HOUSE HUNTING.

Man never is, but always to be blest

Pope.

There must be a great quantity of Dutch blood in this city, for the euphonious names of Vanbenschoten, Vanvredenburgh, Vanvoorhis, Vanoutersturp, Vanschaick, Vanbokkelin, Vanmeerbeekie, Vogelsang, Vonck, Volk, Vogt, &c. are to be met with in every street, and at every corner; but in what street or at what corner are to be found the still and tranquil virtues, the sedate and circumspect demeanor, the profound love of ease and phlegmatic temperament of the ancient denizens of Manahatta? In the good old times that have for ever passed away from this island, a man might be born, reared, married, and buried within a circuit of three miles; and a true Dutchman would as soon have thought of going to bed without his night−cap, as of chopping and changing about from one house to another. Wherever he first inhaled the breath of life, there he exhaled it. It was quite clear to his mind that Providence had cast his lot in a certain street, and a certain house, and for him to think of emigrating to another, would not only be presumptuously setting up his judgment against high authority, but a great waste of bodily exertion. Indeed, when he looked around, and saw all the furniture firmly fixed the ponderous dresser the solemn clock the substantial table just as his great−grandfather had placed them when the first ship first drifted from Holland to this coast, the idea of pulling them from their places, carrying them out into the open air, and setting them up in another domicile, seemed not only a sacrilegious disturbance of the household gods, but an enterprise requiring so much toil and trouble, as to make it scarcely worth the while attempting, considering the short time that is allotted for man to sojourn in this world. So lived the forefathers of a goodly portion of the present quicksilver generation. They worked when there was no help for it, and sat still whenever they could; they counted over their bright silver dollars (the only kind of change a Dutchman loves) and put them carefully away in their old stockings they took their glass of genuine Schedam, they smoked their pipes in peace "They eat and drank and slept. What then? They eat and drank and slept again." And even so passed away the mortal existence of the forefathers of the identical Master Cicero Vanderscholten, that goes to masquerades and executes pigeon−wings and pirouettes with such grace and agility; and so lived the progenitors of Miss Cecilia Amelia Anna Maria Vanwaggenen, that makes a noise on the piano, and keeps an album! *O tempora, O mores!*

Of all the civilized nations on the face of the earth, the Americans seem to attach the least value to a "local habitation;" and of all the parts of America, New−York is the most restless. Its citizens seem to be born with a feverish love of change and excitement, which pervades, more or less, every action of their lives, and to this they sacrifice friends, interest, and convenience. They put no faith in the proverb "let well enough alone" but are

always ready to give up "well enough" in the desperate hope of getting something better. They must be in motion, and that motion is about as different from that of their Dutch ancestors as the motion of a duck pond on a calm day is from that of the rapids of Niagara. In business they are fickle to a degree that appears, and really is, heartless and unfeeling. They will give up a tradesman that has served them well and faithfully, and in whom they can place confidence, to run after some fresh adventurer, of whom they know nothing. But this is the way all over the country; and a tradesman has in reality just as little consideration for his customers as his customers have for him. A man commences business in a small city; in the course of time forms acquaintance and connexions, and finds himself getting along, as he says, "as comfortably as he can wish," when suddenly he hears of some new town that has sprung up in the wilderness, where they "are doing considerable of a business;" and, without more to do, he sells off his stock, takes leave, without regret, of kind friends and familiar faces, and sets off to the land of promise to run a similar career. This is a national trait, and does not attach, with any peculiar force, to this city; but, for the love of change in their places of residence, the New−Yorkers are particularly famous. They never regard a house as a kind of inanimate friend one who has protected them from cold, and rain, and tempest, and by whose hearth they have spent many happy hours, and enjoyed many comforts; but merely as a temporary covering, under whose roof it would be a sin, shame, and a folly to live two years in succession. Accordingly, on the first of May, when people all over the world are enjoying that charming season among fields and flowers, the sagacious citizens of New−York think they have lived quite long enough in one place, and prepare to pitch their tents elsewhere. Those that live up town come down, and those that live down town go up; and amidst disjointed furniture, broken crockery, dust, dirt, and vermin, they hail the genial approach of smiling May. After spending their money, losing their regular dinners, and suffocating themselves for three or four days, they squat down in their new domicile for another twelvemonth.

But it is not only the miseries attending the committal of the act itself, but also the preliminary ones which bespeak its approach, that are to be taken into account. There is a great and crying evil at present existent in this city, entitled, "house hunting," which disturbs the peace of families, and is productive of much scandal and other ill consequences. It appears that on the first day of February the householders notify their several landlords that they have only one more quarter's rent to expect from them, and immediately after such notification, nearly all the tenements in the city are labelled "this house to let," inquire so and so. A stranger would naturally suppose that the plague, the yellow fever, or some tremendous evil was momentarily expected, and that the inhabitants were about to seek safety, *en masse*, in flight. No such thing; but from that time the proud boast, that "a man's house is his castle," no longer belongs to the citizens of New−York. A Spaniard's doors are not more open to the holy fathers of the inquisition, or a place−hunter's to a man in office, than are his to all the impertinent people who please to demand admittance. They march through his rooms, peep under his bed and into his closets, and not unfrequently surprise him and his family in very equivocal situations; after which, they express a hope that they have not disturbed them, to which they receive a lying answer in the affirmative beg leave to trouble them "for a glass of cold water" say they don't think the house will answer and go about their business; and the only satisfaction the poor people have, is to go unto their neighbor and do likewise. But this is not all. There is a nest of old maids in the city, who, having given up all hopes of ever being obliged to look after a house on their own account, kindly volunteer to do so for their friends, in order to indulge their *penchant* for inspecting their neighbor's affairs, and discuss the interesting tittle−tattle arising therefrom. Under various pretexts they pop their noses into every hole and corner of pantries, parlors, kitchens, and cupboards, and spy into the barrenness of the house; and all this is noted down in a sort of diary, to be used afterwards at visits and card parties, as occasion may require. I am slightly in the good graces of the niece of one of these ancient women, who favored me with a peep at her aunt's land log−book, from which I made the following extracts. For obvious reasons, the names of the people and numbers of the houses are omitted.

February 5. No. Greenwich−street. Called at the house of Mrs. D . Rooms small no garrets wonder where the goodness all the children sleep. Carpets very shabby remains of a turkey carefully put by in the pantry, and black woman making her dinner off cold mutton. Eldest Miss D. has a new silk pelisse wonder where the money came from. Mem. The D.'s *may* be honest enough, but can't imagine how some people make a living!

Same day. No. Broadway looked in upon my dear friend Mrs. W the house to let, going to take a larger one. Cut a great dash hope it may last. Mr. W. is, to be sure, cashier of the bank, but his salary cannot be much. Some how or other, people in banks never want money. Mem. If Mr. W. should be back in his accounts and commit suicide, which is not unlikely, what would become of poor dear Mrs. W.?

February 17. No. Hudson−square. Fine looking house great deal larger than what I wanted, but went in to see it. Mrs. M. not at home; was shown through the house by Miss M. a poor white−faced creature, with her hair out of curl, who looked as if she had just got up. Recollected meeting a prettyish sort of girl by that name at Mrs. K.'s party last night. Found out it was the same should never have known her! Not quite so much color as she had when dancing last night suppose she can get more when she wants it. Good gracious! how the poor men are deceived!

Same day. Went through the sausage manufacturer's premises in the Bowery. Mem. Eat no more sausages, &c. &c.

It would be tedious to give more of these precious records; suffice it to say, that there was scarcely a house from the East river to the North, or from the Battery to the regions about Fourth−street, which had not been inspected by one or more of these scandalous old women, who meet at night and compare notes; and not a single kind remark or charitable supposition was ventured upon by any one of them. They went altogether on Sir Peter Teazle's principle, "that it was a bad world, and the fewer that speak well of it the better."

But this is by no means the only evil to which the citizens subject themselves by this love of change. They are innumerable; and, perhaps, one of the heaviest is the injury done to the periodical literature of the country. A man will subscribe for a paper or a magazine, with which he professes to be agreeably entertained and well satisfied; but if any new adventurer spring up, and promise impossibilities in a flaming prospectus, he straightway relinquishes that which he knows to be good, for the chance of getting something better; and this, in its turn, is thrown aside for fresh experiments. In no country are there so many and such abortive attempts to get up fresh publications, and this, in a great degree, accounts for it. Of the majority it cannot be said, that "'Tis pity they're short−lived." They do not good and much harm; for by diverting public patronage into so many channels, all are inadequately rewarded, and hence the poor state of the public press generally, compared with other countries. In all sorts of business it is precisely the same. If a man finds that past endeavors are no security for future favors, he naturally relaxes in those endeavors, and will as soon sell a bad article as a good one, when there is an equal chance of his customer returning; thus, the evils which the buyers inflict upon the sellers in the first instance, eventually return upon themselves, and no one gains by those proceedings but those who, under a better state of things, would be neglected entirely.

But what avails talking? What can be expected from the inhabitants, when the "fathers of the city" set them such examples? The people move themselves, but the corporation move the houses. Their committee come and squint along a street, and then say unto a man, "Sir, you must shift your house sixteen feet back!" Shade of Wouter Von Twiller! shift a house! What would a genuine Dutchman think of such a proceeding; or, indeed, any European? A little Frenchman, fresh from Paris, who thought every thing on earth was to be seen there, lately witnessed a performance of this kind. He was met by a friend soon after, in a high state of excitation. "Oh, mon dieu!" said he, "I have see what in Paris I nevare have see nevare! I have see one house taking one leetle valk! Mon dieu!" But the evil may not stop here. In time streets and squares may be found traveling about the city, and it is not impossible that a man may be run over by a church.

HYPOCHONDRIACISM.

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O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
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       An' foolish notion;
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
       An' e'en devotion!
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Burns.

Hypochondriacism is a disorder produced by the disorganization of the nervous system, whereby the patient ceases to view things as they exist, and acquires the property of seeing others that have no existence. His faculties become changed, and he regards chimeras as realities, and realities as chimeras. On all points excepting one, a hypochondriac may be perfectly sane, but on that one he looks upon the rest of the world as fools, and himself as the only person to whom heaven has given light. There are many shades of this disorder, and the ways in which it manifests itself are innumerable. Doctor Johnson gives a very meagre definition of a hypochondriac when he says it is "one affected with melancholy." Now, though in some instances this may be the primary cause, in nine cases out of ten it is the offspring of vanity and ignorance, which, secreting themselves in a man's brain, engender there strange and overweening notions of his own qualities and capabilities; this, in the first stage of the disorder, is termed self−conceit, but swelling beyond all imaginable or endurable bounds, it becomes at last a confirmed case of mental delusion, and takes the form of medical, legal, religious, political, or literary hypochondriacism.

One of the peculiarities of this disease is the manner in which those who are affected with it laugh and jeer at all who are in a similar predicament with themselves the quickness with which they detect their neighbor's infirmities, and the obstinacy with which they shut their eyes to their own. Thus, a well−informed gentleman, who eat, drank, slept, and behaved himself like other people, could never get over the strange belief that he was a barleycorn, and at the mere sight of a barn−yard fowl he would fly into his house and lock himself in, for fear of being picked up and transferred to the crop of his enemy; yet the same gentleman was very much tickled with the story of another hypochondriac, who in walking imagined that he did not possess the power of turning, but must of necessity move on in a direct line, and who had cut himself severely by marching straight through a shop window which unfortunately crossed his way just as one foolish hypochondriacal author will laugh at another's expectations of immortality, although at the same time he does not entertain a doubt of its being his own inheritance. I knew a profound scholar, and what is more, a sensible man, but who, nevertheless, insisted that he was cursed with a cast−iron nose. No arguments could convince him of the fallacy of what he considered so self−evident that it might be observed by any one; and when a storm of thunder and lightning occurred, he was to be seen running about in an agony of fear, and using all sorts of precautions to prevent his metal proboscis from attracting the electric fluid; after the storm he would regain his composure, and thank heaven for his remarkable deliverance. A friend, to cure him of this fancy, told him of another person who imagined he had a glass nose, and was afraid of going out on a windy day for fear of getting it injured, at which he laughed immoderately, and proceeded to show very plainly that no man ever had, or could by any possibility have a glass nose. The other then began gently to insinuate doubts respecting the existence of any metallic substance on his own face, upon which he grew mightily offended, hit his nose a sharp blow, and asked him if he could not hear it was cast−iron by the sound! This would all seem ridiculous enough to a spectator, but how many hundred thousands are there in this world who terrify themselves with evils just as imaginary as cast−metal noses, yet at the same time laugh heartily at the fears of those who entertain apprehensions for their glass ones? but because their numbers are such as to keep each other in countenance, they escape the charge of hypochondriacism which manifestly attaches to them.

Of all classes of hypochondriacs, the health−preserving are perhaps the most numerous and notorious. These are the people for whom heaven has not been able to make any thing fit to eat. Every dish that is set upon the table is, according to their view of things, impregnated with subtle poison. One produces flatulency, another acidity beef is indigestible, ham is bilious, tea nervous, and so on from the simplest receipt in Dr. Kitchiner's cookery to the most complicated effort of Mons. Ude. Whenever they eat they say, "I know it is wrong;" and look upon a person who makes a hearty, careless, miscellaneous meal, as one who is not long for this world. All their conversation turns upon their internal concerns; and, in company, they favor the unfortunate lady or gentleman who sits next

them with anecdotes of their stomach and digestive reminiscences for the last three weeks. They are amateurs in physic, and swallow all sorts of abominations with infinite relish; and then they wonder, for all the care they take of themselves, that they are no better. Poor wretches! the undertaker eyes them as he walks along; the coffin−maker takes their dimensions in his "mind's eye," and proceeds to make their mahogany resting−places on speculation; the sexton chuckles at their approach, and says he hopes he "see's them well!" the resurrectionist marks them for his own; and the surgeon, surveying their formation with a scientific eye, longs to settle some disputed points of anatomy by means of their unfortunate bodies. Death comes at last and pops the little life out of them that dieting and doctoring have left, and they are troubled with hypochondriacism no more!

Literary, as well as health−preserving hypochondriacism, is not unfrequently occasioned by a slight touch of dyspepsia. Young gentlemen with yellow faces and weak digestions, mistake the sickly fancies produced by a diseased state of the humors for the coruscations of genius, and whenever they feel a little unwell, concoct what they call poetry, which is merely a number of hypochondriacal notions strung together, in which they abuse the "unfeeling world," and long for "pleasant death," and the "quiet peaceful grave," at the same time that they are taking their spring physic, and using all necessary precautions to avoid one and keep out of the other as long as possible. They poetize somewhat after this fashion: My burning brow my burning brow! My bursting heart my mad'ning brain! Would would that ye were quiet now, And I at rest from all my pain! The grave the grave! how calm they sleep Who lie where yonder yew−trees wave! They neither sob, nor cry, nor weep Oh give *me* that the grave! the grave! and such like abominable nonsense, which many people call "very pretty," and "very pathetic," and so they come all at once to believe themselves poets, and go on wishing themselves dead, until people of common sense would have no objection if they were taken at their word. One of the most absurd peculiarities of this tribe is, their invariably assuming that physical imbecility and mental strength go together, and *vice versa*, as if a sound constitution, a cheerful temper, and a vigorous and imaginative mind were incompatible. William Shakspeare, Walter Scott, and Robert Burns were, in their several ways, the three greatest men that ever lived, and at the same time three as healthy, hearty, and merry fellows, as the world has seen, and never wrote a line of regular churchyard poetry in their lives.

Political hypochondriacs are as thick as flies at midsummer, and are more headstrong, absurd, and obstinate, than any of the other classes. No matter how monstrous their dogmas are, the pertinacity with which they cling to them leaves the man with the cast−iron nose far behind. A member of the English parliament got it into his head, and all the other members could not get it out, that the great cause of distress among the poor was the plentifulness of the grain harvests, that starvation was a necessary consequence of over−production, and the more wheat there was grown the less there would be eaten. In this country certain people advocate a tariff that will increase commerce and support the navy, by doing away with the necessity for ships and sailors; while others believe in a dissolution of society, in consequence of a few men, calling themselves masons, getting together in a snug room, for the purpose of singing and drinking without fear of interruption. Indeed, there is no notion too improbable to find its way into the head of a political hypochondriac. Many well−meaning individuals firmly believed as soon as General Jackson became president, that men would hang on trees as thick as acorns, that he would fire the city of Washington, destroy the constitution of the United States, put the country under martial law, keep his hand in practice by shooting a dozen citizens or so of a morning before breakfast, and do a number of other improper things for reasons best known to himself; and when they are told that no such thing has happened, they very wisely shake their heads, and say the ides of March are not yet over. There is another set of political hypochondriacs who credit whatever the newspapers tell them, and of course are worse than all the rest put together.

Then there are the religious hypochondriacs, who firmly believe that no one can be in the right except themselves Some think on Calvin heaven's own spirit fell, While others deem him instrument of hell. But this is ticklish ground. In theatricals the cases of hypochondriacism are innumerable, and generally incurable. I have seen matrons of forty−five years of age and one hundred and fifty pounds weight, who really thought they looked and played the girlish Juliet to perfection, and whom no criticism could convince to the contrary; and I have seen a little fat fellow of five feet and an inch, who looked upon himself as the *beau ideal* of Roman grandeur and

dignity. I have seen Miss fancy she could play a fashionable lady, and Mr. imagine that he looked like a gentleman. I have seen but cases multiply too fast.

The greatest hypochondriac of modern times, however, is undoubtedly Robert Owen. This very singular individual has taken it into his head, that by means of certain strange doctrines which have the immediate effect of crazing the intellects of those who dabble in them, the world is to be regenerated, and the perfectability of human nature accomplished. He actually believes the time is coming when men will not lie, nor women flirt when banks will not break nor bills be protested when tailors will keep their words and gentlemen pay their debts when brokers will be generous and politicians independent when a man will love his neighbor as himself, and lend him money without interest or security when Cobbett will be consistent and Lady Morgan unaffected, and other things equally strange and improbable. This is the greatest case of hypochondriacism on record, either moral or medical, and any man who will believe these things, will believe that the world is growing honester.

IDLE PEOPLE.

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       Under the greenwood tree
       Who loves to lie with me,
       And tune his merry note
       Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
       Here shall he see
       No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.
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Shaks.

There is no class of human beings visited with more matter−of−course vituperation than idle people. Idleness! it is the greatest vice of civilization, for it is the least profitable. Men may lie, and cheat, and game, and drink, and break the ten commandments in whatsoever way they please, and they will find apologists; but for idleness, no one lifteth up his voice to speak. From the busy haunts of men, from the toil and turmoil of the marts of traffic, from the din and smoke of manufactories, from the high courts of Mammon, it is for ever banished: only on the pleasant hill side, in the waving meadow, and under the ancient forest trees, or by the babbling brook and lazy river hath it sought out an undisturbed retreat; and there its devotee is to be found, stretched luxuriously along the green sward, worshipping his divinity after his own calm and easy fashion. Foolish fellow! up and away unto the crowded city, for there money, "the white man's god," is to be made spend thy days in bargaining and wrangling and over−reaching, and thy nights in scheming and calculating until thou art worth a million! but rest not, relax not, toil and bargain and wrangle on, and thou mayest yet be worth a million and a half! and then if death some morning put a stop unto thy profitable speculations, think, for all thy care and anxiety thy joyless days and sleepless nights what a glorious consolation is thine! The poor idler goes to his grave not worth a groat, while thou descendest to thine everlasting rest with more money invested in the funds than any man on 'change!

"Idleness," saith the proverb, "is the mother of mischief." How strange that such a noisy brawling urchin should spring from so inoffensive a parent! For my own part, I have a respect for idle people; and, when no one suffers by their idleness, they are the most sensible people on the face of the earth your only true philosophers. Love of ease is natural to man, and industry came into the world with original sin. Hard work occasioned the first murder. If Cain, instead of tilling the stubborn earth and earning his bread "by the sweat of his brow," had had nothing to do but lounge on the mountain−side like his brother Abel, play his pipe, watch his sheep feeding, and then feed himself, he would never have envied him, and the second great transgression would not have come to pass.

That idleness is the natural state of man, cannot be doubted. Like the flowers of the field it springeth up without care or culture; but industry is a hot−house plant, of forced and artificial growth, and is apt to wither away, if not anxiously tended and cherished. In asserting these undeniable truths, let it not be supposed that any reproach is

meant to be cast on the industrious. No the man who sacrifices his love of ease, and labors unremittingly that his wife may be at rest, and his little ones comfortably clothed and fed that he may be free from duns and debts, and walk through the world fearing and beholden to no living creature such a man is worthy of all admiration. But there are others, who have enough and to spare, but still go on the slaves of avarice and habit; who dignify their love of gain with the name of industry, and plume themselves mightily on "never being a single minute idle;" why what are they at best but miserable earth−worms voluntary bondmen; the worldly wise, and yet the most egregious fools!

One thing that has undeservedly brought idleness into bad repute, is the confounding it with laziness, than which no two things can be more different. The lazy sluggard who hates motion in every shape, and lies upon the earth an inert piece of animation, is scarcely upon a par with the beasts that perish. A fine specimen of this tribe was a fat old gentleman of this city, a prodigious eater, who, in the summer time, used to sit, by the day together, smoking and steaming like a caldron. The only exercise he was ever known to take consisted in calling out, after he had sat on one seat long enough to make it uncomfortably warm, "John, bring me a cool chair!" and then moving from one chair to the other. Now idle people are the very reverse of this. In all sorts of games and sports they are first and foremost. It is they who can pitch a quoit or bowl a cricket−ball straighter and truer than any one else; the swiftest runners and most active wrestlers of the district. It is they who have roamed the country far and wide, and know where the finest fishing streams are to be found, and where the birds are most plentiful the healthiest, hardiest, and most venturesome of heaven's creatures; who will scramble up a precipice, and risk their necks for a bird's nest, but droop and pine away under a regular routine of money−making tasks. There are, however, different varieties of this species, like every other. Some of a more contemplative turn, who seek out the pleasant nooks and shady places, known but to themselves, and there muse away their hours. These are intimate acquaintances of nature, and are initiated into thousands of her little secrets that others know not of; and with Shakspeare in their hand, they read unfolded mysteries of mind and matter, that seem, and are, not the records of observation, but the outpourings of inspiration. Such an one was Jaques, though rather too cynical; and, at times, even such an one must Shakspeare have been. It appears impossible that the scenes in the forest of Arden could have been engendered any where except "under the shade of melancholy boughs." So thoroughly are they imbued with a true pastoral spirit, so free from the noise and smoke of cities, that it is really strange, after reading "As you like it," with your mind filled with images of lonely forest walks, and their denizens the duke of Amiens and his "comates and brothers in exile," to walk to the window and see so many streets, houses, carriages, and fantastically dressed men and women. How pitiable would he be who could afford to dream away hours amid such scenes, and yet who should forsake them "For so much dross as may be grasped thus!" Yet idle people are looked upon as the very worst and "most good−for−nothing" people in existence. They are under the ban of society. The worldly father points them out to his son as a warning, and the prudent mother watches that her marriageable daughter's eye rests not on them; their names are stricken from invitation lists; and every griping scoundrel twitteth them and vaunteth his superior pack−horse qualifications. And for what? why, their comparative poverty and practical philosophy. Yet they are in one sense the wealthiest of men, "Poor and content, is rich, and rich enough; But riches, fineless, is as poor as winter To him that ever fears he shall be poor."

In towns a person of this temperament is altogether out of his element. He is a connoisseur in sweet, wholesome air, and sighs to rove about in search of it. As long as the grizzly tyrant winter keeps the fair spring in chains, it matters little where he is; but when one of those glorious days that herald her approach breaks forth, and nature becomes, on the instant, all life and animation, there are few men, let them be as industrious as they may, who have not experienced his feelings. Who, on such a day, has not felt a pleasing languor steal over him, and a distaste for ordinary pursuits and avocations? Who does not long to leave the hubbub of the city far behind, to stroll forth into the fields, and have the taint of the smoke blown off by the fresh April winds? and who would not do so if "Necessity, the master still of will, How strong soe'er it is," did not drag him back to his toils? Oh! what a clog it is on a man's spirit to feel that he is a slave (for what are they but slaves with the privilege of change, whose daily labor buys their daily bread?) to long for liberty, yet feel that the pure air, the green fields, the blue sky, the very commonest gifts of nature, that are enjoyed by the brutes of the earth and the birds of the air, are denied to him? True, he may break through all restraints and go about inhaling as much fresh air as he pleases; but

when the cravings of appetite hint to him that it is dinner time, whence are to come the victuals that constitute that important item in the sum total of human happiness? Man is unfortunately a carnivorous animal, and must, once a day at least, be fed with flesh, fowl, or fish: he cannot make an unsophisticated repast off the roots and fruits of the earth, for though "his anatomical construction Bears vegetables in a grumbling sort of way Yet certainly he thinks, beyond all question, Beef, veal, and mutton easier of digestion."

Then why are idle people, who can afford to be so without wrong to any one, so hardly dealt with, when all men, deserving the name, would be idle if they could? Who ever knew a creature that made use of the too−common expression, "I am never easy unless I am doing something," that was worth passing an hour with, or that showed the slightest symptoms of having a soul? He cannot be easy without doing something, merely because he cannot hold communion with himself; he has no treasures of thought to which he can revert, and his mind preys upon itself unless exercised in the miserable distinctions and petty gains and triumphs of business, which is at best but a necessary evil. With a few exceptions, I much admire the state of things that the old courtier in the Tempest proposes to introduce into the enchanted island if he were king of it

"No kind of traffic Would I admit; no name of magistrate; Letters should not be known; no use of service, Of riches, or of poverty; no contracts, Successions; bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none: No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil; No occupation; all men idle, all; And women too; but innocent and pure. All things in common nature should produce Without sweat or endeavor; treason, felony, Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine, Would I not have; but nature should bring forth Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance, To feed my innocent people."

PRIZE TRAGEDIES.

In days of yore Melpomene was a proud and haughty dame, who had to be long and ardently wooed before she would vouchsafe her company to any one; she was like one of those fair, unreasonable damsels in the age of chivalry, for whose sake a man had to endure much abstinence, penance, and mortification before he was rewarded with the slightest degree of familiarity; but now she is transformed into a mere modern miss, who will flirt and keep company with all who take the trouble of asking her. And then both she and her votaries have become mercenary. In former times it was "the divinity which stirred within them" that prompted tragic poets to the creation of those mighty works that have spread a halo around their names; now it is a mere matter of dollars and cents: ours serve for hire, and undertake to manufacture tragedies on any given subject that may be dictated to them. On one point, however, they have decidedly the advantage; if the ancients were superior to the moderns in strength, they are far inferior in productiveness; and an author now litters more literary offspring in a year, than three or four could formerly bring forth in ten; but what is produced with so little trouble and in such abundance, is sickly and short−lived; whilst the rare, but healthy, hardy offspring of the intellects of other years still continue to bloom and "flourish in immortal youth."

The great point of inferiority of the ancients to us was their ignorance of machinery, the discoveries in which we have applied admirably both to physics and literature. Our forefathers were in bodily strength immensely superior to the present slim generation; yet by the aid of engines we can do more in an hour than they could in a year. So it is with the drama. They were giants in intellect, and a tragedy was with them a tremendous mental struggle and victory; with us it is a mere mechanical affair. The matter is a trifle, the manner all in all. We take an interesting anecdote, put it into turgid blank verse, inflate it with bombast and epithets, divide and subdivide it into acts and scenes, and, by the aid of machinery, scenery, dresses and decorations, make it go off with more noise and eclat than can be produced by the most striking and wonderful delineations of human passion. The curious anatomy of the heart of man is not half so imposing as the intricacies of a "grand tramp march;" and a prolonged mock combat and pantomimic style of giving up the ghost are superior to the very finest poetry. This is not idle complaining. It is so, and will always be so, as long as show is preferred to sense; and such things have probably been much in vogue ever since Thespis played upon a cart, though it was reserved for the present age to be

exclusively devoted to them. The "good old times" is now generally allowed to be a misnomer, and it is foolish to affect to lament over them. The world has greatly improved since then; but certainly in most things connected with the drama we have retrograded lamentably. Modern comedies are poor enough; but from two−thirds of modern tragedies, there is no affectation in saying "heaven deliver us!"

The literature of these United States has been made the subject of taunt and ridicule; and it is to be wondered that such has so long been the case when the means of remedying the defect were so easy. It appears that at any time authors can be forced into existence as easily as mushrooms; and it is really curious to observe, as soon as a five hundred dollar premium is offered, what a flood of inspiration deluges the whole land! The mere reading of the advertisements created hundreds of tragic poets who never before dreamt of such a thing; and a speculator in quills realized a very handsome profit by buying up all the stock within his reach on the first announcement of the business. The ploughman quitted his plough and wrote a tragedy, the drygood−clerks neglected their customers and wrote tragedies, the frequenters of ten−pin alleys, and similar elegant places of resort, stayed at home o' nights and wrote tragedies; and it is understood that some of them were the most unique things of their kind that were ever submitted to the eye of man. To say nothing of the grammar or the chirography, the violations of the simple rules of Webster's spelling book were grievous in the extreme; and towards the latter end of the fifth act "Murders were done too terrible for the ear." In some instances the carnage was immense. Two or three of the much−enduring committee have scarcely recovered from the shock which their intellects received, and yet retain a perfectly excusable and natural antipathy for the very name of tragedy. Considering the manner in which they had to addle their brains by perusing all this perilous stuff, there ought certainly to have been a benefit for the remuneration of the sufferers that is, the committee. This was the prevailing character of the pieces, the authors of whom had taken for their guide Othello's exclamation, "blood, blood, Iago!" and cut short the mortal career of their dramatis person æ with the most unrelenting pens. Others there were of a more lady−like and lachrymatory turn, who dealt in "Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise, Three−piled hyperbole, spruce affectation," and preferred tears to blood; but they also, in self−defence, were obliged to make away with a great number, as the depth of a tragedy now−a−days depends upon the mortality that takes place among the persons brought together; consequently there is twice as strong an infusion of the tragic in a play where ten people are killed, as there is where only five expire. Soldiers, citizens, peasants, and such plebeian parts as are enacted by supernumeraries whose names are not in the bills, are, however, not taken into account; just as in real life, a great outcry is made about a dead general, while the rank and file rot quietly away without any thing being said about the matter.

But Mr. Forrest, Mr. Forrest, what excuse can be made for thee? Thou who didst profess to admire the Indian character, and venerate their great and noble qualities. Was it well done in thee to single out this persecuted race of beings from the nations and communities of men on the face of the earth, as fit subjects to be backed and tortured by all the poverty−stricken and unfledged poets in the country? "Call you this backing your friends?" Is it not enough that they have been ruthlessly driven from house and home, that their lands have been forcibly wrested from them, and the graves of their fathers violated, but you must, by holding out a five hundred dollar inducement, hound on all sorts of people to dramatize the lives of their warriors, and put into the mouths of their sachems and orators, bad grammar and bombast, which when living they would have blushed to utter? Think, Mr. Forrest, of the number of noble chiefs that have been resuscitated through your means, and transformed into senseless ranting braggadocios. They may not, to be sure, appear in public; but will not their several vainglorious authors distribute the manuscripts of their unsuccessful efforts among their friends and connexions all over the country, merely to show the incapacity of the committee, thus rendering the Indian character ridiculous, and adding, as it were, insult to injury? If you want more prize tragedies, make the affair general, give the money to the best, but play all that are sent, and let us have a laugh at the whole world. Make no more invidious selections, but let there be classic victims, Grecians and Romans, of whom antiquity furnishes an inexhaustible supply. Besides, it would be a very difficult matter to make another aboriginal tragedy. Indianisms, such as "smoking the pipe of peace," and keeping the "chain of friendship bright," sound very well when judiciously and sparingly introduced; but it does not answer to compound many long speeches entirely of such figurative fragments.

OYSTERS.

Man has been styled a speaking animal, a laughing animal, a bargaining animal, and a drunken animal, in contradistinction to all other animals who neither speak, nor laugh, nor bargain, nor get drunk; but a cooking animal seems after all to be his most characteristic and distinguishing appellation. In the important art of cooking victuals he shines pre−eminent; here he taxes all his faculties, racks his invention, and gives unbounded range to his imagination. Nature has given to every other animal a peculiar taste, and furnished three or four kinds of food to suit that taste, but this sense in man accommodates itself to an innumerable quantity of materials. He has made copious selections from all things that dwell upon the face of the globe from the birds of the air, from the fish of the sea, from the inhabitants of lake and river, yea, from the bowels of the earth has he extracted substances to minister to his palate, and the whole mineral and vegetable world has been ransacked with indefatigable industry for its gratification. Thousands of his species pass their lives in dreary mines to send forth the simple but indispensable salt with which he seasons his viands; while others fit out frail vessels, and amid storm and tempest, traverse the wilderness of waters for certain spices that add piquancy to a favorite dish! But after he has collected all the products of the world together, that is only the commencement the preliminary mustering of his forces. What are all these materials collectively to the innumerable, the inconceivable quantity of dishes which he manufactures from them by skilful combinations or incongruous mixtures? Twelve figures can be set down in thousands of different ways and no two alike; then out of those millions of primitive substances, what countless quintillions of dishes can he not compound! whilst every day new secrets are brought to light and added to the limitless list of gastronomic discoveries.

The ancients knew something as regarded these matters; but still they seemed to have studied expense and vanity more than real gratification. There are few that have not heard of the extravagances of an Heliogabalus, his brains of flamingos, his tongues of nightingales, and his heads of ostriches, six hundred of which were served up in a single dish, and for which single dish the deserts of Arabia must have been scoured and desolated but there is no ingenuity in this, nothing remarkable, save its monstrous folly. At a later period the art took a more complex form. In 1577 the abstemious cardinal, Ascanius Colonna, gave an entertainment to the prince of Nassau, when the following unique *olla podrida* was produced, which was looked upon as one of the greatest achievements of the times, and was so admired and lauded by all who partook of it, that a certain holy father present at the feast, composed a Latin ode upon it, and handed the receipt down to an ungrateful posterity, who refuse to avail themselves of this *chef d'oeuvre* in the annals of cookery. The ingredients were "ten pounds of beef, three pounds of a pig, six wood pigeons, one pound of truffles, six thrushes, one capon, three pounds of turnips, six handsfull of green fennel seed, two pounds of sausages composed of curious materials, one pound of pepper, six onions, twelve larks, three lobsters, seven lampreys, four choice cardoons, (a vegetable resembling celery) two heads of Bologna cabbage, three pounds of tallow, spices, salt, sugar, and other seasonings." How stomachs were constructed in those days it is not stated.

The United States possess an advantage over all the nations of the earth in two things highly conducive to human happiness oysters and peaches. Men may disagree about forms of government, or the fine arts, or the relative merits of poets, painters, and actors; and whether they are right or wrong, may be perfectly sincere and well−meaning in their opinions; but whoever denies the complete supremacy of the oysters and peaches of this part of the world, must be given over as incurably infected with prejudice and perverseness. The peaches of England are nothing, and the oysters, generally speaking, no more to be compared to these, than a crab−apple to a pippin; though there ought to be an especial reservation made in favor of what is called the "Colchester native," the flavor of which must dwell in the grateful remembrance of all who have had the good fortune to taste them; they are uncommonly sweet, but small a very choice oyster for ladies; but when taken into a tolerably capacious mouth, do not touch the palate at every point there is still something wanting, and you do not experience that unalloyed gratification, that fulness of delight which is the necessary consequence of swallowing a large, fresh, fat, Yorkbay oyster. So extremely grateful are the latter to all who truly appreciate their estimable qualities, that every additional one only creates a keener desire for its successor, "As if increase of appetite had grown By what

it fed on," until the stomach signifies its incapacity to receive a farther supply of the luscious and delectable food.

Man is naturally a self−opiniated contrary animal, and feels a natural inclination to disagree with his species on all earthly questions; but still he divides into parties and subdivides into factions, and it is possible to find half a dozen people who have the same views in politics, religion, and literature; but perhaps no two were ever formed since the creation with exactly the same tenets respecting the stomach. They may hold on together for some time, and confess that they both like boiled salmon or roast ducks; but let them speak upon the subject of eating for a quarter of an hour, and a hundred minute but important differences of taste discover themselves. Indeed, two men alike in this respect would be a much greater rarity than the two Dromios. There are few points on which there is a more unanimous opinion entertained than oysters. All agree as to their virtues in the first instance; but whether they are best raw, or stewed, or fried, or broiled, or pickled, is the subject of endless cavillings, and interminable harangues. The longest dispute I ever listened to was whether it was best to devour these creatures with black pepper or red; and such was the earnestness of the disputants that the man employed in opening them, making a mistake, kept helping the red pepper advocate with black and the black pepper zealot with red; and to the infinite amusement of the lookers on, neither found out the difference until they were told, when both instantly declared they thought the oysters had a very peculiar taste! just as newspapers or politicians will now−a−days commence a fiery dispute concerning democratic and federal parties, or the powers of the general and state governments, until they unconsciously change sides in the course of the argument, without being anything the wiser; and just so trivial and undistinguishable are half the disputes into which we poor brainless bipeds plunge with such uncontrollable fury, to the infinite amusement of all calm and dispassionate spectators. But it will not do to go on grounding general reflections on an oyster. It was made for better things than to be a theme from which to extract a questionable moral. I would if I could be eloquent in thy praise, thou best and gravest of fish thou most nutritious and di gestible of moluscous substances thou stanchest friend and steadiest supporter of Afric's trampled sons, for whom thou daily effectest more than Wilberforce can ever hope to compass much do I regret that the insatiable appetites of the citizens are robbing their bay of its greatest boast; like the boy who killed the goose for the golden eggs, they are not content with the yearly produce of thy fruitful beds, but they leave them oysterless, seize on both interest and principal, and expect a miracle to provide for the future. It is easy to foresee the ruinous consequences of such atrocious conduct but it is not in common prose that thy merits and sufferings should be commemorated. I will take my harp and sweep its softest strings.

LINES ON A NEWLY−OPENED YORK−BANKER. With feelings strange and undefined I gaze upon thy face, Thou choice and juicy specimen of an ill−fated race; How calmly, yea, how meekly thou reclinest in thy shell, Yet what thy woes and sufferings are man may conjecture well! For thou hast life as well as he who recklessly seeks thine, And, couldst thou speak, might draw forth tears as briny as thy brine; For thou was torn from friends and home and all thy heart could wish, Thou hapless, helpless, innocent, mute, persecuted fish. Perhaps thou wast but newly joined to some soft plump young bride, Who op'd her mouth for food with thee when flowed the flowing tide; Perhaps thou hast a family, from whom thou hast been torn, Who sadly wail for him, alas, who never will return! Thou wast happy on thy native bed, where blithesome billows play, Till the cruel fisher wrench'd thee from thy `home, sweet home,' away; He stow'd thee in his coble and he rowed thee to the strand Thou wast bought and sold and opened, and placed in this right hand! I know that while I moralize thy flavor fades away, I know thou shouldst be ate alive, before thy sweets decay! I know that it is foolishness, this weak delay of mine, And epicures may laugh at it as sentimental whine. Well, let them laugh. I still will drop a tear o'er thy sad fate, Thou wretched and ill−fated one! thou sad and desolate! O'er thee and o'er thy kindred hangs one all−consuming doom, To die a slow and lingering death, or, living, find a tomb! Like the Indian from the forest like the roebuck from the glen, Thy race is dwindling silently before the arts of men; Ye are passing from the river, from the sea−bank, and the shore, And the haunts that long have known ye, shall know ye soon no more! The Blue−point and the Shrewsbury† are vanishing away, And clamless soon will be our streams, and oysterless our bay; Rapacious man, before your prime, ordains that ye shall die, And drags ye from your cool retreats to boil and stew and fry! Why were ye made so racy, rich, and luscious to the taste? 'Tis that has stripped your thickest banks, and made your beds a waste; "Your virtues have proved sanctified and holy traitors to ye," And that which was your proudest boast has served but to undo ye! E'en I, the friend of all thy kind, when I think

of what thou art, When I ponder o'er the melting joys thy swallowing will impart, Can delay thy fate no longer; one look, it is my last! A gulp one more a silent pause a sigh and all is past!

PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF AN UNFORTUNATE.

"Ah me! for aught that ever I could read, Could ever hear by tale or history, The course of true love never did run smooth."

Thomas Augustus Phelps was a junior clerk in a small retail store, in an unfrequented part of Maiden−lane. His salary was insignificant, and his expenses were considerable; and, there being no visible channel through which extraneous funds could come into his possession, how he contrived, as the saying is, "to make both ends meet," was a problem which his most intimate friends were utterly unable to solve, and which was, moreover, a subject upon which, for some reason or other, he always declined to throw any light. He was generally characterized as a genteel and rather well−informed young man that is, his dress was unexceptionable; his address easy, forward, and flippant; and he discoursed with uncommon fluency on a number of subjects which he knew nothing about. After he had gone through the business of the day, he improved his mind, of an evening, by playing billiards, and his morals by lounging about the saloons and lobbies of the theatre, from which places he criticized the performances in a very decided manner. This he was the better enabled to do, from being hand and glove with many of the minor actors, by whom he was let into the secret that the principal favorites of the town were persons destitute of ability, but that the capabilities of the minors were uncommon, though lost to the public by a monstrous system of managerial mismanagement, which bore heavily upon the whole mass, and with intense severity upon the peculiar talents of the several informants. But his greatest qualification was his inexhaustible fund of what is termed "small talk!" This he poured forth on all occasions, in "one weak, washy, everlasting flood," in a way that gained him the ardent admiration of numerous young ladies, and at last made an indelible impression upon the susceptible heart of Miss Julia Carmine, only surviving child of an artificial−flower manufacturer in Division−street. Julia was a beauteous being, in the spring of life. Her features were strictly and chastely classical, excepting her nose, mouth, chin, and forehead; her eyes were exceedingly blue, her color rich and roseate, and her auburn tresses flowed in luxuriant ringlets down her lovely neck, which was somewhat short. Nature had done every thing for her, setting aside that she wore artificial curls, and had purchased the majority of her teeth; and though her complexion of a morning was rather sallow, yet when dressed out, and seen by candle or gas−light, she was in reality a very pretty looking young woman. She had faults, to be sure who has not? But the greatest of them were, that she talked occasionally a sort of mongrel French, played on the guitar, and kept an album.

What a sacred thing is first love! and its accompanying train of inexplicable and indescribable feelings! and how hallowed in the imagination becomes every spot connected with this purest of passions; particularly the spot where a mutual reciprocation of sentiment first took place! It is that of which I am about to speak. Julia and Thomas Augustus sat alone one evening in a small arbor, or rather wooden box, in a retired corner of the "Bowery tea−garden;" "The moon hid her light From the heavens that night," and a variegated lamp, attached to the front of the box, was all that shed a melancholy radiance over the scene. Both experienced sensations unknown till then, and they had each a glass of ice−cream before them.

"How beautiful is the firmament, with all its countless myriads of twinkling stars," observed Thomas Augustus Phelps, looking upwards.

"Beautiful indeed!" sighed Julia.

"And this ice−cream aint so coarse neither," said he.

"No by no means," responded she.

"Methinks," continued Thomas, "I could sit for ever thus, with thee by my side, gazing upon the blue vault of heaven, beloved Julia!"

Julia did not answer, but her silence spoke more eloquently than words; she bowed her head, and it is presumed blushed, but, as the lamp wanted trimming, there was not light enough distinctly to ascertain that fact. Thomas Augustus gently drew the sweet girl towards him, and oh! extremity of bliss! she did not resist. The coldness of worldly restraint was broken down they exchanged vows of everlasting fidelity, and Thomas was about to seal the covenant on her lovely lips, when the man that goes about to gather up the empty glasses, unceremoniously popped his head into the box, and observed, "that he did not allow of them there sort of proceedings in his garden!" Thomas Augustus would have resented this injurious insinuation on the instant, only he was by no means athletic, and did not possess a particle of courage. He therefore contented himself with declaiming for some time in a style of lofty invective, and wound up by indignantly paying the man what he owed him, tucking Julia under his arm, and walking out of the shrubbery.

It is necessary, however, to premise that twelve months antecedent to the tender passages on which we have been dilating, Mr. Phelps commenced business on his own account in Canal−street. His debut was made during that auspicious period denominated the "Canal−street fever," when, in consequence of the lowness of the rents in that part of the city, every body flocked thither, which caused the landlords to quadruple their original demands, by which judicious proceeding they ruined their tenants and got no rent at all. He had invariably represented his affairs to Julia as being in a most prosperous state; but unfortunately, though he was a young man possessed of many virtues, a love of truth was not one of them. Indeed, they who knew him best, affirmed that he was a notorious liar, and there is no reason to doubt their word. As he had started altogether on credit, and as he spent all the money that came in as the goods went out, when his bills fell due, he told his creditors he was extremely sorry, but that he had no funds to meet their demands: they in return assured him that they were extremely sorry to hear it, seized upon the residue of his stock, and turned him out of doors. This was hard to bear, and he flew on the wings of love to find consolation in the society of his beloved Julia; but she was not at home. The next day he called, and still the same answer. On the evening of the third day he was admitted to her presence, but "Oh frailty thy name is woman!" she had heard of his misfortunes, and received him with chilling politeness. The lady was not at all mercenary; but then she had found it convenient, as she informed him, to plight her virgin vows to Mr. Raphael Jackson, (familiarly termed Ralph Jackson) and they were to be married early in the ensuing week. Thomas stood mute and motionless, for, as the poet justly observes, "Oh! colder than the wind that freezes Founts, that but now in sunshine played, Is the congealing pang which seizes The trusting bosom when betrayed." What barbed the dart and made the matter worse, was that this Mr. Raphael Jackson a young lawyor with a good deal of cunning, and more impudence, consequently likely to do well in the world was his most particular friend. Julia aroused him from his trance by asking him if he would not "stay to tea?" this offer he indignantly spurned, and immediately quitted the premises. The next morning he found on his table an invitation to the wedding. It was, of course, never suspected that he would accept it, and was purely meant as a piece of gratuitous insolence on the part of the bride. Whoever calculated, however, on his not coming, reckoned without their host. "Yes!" exclaimed he mentally, as he surveyed the perfumed rose−colored note; "yes; I will see her once more for the last ay, for the last time!"

About seven o'clock in the evening of the twenty−second of April, 1827, a jovial wedding party were assembled at the house of Mr. Carmine, in Division−street, to celebrate the nuptials of his accomplished daughter. All was prepared for the impressive ceremony. The bride had got through shedding the preliminary tears usual on these occasions; the bridegroom was doing his best, as in duty bound, to look joyous and happy; the bridesmaids were tittering and laughing for some reason or reasons best known to themselves; the groomsmen were endeavoring to be uncommonly facetious, and the clergyman had put on a look meant to rebuke all tittering and facetiousness, when the door suddenly opened, and a figure stalked into the room. It was Mr. Thomas Augustus Phelps, but alas, how changed! He looked not like one who had come to participate in a scene of happiness. His boots were dirty, his hat was slouched over his eyes, his coat was buttoned up to his chin, his cravat was far from clean, and his hands were stuck into his trowsers' pockets. The company recoiled, the bride uttered a faint exclamation, and the

bridegroom stepped forward and demanded in a bullying tone of voice, "the meaning of this extraordinary intrusion?" Phelps spoke not a word, but drew from his right−hand coat pocket the perfumed rose−colored invitation note, and presented it to the bridegroom. He then drew from his left−hand coat pocket an uncommonly large horse−pistol, upon which Mr. Raphael Jackson retreated with great precipitation. Phelps deliberately cocked the pistol, and an uncommon curiosity took possession of the guests to see which one of them he intended to sacrifice. This interesting suspense was soon ended; for slowly bringing the fatal weapon in a line with his own forehead, he proceeded to pull the irrevocable trigger. A struggle ensued, and dreadful to relate, in the scuffle the pistol went off full in the face of one of the fair young bridesmaids. Fortunately she sustained no injury, which led to a suspicion that the instrument of death had been loaded with an eye to safety. Upon this the gallant bridegroom experienced a revivification of valor. He stepped forward, informed the unfortunate Phelps that he should hear from him in the morning through the medium of Mr. Hays, and peremptorily ordered him to leave the room. The poor bride, who during this scene had been rather in the back ground, thought she now perceived a favorable opportunity for display, and accordingly, as the most natural expedient, commenced a fainting fit; but there being no one sufficiently on the alert to catch her in his arms, and having, in the hurry of the moment, neglected the precaution of seeing that there was a chair in her immediate vicinity, she was obliged, when just upon the brink of insensibility, not only to recede considerably, but also to look around her and diverge from a straight line in order to attain that necessary piece of furniture. This gave such an air of insincerity to the whole proceeding, that even her warmest admirers were compelled to admit that the attempt was a failure. Mr. Jackson once more asked Mr. Phelps whether he intended to quit the room, or whether he was waiting for him (Jackson) to put him out. Phelps scorned to reply; a peculiar expression flitted over his pale features, he cast an indescribable look towards the bride, and then did as he was desired.

On the following day, about noon, a gallant Liverpool packet was passing Sandy Hook, outward bound. On her deck stood the principal actor in the intended tragedy of the preceding evening. His disappointment in love, and some fraudulent transactions connected with his late failure, had induced him to seek relief in change of scene. The breeze was fair, and the vessel was careering "o'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea" at the rate of about nine knots an hour. Phelps stood at the stern of the ship gazing intently on the land of his forefathers, which was fast fading in the distance. A slight blue line at the verge of the horizon was all that remained to him of the home of his childhood the scene of so many balls, and publics, and parties where he had danced, and sung, and played billiards, and eaten oysters when a mere boy; the tears started to his eyes, he leaned his head over the ship's side, and in a voice choked with agony, exclaimed

"Oh, captain, I am very sick!"

The captain, in that cheerful tone of voice with which a man who has nothing the matter with him consoles another who has, replied, "Never mind, sir you'll be better in a day or two haul taut the fore−top−sail halliards there! belay!"

This to Phelps, whose face exhibited as many shades of blue, and black, and green, and yellow, as the back of a dying dolphin, was a great consolation. Indeed I have myself often had occasion to observe the happy effects of similar scraps of comfort applied to sea−sick passengers. It is so pleasant when you are suffering under this horrible affliction when every minute seems an age, and every hour an eternity to be told, "never mind, sir, you'll get over it in less than a week, maybe!"

Time rolled on, and nothing reached the American shores concerning the fate of Thomas Augustus Phelps, except a flying report that he had been undergoing a course of exercises in the Brixton tread−mill, when one Sunday morning, in the autumn of the year 1829, a shabby−genteel personage was seen strutting up Broadway. It was Phelps yet why was he here? His first love blessed another; and the children that ought to have been called Phelps, were christened Jackson. The wooden paling of Trinity church−yard was at that period prostrate, and the cast−iron railing had not been erected, so that there was no obstacle to a free ingress to and egress from the burying−ground. Phelps wandered in among the tombs a presentiment of some overhanging evil weighed heavily

upon his breast, and before he had proceeded far he came to a plain marble slab almost overgrown with grass. A strange curiosity seized him; he knelt down and parted the rank weeds which over−shadowed it; a sunbeam at that moment darted precisely on the place, and he saw, carved in legible German−text, the simple inscription "Julia." He was indescribably affected; and yet he felt a melancholy pleasure in thinking that she had too late become sensible of his merits, and pined into the grave in consequence of his absence. While indulging in this train of reflection, a troop of little boys, attracted by the extraordinary spectacle of a man upon his kness in a church−yard, began to gather round, shouting and pelting him with earth and small pebbles. He arose to reprimand them; but there having been a heavy shower of rain, and he having white duck trowsers on, the effect of his kneeling, upon his clothes, can, like a young heroine's feelings, be more easily imagined than described. He instantly, therefore, became an object of universal observation, and the little boys shouted and pelted more than ever. Phelps was exasperated beyond measure; he seized one of the young miscreants, shook him well, and threatened the most dreadful corporeal chastisement if he did not desist.

"Hurrah for Jackson!" exclaimed the young rebel, nothing daunted.

"Hurrah for Jackson!" chimed in his companions in evil−doing. This pointed, though unintentional allusion to his rival, at once unnerved Phelps recollections of former insults and injuries came over him, and he strode from the burialground, the boys hurraing all the while at his coattail; when lo! who should be seen issuing from the church porch but Mr. Raphael Jackson himself with his own Julia, now Mrs. Jackson, hanging on his arm! This was too much so then it appeared she had not pined away in his absence she had not died and he had been kneeling by the side of some one else's Julia! They passed him without speaking, he muttered dreadful imprecations to himself, and bent his way down Wall−street.

He is now only the wreck of his former self, though he is more corpulent than he was wont to be, yet it is not a healthy corpulency; and his apparel is the extreme of what is generally denominated "seedy." Yet amid this moral and physical desolation some traces of identity are yet preserved some glimmerings of what once was Phelps! There is still that peculiar strut in his walk, and he still wears his hat knowingly adjusted on one side of his head; but he drinks like a fish, talks politics incessantly, and his shirt−frill is much bedaubed with snuff. What will be his final fate depends upon ulterior circumstances; at present it is enveloped in the mists and darkness of futurity.

SPRING.

Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

Song of Solomon, chap. II.

Every year, all the periodicals, in every city, in every country of the earth, have something to say upon the subject of spring, and have had something to say since time was, or at least, since periodicals were born, and will continue to have something to say until time shall cease to be. It is, in all respects, a most prolific theme, and there is no more chance of exhausting it, than of exhausting our kind mother earth of grass, leaves, and flowers, and the never−dying vegetative principle. The reason is obvious enough: last year's grass, and leaves, and flowers are dead and past away their freshness and fragrance are forgotten, and their beauty is remembered no more; so it is with the essays, reflections, songs, and sonnets that sprang into life in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty−nine they also have passed away, and their sweet thoughts and pretty sayings are likewise remembered no more; but as last year's vegetation fell to the earth and became incorporated with it only to be reproduced again in forms of fresh brilliancy and beauty, so do the thoughts and images of former writers assume a new shape, and bear the impress of the present time by appearing in all magazines and newspapers, daily, weekly, and monthly, for the year eighteen hundred and thirty. And there is no plagiarism in all this; it is merely, as Puff says, "two people happening to think of the same idea, only one hit upon it before the other that's all." Indeed, who would

think of plagiarism on such an exhaustless subject as spring? Why a thousand thoughts and images that have lain dormant in the mind start into life at the mere mention of the word. As the fresh April breeze, laden with healthful fragrance, blows upon you, it becomes a sort of natural impulse to vent your feelings either by pen or speech. You look back upon the snow, and fog, and sharp unfeeling winds of winter as upon a desolate waste over which you have trodden, and fancy, as you see nature putting on her youthful gay attire, that you are entering into another and better state of existence; forgetful that though her spring may be eternal, your own is flitting fast away, never to be renewed. But no reflections! let them come with winter, their fitting season. Spring was made for enjoyment, or rather, anticipation of enjoyment promises of good pleasant visions, and gorgeous castles in the air. Experience convinces not the young. They think not of their last year's visions that have faded away, nor the aerial castles that have tumbled about their ears; or if they do, it is only to contrast their frailty with the firm texture and sure foundation of those in the perspective. But though spring be delightful to all classes, it is so to each in a different way, and for a different reason. In the country, your true agriculturist, though he wander amid a wilderness of sweets, marks not the tiny buds that are expanding and blooming into beauty all around to be sure, he hopes that no killing frost will come and spoil his prospects of cider, but that is all. These are too small concerns for his capacious head. He ponders on acres of corn and fields of buck−wheat, and plans where barley should be sown and where oats. He looks into futurity and calculates how much the yet unengendered grain will bring; he schemes how his barren land may be artificially fertilized in the best and cheapest manner, and it is his business, not his pleasure, to take note of the wonderful operations of nature. His wife considereth the dairy, and looketh out with motherly care that her sleek and velvet−coated cows be not turned from their winter quarters into damp and swampy meadows, lest they contract colds, coughs, catarrhs, and other disorders incident to cattle; while the rosy−cheeked daughter attends to the poultry, (always the daughter's perquisite) and literally "reckons her chickens before they are hatched." Anxiously does she watch that the young turkeys (the most tender of domestic fowls) do not get wet feet; for on the proceeds arising from their sale depend the splendor of the gown and the quantity and quality of the ribbon that have in summer to adorn the village church, and excite the wonder and admiration of its simple congregation. So passes spring with them and others of their class. They talk and think less of its beauties than those who merely get glimpses of them in crowded cities, and have to draw upon their imagination for the rest.

In the city spring brings with it a still more multifarious collection of hopeful schemes and projects. Business that has been in a state of stagnation during the winter now flows briskly through a thousand different channels; and the ladies, whose business is pleasure, are busier than any one else, for the spring fashions have come; milliners are now the most obsequious of people; tailors examine with a curious eye the coats of their customers as they meet them in the streets, and inquire most kindly and disinterestedly after their health and prospects; merchants are scattering their ventures abroad, ships are fitting out, much beef is salted down, and many biscuits baked, but a number of hard things said about the tariff notwithstanding; the North river is emancipated from ice, and owners of steamboats are preparing to oblige the public and ruin themselves by vigorous competition; the rustling of silks is heard in Broadway, criticisms upon hats, gowns, and trimmings are much in vogue amongst the fair creatures who pace its fashionable side, and they look upon spring as the most charming season of the year, "it is so delightful for morning calls."

Spring is coming! all good things are coming! and some good things are going oysters are going there will soon be no R in the month, and then they are gone; but shad are coming; strawberries and pretty country girls are coming, so is fresh butter; the men of Rochester and Buffalo, and other districts of the "far west" have come, and they wander up and down the streets in "wrapt amazement" at the never ceasing jingling of fortepianos, and the twanging of guitars, harps, and other stringed instruments; the sons of the South have come, and Virginians, Carolinians, and Georgians are to be seen sauntering along, and gazing with horror at the shocking quantity of freedom enjoyed by the poor black wretches whom they chance to meet, and though they see it every summer, they are never able to get over the astonishment created by beholding a dark dandy or an African coquette as if white people possessed the exclusive right to make fools of themselves. "Ah!" think they, as a colored gentleman unceremoniously takes the wall of them "Ah! if I only had you in Savannah!"

But spring has still its sad feelings, and after levity comes heaviness of heart. It is a joyous season to those who, like the year, are in their springtime, just bursting into untried life; but to such as have seen that time pass away for ever, whose spirits are depressed by difficulties, or broken by unavailing struggles, it is a season rather of melancholy retrospection than present enjoyment. The aged or unfortunate are insensible to its influence; they recall *their* spring, and mournfully contrast the happy past with the dreary present; truly is it said, "Joy's recollection is no longer joy While sorrow's memory is sorrow still;" and deeply do they feel its truth. To those in their prime it is, at times, perhaps sadder still to look back upon the flowery fields of existence through which they have been rambling, and to contrast them with the beaten track they now tread, and the desolate prospect that lies before them. The friends of their youth have passed away, so have their brightest hopes; they feel themselves changed, and their capacities for happiness diminished; they see things full of joy and promise around, and are filled with a mixture of wordly scorn and unavailing regret for what can no more be theirs; and sadly do they enter into the feelings of the poet "The sky is blue, the sward is green, The leaf upon the bough is seen, The wind comes from the balmy west, The little songster builds its nest, The bee hums on from flower to flower, Till twilight's dim and pensive hour, The joyous year returns but when Shall by−past times come back again?"

PHILADELPHIA NEW−YORK BOSTON.

Satirists have said that all the concerns, great and small, of this bustling world, its love and war, laws, literature, and business, have self for their beginning and self for their end; and that even charity to others is only a more refined species of self−love. Whether these suppositions be correct or not, will, like the destiny of the lost pleiad, and the powers of the general government, always remain matters of opinion; and far be it from me to attempt to settle, and thereby render of no effect, such interesting topics of conversation and speculation.

In putting pen to paper, it is certainly best to avoid all new and hazardous assertions, and to content one's self with advancing, in a fearless manner, what no one can possibly doubt. I may, therefore, in the language of some writers, who display a large quantity of superfluous valor and determination when there is no occasion for it, boldly assert, without fear of contradiction, that self−love is no rarity in this world of ours. It manifests itself in a variety of ways, some of which are exceedingly curious and amusing, and as pleasant to laugh at as a friend's misfortunes. One of its most ludicrous forms is the way in which men interest themselves in little localities, the pride they feel in them, and the additional importance which they imagine attaches to themselves, in consequence of the celebrity of the city or district to which they belong, for some small matter or other. Thus, a Philadelphian identifies himself with the breed of horned cattle in the vicinity of that city he considers their fame and his own as inseparable, and looks down upon a citizen of New−York because the cows of Pennsylvania give richer milk than those of Long Island; a Bostonian thinks he ranks considerably higher in the scale of creation on account of the occult mystery of making pumpkin pies having attained a state of perfection in Boston as yet unknown in the regions of the south, north, and west; while a New−Yorker is apt to be dogmatical on all things connected with canals, though perhaps he never saw one in his life, merely because the longest one in the world was accomplished in his native state.

They say "there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous." Now the feelings of pride and love with which a man looks upon his native country, are very proper and natural; and though, in the eye of cold−blooded philosophy, a person is neither any thing the better nor the worse for the spot of earth which he may chance to have been born upon, yet men generally never have been, nor ever will be of that opinion. The laws and institutions of a country, the fame of its literature and science, and the long train of glorious deeds that have been accumulating for ages, descend to a man as a species of national property, and there is no one but who values himself so much the more for his share in it, and looks upon himself as braver and wiser on account of the brave and wise men his native land has bred. There is something noble in this feeling in the aggregate; but when it comes to be frittered away upon small matters to be divided and subdivided into counties, towns, and villages, it is simply ridiculous. Some persons carry their local feelings to an extraordinary extent: not only is their own country the greatest in the world, but their city, for some reason or other, is the best in the country; the street in

which they reside the best in the city, the house they occupy the best in the street, their room the best in the house, and themselves, by all odds, the best in the room. Nay, some do not even stop here. There are people who form little local attachments about their own persons, and fall in love with an eye, a nose, a cheek, a chin, or a finger−nail. One of the first vocalists on the British stage, is known absolutely to doat on the construction of his leg; he thinks, that since legs were made, nature never constructed such a pair as he is the possessor of, and he accordingly takes every opportunity of obtruding them upon the observation of the audience. The earnestness with which he details their circumference, in various parts, to his friends and acquaintance, and the complacency with which he regards them when only covered with thin black silk stockings, would be a fine subject for any clergyman who wished to preach a sermon on the vanities of this world. Unfortunately the costume of English opera but seldom affords an opportunity for the display of the pedestals on which the musical hero's body is erected, and those of Mr. were too often doomed to be secluded in long wide trowsers, from the admiration of the public. But the fates were not always averse, and times would occur when thin black silk stockings were not at variance with the stage regulations. Alexander the Great was a proud and happy man when he crossed the Granicus; Henry the Fifth when the battle of Agincourt brought the French nobles, who had been playing at dice for him, captives at his feet; Apelles when his rival mistook his curtain picture for reality, and Brigadier General the tailor, when surrounded by the best dressed staff in the militia, arrayed in coats of superfine cloth of his own making; but none of them were so proud and happy as this vocalist when he at last obtained an opportunity of submitting his unexceptionable pair of legs to the public view. He would rush upon the stage and pour forth his excited feelings in song, and there were few who could entrance an audience with the melody of sound like him they would hang with breathless attention upon every accent, and he never failed to make his exit amid the most deafening applause. This he was far from attributing altogether to his vocal powers. "Ah!" he would say, as he reached the side wing, at the same time slapping the objects of his admiration with affectionate familiarity "Ah! it is some time since they have seen such a leg as that!"

This is a long episode, but as it is a fact, and at the same time shows the length to which men will carry their local partialities, it may perhaps be excused. I was greatly amused last week on board a steam−boat, by listening attentively to a disputatious conversation between a Bostonian, a New−Yorker, and a Philadelphian, setting forth the several excellencies of their several cities. The Bostonian was the most learned and pedantic, the New−York man the most loquacious and grandiloquent, and the Philadelphian the most sensitive and uncompromising. The first discoursed in a lofty strain of the classic charms of antiquity, and the advanced state of literature and the fine arts in the regions round about Cape Cod. "The unequalled state of our literary and scientific institutions," said he, "and the extreme beauty of many of our public buildings must be admitted"

"Public buildings," interrupted the Philadelphian, cutting short the thread of the man of Boston's discourse, "if you want to see a public building, look at our market, look at our bank, look at our"

"And if you talk of architectural beauty," said the New−Yorker, "look at our City−hall and St. Paul's church, and the Park theatre; and as for the fine arts," continued he with solemnity, "I regard them as introducing luxury and corruption as fitted only for the tainted atmosphere of Europe as inconsistent with the genius of our political institutions, and, I thank heaven, the charge of encouraging them cannot be laid to New−York. No!" quoth he, gathering strength as he went along, like a stone rolling down a hill, "give me the useful arts. When I contemplate the immense sums *our* custom−house yearly pays into the national treasury when I behold our docks crowded with shipping when I survey our spacious bay, studded with islands, and our waters covered with"

"Your waters!" interrupted the Philadelphian, unable any longer to withstand this torrent of eulogium, "your waters! why there isn't a drop of water fit to drink in your whole town. If you want water, go to Philadelphia; or if you want milk, or peaches, or shad, or straight streets, or fresh butter, or fresh air, or"

"Fresh air!" interrupted York, in a supercilious tone, and with an ironical though somewhat agitated expression of countenance, "why, you have no air worth speaking of in Philadelphia; look at *our* fresh air *our* fresh sea breezes

daily wafted from the vast Atlantic through our streets."

"*Through* your streets!" reiterated the descendant of William Penn in a fury; "*through* your streets! Let me tell you, sir, your sea−breezes *may* be good enough, but your streets are so cursedly crooked that the breezes cannot find their way *through* them let me tell you that, sir."

The blood of the man of York was up; but he endeavored to keep down his rising wrath, and then in a voice of affected calmness, though trembling with rage, began to undervalue and sneer at straight streets, and boldly affirmed that crooked ones were infinitely better for a variety of reasons that he did not think proper to mention, and that any man of taste would decide that Pearl−street was a finer street than any in Philadelphia.

This was perfectly unbearable, and the Philadelphian, after swearing in a very wicked manner, went on to more than insinuate that his opponent was a fool, an ass, an idiot, and no gentleman; and they might have proceeded to settle whether straight or crooked streets were best by knocking each other's brains out, if the company had not interfered. Happily at this crisis the dinner−bell rang, and to those who have traveled much in steam−boats, I need say no more to account for the instant cessation of all symptoms of hostility. Never did the clock striking twelve in a romantic melo−drama produce so dramatic an effect, as the ringing of the dinner−bell on board of a steam−boat. All previous topics of conversation, argumentation, or disputation, are instantly swept away, and a universal rush is made towards the savory cabin. You may know an old traveler by observing him take his station near the hatchway as the time approaches. As soon as the welcome sound strikes his ear, he gives a look of triumph round the deck for a single instant at the inconsiderate persons who, in remote parts of it, have been gratifying their passion for the picturesque, and immediately dives below. Then may be seen the hurry and trepidation of the novice, the struggle on the part of the gentlemen between the attention and politeness due to the ladies, and their own love of victuals the painful efforts of the ladies to preserve an air of unconcern and composure, and their anxiety touching the delicate first−cuts from the bosoms of capons and turkeys then may be seen the utter looks of consternation of those unfortunate people who happen to be at the bows of the boat, and the glare of horrid malignity with which all the company above regard any corpulent old gentleman who takes his time in descending the ladder. The most impudent thing I ever witnessed in the whole course of my existence, was during a scene of this kind, on board a steam−boat last summer. An astonishingly fat old man was, by reason of his previous advantageous locality, almost the first who reached the entrance to the cabin when the dinner−bell rang. He swung his unwieldly mass of brawn slowly and heavily into the doorway, completely obstructing the passage, and proceeded to descend at a snail's pace, amid the smothered execrations of the company. After a considerable interval of time, he succeeded in reaching the middle of the ladder, when, what will it be supposed the fat old man did? He actually came to a full stop, took his hat from his head, drew from thence a pocket−handkerchief, proceeded deliberately to wipe his forehead, then one cheek, then the other, and concluded by drawing it leisurely across his chin, after which he deposited it in his hat again, placed his hat on his head, and continued on his way as if he had done nothing amiss. It speaks volumes for the morals of the people and the state of society, when I affirm, though it may seem incredible, that he escaped without the slightest violence! As the lady says in the tragedy, "curses kill not;" and it was lucky for the fat old gentleman that this was the case, otherwise he would have been a lifeless corpse before dinner that day.

I have rather wandered from the subject of localities, and it is now too late to recur to it again. I may, however, state, that the Bostonian, Philadelphian, and New−Yorker spoke no more during the passage, and doubtless parted with a hearty contempt for each other; thus adding one more to the many instances of the utility of warm disputes about nothing at all.

OLD SONGS.

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Mark it, Cesario, it is old and plain;
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones
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Do use to chaunt it.

Shaks.

I LIKE an old song. It is the freshest piece of antiquity in existence; and is, moreover, liable to no selfish individual appropriation. It was born far back in the traditionary times, so that its parentage is somewhat equivocal; yet its reputation suffers not on that account, and it comes down to us associated with all kinds of fond and endearing reminiscences. It melted or gladdened the hearts of our forefathers, and has since floated around the green earth, finding a welcome in every place humanized by a ray of fancy or feeling, from "throne to cottage hearth." It has trembled on the lips of past and forgotten beauty; and has served, in countless wooings, as the appropriate medium for the first fearful breathings of affection. The youthful maiden has broken the silence with it in many a lovely, lonely dell; and the shepherd has chaunted it on the still hill side. The rude sailor has filled up the pauses of his watch by whistling it to the shrill winds and sullen waters; and it has bowed the head, brought the tear to the eye, and recalled home, and home thoughts to the mind of many a wanderer on a distant shore. It has been heard in the solitudes of nature, and at the crowded, festive board. It has refreshed the worn−out heart of the worldling, and awakened "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears," in the minds of the moody and contemplative. It has been a source of consolation and joy to those who have passed away; it comes unexhausted to us; and it will glide gently down the stream of time, cheering and soothing as it goes, from generation unto generation, till utilitarianism becomes universal, and music and poetry fade into a dimly remembered dream. Yet a truebred, moth−eaten antiquary would sacrifice it, if he could, for a copper coin fifty years its senior!

If any musical man expect, from the title to this, a learned article, he will be egregiously disappointed. I have no pretensions to treat this subject scientifically, being, indeed, admirably qualified, in this age of confessions, as far as want of knowledge goes, to write the "confessions of an unmusical man." As regards flats and sharps, I am truly little better than a natural; and as for quavers, semi−quavers, demi−semi−quavers, and other subtler divisions, if there be any, I am as ignorant of them as the ass that crops his thistle off the common, and brays in whatsoever note nature prompts him. But what of that! Music is not altogether a mechanical science; and there are profounder sympathies in the heart of man than the orchestra think of. There is no more nauseous animal in existence than your musical coxcomb, who has all the terms and technicalities of the art at his tongue's end, without the glimmering of an idea concerning the human passions, the deep feelings, and the keen and delicate perception of the beautiful, on which that art is founded. Proportionably to be admired is the man who, after spending years in study and research, and successfuly fathoming and mastering all difficulties, never dreams of considering his laboriously−acquired knowledge as more than merely an accessory, not a principal, in the delightful science he has made his study. The former are, as a naturalist would express it, "in theatres and at concerts common;" the latter is of a species scarce all over the world.

There may be loftier flights a higher species of fame, than that attained or aimed at by the song−writer; but there is no one to whom honor is more gladly rendered by the mass of mortals. His claims come into notice, for the most part, in a genial season when friends are met, and the glass and sentiment and song go round; when gladness swells the heart, fancy tickles the brain, and mirth and good−humor sparkle from the eye; when Bacchus has almost closed up criticism's venomous optics, and laid hyper−criticism quietly under the table; when the fine−strung nerves are exquisitely alive to all pleasurable sensations; then it is that divine music, wedded to still diviner poesy, can, in an instant, "bid the warm tear start. Or the smile light the cheek;" and then it is that the memories of the masters of song are pledged with a fervor that the ethical or epic poet may despise, but can never either expect or hope for from the partiality of his cooler admirers. Next to Shakspeare there is no one whose memory is more fondly treasured than that of Burns. Independently of being intensely loved and revered wherever a Scottish accent is heard, social societies are formed in every country in which his language is known, to keep that memory fresh and green. And he well deserves it. Perhaps his songs are the best ever written. He has not the polish, the refinement, the exuberance of imagery, or the sparkling fancy of Moore, but he excels him in humor and pathos. They are, however, both glorious fellows; and it must be a narrow heart that cannot find room for admiration of more than one. If the lyrics of Burns do not, as yet, strictly come under the designation of

"old songs," they at least will do so, for they have the germ of immortality within them. It is almost impossible to dream of the time when "Auld Lang Syne" will *not* be sung. He had his faults (I am no Scotchman), and in turning over his pages, besides occasional coarseness and bad taste, you sometimes meet with a verse, that, "not to speak it profanely," bears a striking resemblance to utter nonsense; for instance, (though what could be expected from words to such a tune "Robin Adair!") "Down in a shady walk, Doves cooing were, I mark'd the cruel hawk Caught in a snare: So kind may fortune be, Such make his destiny! He who would injure thee, Phillis the fair!" But if your admiration of the poet begin to falter for a moment, perhaps the very next page brings you to "Highland Mary," "Ae fond kiss and then we sever," "A man's a man for a' that," "Mary Morrison," or, that song without a name commencing "Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear, Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear; *Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, And soft as their parting tear*

Jessy!" Burns has done for Scottish song what Scott has done for Scottish history made it known and renowned in every portion of the globe; and had "auld Scotland" never produced any other names of note, these two are amply sufficient to honor and glorify her through all time.

What are generally known by the name of "Irish songs," the "Paddy Whackmeracks," and "Barny Brallagans" of the pot−house and the playhouse, bear ten times less resemblance to the genuine melodies of the "green isle," than even the majority of regular stage Irishmen do to the existing natives. Both are merely broad English caricatures. The soul of Irish music, beyond that of all other national music, is melancholy. It is, perhaps, too fine a distinction to draw, but of the serious melodies of the three nations, perhaps the English airs are most characterized by mournful sadness those of Scotland by pathos and tenderness and those of Ireland by a wild, wailing melancholy, of an almost indescribable character. But words are poor expositors in such cases. Let any one play a few airs from each, and they will probably furnish him at once with the distinction here attempted to be drawn. I would humbly suggest "Coolin," or "Silent, oh Moyle," as the strongest instances I can think of on the part of Ireland. The English, it is said, have no national melody; and perhaps this is true of that portion of the country from Dover to the borders; but long prior to the presence of the Normans, who changed the manners and injured the pithiness of the language of the natives, the British had melodies marked by great simplicity and sweetness. Who does not remember the beautiful song, "Ayr hyd y nos," familiarly known as "Poor Mary Ann?" then there is that fine air, "Of a noble race was Shenkin," and many others, which may be found in Parry's Welsh Melodies. These are still to be met with in many a quiet and sequestered glen amid the fastnesses of Wales, where the harp of the Druids took sanctuary, and where the poetry and melody of that mysterious sect are still preserved. It is no wonder that at the inpouring of the heterogeneous and mercenary Norman flood, the pure native melodies became corrupted, and were nearly swept away; yet, notwithstanding, the splendid church music of the English excites the deep admiration of Europe; and their glees and madrigals have never been excelled. Purcell, Locke, Jackson, and Arne, have written many charming melodies: but to come nearer to the present day, if I may venture an opinion, I would say that justice has scarcely been done to Shield, a sound, manly composer, who has left a number of things behind him which really and truly deserve to live and flourish amid the mass of musical compositions that, fungus−like, hourly spring into existence, and as rapidly decay. "The Thorn," "Let Fame sound the Trumpet," "Old Towler," "Heaving the Lead," "Ere round the huge Oak," and a number of others, if they cannot justly lay claim to any great degree of imaginative beauty, have at least an infusion of genuine melody a body, ay, and a soul, that will long preserve them from oblivion.

Shakspeare's songs, for the most part, have been fortunate in being married to good music; some of them almost better than they deserve. Whether in ridicule or not of the song−writers of his time, he certainly made too liberal a use of the "heigh hos" and "ninny nonnys." Next to Ariel's pretty fancy, "Where the bee sucks, there lurk I," the one with the most freedom and lyrical beauty is, to my taste, "Under the Greenwood Tree." But it loses half its effect when transplanted from the forest of Arden, and sung in a modern room, amid long coats, cravats, decanters, and etiquette. Neither does it assimilate better with boisterous mirth and whiskey punch. Yet it is an ill−used song, even on the stage. It is too operatically given. Your Amiens is generally (like the majority of male music−mongers) a stiff−limbed piece of humanity, who understands singing, and little else; he generally takes his station about four feet from the foot−lamps, and there, with elongated physiognomy, and one arm protruded

towards the pit, goes through his work with most clock−like precision. To parody a beautiful simile, it is "music breathing from a wooden block;" all which is very unlike the free−hearted lord whom we imagine, throwing himself at the root of some antique oak, and, in a fine, mellow voice, trolling forth, until the old forest rang again, his most joyous invitation. But this may be amended when, amid the other astonishing improvements of the times, leading vocalists shall be endowed with joints and ideas. Next to this, I like the one now invariably put into the mouth of Rosalind, and christened the "Cuckoo Song" "When daisies pied, and violets, blue." But your stage Rosalind is generally the reverse of Amiens an arch, vivacious lass, who imparts due effect to the mixture of natural images and domestic ideas suggested by the saucy words of the song.

The sea, "the battle and the breeze," and the rapid and manifold vicissitudes incident to the life of a sailor, furnish a bold and beautiful variety of subjects capable of being turned to good account in a song or ballad. Yet, somehow or other, Apollo does not much affect the quarter−deck. The ocean brine is too powerful for the waters of Castaly. Poesy in some sort suffers by a "sea−change;" and the quantity to be extracted from a volume of genuine naval ditties is wofully disproportionate to the bulk of rhyme. Some of the best sea songs have been written by landsmen, and one great cause of their being so, is their comparative freedom from perplexing technicalities; for though a characteristic phrase may occasionally impart life and spirit to a production, yet a technicality, whether in marine or agricultural poetry, is a sore stumbling−block to the uninitiated. Now every line (or plank) of three−fourths of your nautical melodies is calked with them, independently of containing a much larger infusion of tar than tenderness of pitch than pathos. They abound, likewise, in an inordinate degree, in descriptions of tornadoes, and discharges of artillery in slaughter and sudden death; and the sentiments correspond thereunto, being as rough as a hawser, and as boisterous as a north−wester. Though admirably adapted to be growled out by the boatswain when the vessel is scudding under double−reefed topsails, they would on land, and in a room, go off like a discharge of musketry. But, worse than all, is the minuteness of detail the distressing particularity which ever pervades them. They are mere paraphrases of the log−book; and the due course and reckoning of the ship is most especially insisted on "That time bound straight for Portugal, Right fore and aft we bore; But when we made Cape Ortugal, A gale blew off the shore," &c. Yet, after all, there are some noble things in this branch of the "service," amply sufficient to redeem it from dislike. Who is there that has not held his breath when he has heard a rich, deep−toned voice, commence Gay's glorious ballad "All in the Downs the fleet lay moor'd; The streamers waving in the wind!" and listened throughout, with a quickened pulse, to that "plain unvarnished tale" of humble love and tenderness. There is much, too, to please any man, who is not over and above fastidious, in dozens of Dibdin's vigorous and hearty sketches of a sailor's hardships and enjoyments, to say nothing of Pearce and others of inferior note; but from your regular orecastle narratives, Apollo deliver us!

Things called "comic songs," to wit, "Four and wenty tailors all in a row," &c., are, in my mind, striking exemplifications of the depth of debasement of which the human intellect is susceptible.

In whatever way America is, or may become renowned, she will probably never be a land of song; and for two or three reasons. There are already a sufficiency of standard songs in the world to answer all purposes; and she has imported an ample sufficiency to supply the varied tastes and caprices of her musical population. Moore's Melodies are as common in the cities of the west as in their native land; and those of Burns are no rarity. The geography of the country, too, is strikingly unfavorable for indigenous song. Nature has created the land in one of her most liberal and magnificent moods, and formed its features on a scale of grandeur that is impossible to grasp in this kind of writing. The ocean−lakes the mighty rivers the interminable forests the boundless prairies, are all epic rather than lyrical. How would it sound, either for rhyme or reason, "On the shores of Mississippi, When the sweet spring−time did fall!" The idea suggested is too vast. There is no sung endearing locality about such scenes; and as for "the sweet spring time," it *never* "falls" on a great proportion of the shores of rivers whose waters rise far towards the regions of eternal winter, and roll through every variety of climate, to those of everlasting summer; while the smaller streams, which correspond in size to the "Nith," the "Dee" or "Bonnie Doon," are ruined by the general appellation of "crik" (creek), which is bestowed upon them; and to which some such euphonious title as Big Elk, Buffalo, or Otter, is usually prefixed. Besides, America is not rich in recollections of the past. No castles, grim, hoary and dilapidated, frown upon her heights: no gorgeous abbeys moulder in her

verdant vales. The joys, and sorrows, and sufferings of humanity are, as yet, scarcely impressed upon her soil. She has no records of feudal strife, of faded greatness, and fond affection of all tradition loves, and song delights in. Hope must, in some degree, be to her poets what memory is to those of older lands. But the mind of the song−writer is reminiscent not anticipative; and therefore it is, that with whatever species of fame and greatness America may enrich her brows, it is probable she will never, in one sense, be "worth an old song."

MORALITY HORSE RACING.

There is a kind of people who, instead of finding "Sermons in stones, and good in every thing," are gifted by nature with a peculiar quickness in perceiving and detecting vice and wickedness in every variety of form and complexion. They have an aptitude in raking and scraping together all the bad which is generally mixed up with worldly pursuits and amusements, and of overlooking whatever of good may be mingled therewith. Whether this intimate acquaintance with evil habits and feelings this familiarity with the obliquities of human nature, is to be accounted for upon the principle embodied in the shrewd proverb of "set a thief to catch a thief," ought to be left to people more charitable in their constructions than themselves, or the verdict would not be at all flattering. The worst of the matter is, they claim this sharp perception of the vile and vicious as a sort of merit, and account it pure stern morality harshly to censure what they dislike in the conduct of others. They take a one−sided view of all things, try them according to their own standard of propriety, and so decide that they are altogether right or altogether wrong: they cannot bring themselves to see that "the web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together," that "our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our virtues." This is rather too reasonable and philosophical a view of the question for them, and in reason and philosophy they profess to place but little faith. These infallible personages have seen or heard that there are such things as foolishness and frivolity in ball rooms, and therefore, without taking into account the innocent mirth and harmless gaiety which there predominate, they set down balls as very foolish and frivolous affairs; they have seen or heard that there are specks of immorality and dissoluteness to be met with in a theatre, and therefore set down a theatre as a concentration of all that is dissolute and immoral; they have seen or heard that blacklegs, vagabonds, sharpers, &c. attend race courses, and therefore set down all that go as blackages, vagabonds, or sharpers. They are great generalizers, and account a man who stands and looks at one full−blooded horse running agains another as a species of monster, incapable of discharging the moral and social duties of society.

There has always been a particularly large quantity of cant abroad on the subject of morality; and the foundation of it appears to be laid in an erroneous belief of the extreme susceptibility of human nature to impressions of either good or evil. Men's morals, like their constitutions, are more permanent and durable than is frequently imagined, and neither so easily destroyed or mended as mental or medical hypochondriacs would have us believe. A man beholds a discreditable action or hears a questionable speech, and is no worse for it; or he sees a virtuous action and listens to a lecture containing the most excellent advice, and is no better for it. This is the case ninety−nine times out of a hundred; and it takes a long familiarity with either good or evil to make a permanent impression on one with any pretensions to stability of character. Nothing can be more childish than to hear the advocates or opponents of the stage, for instance, endeavor to settle its general tendency by picking out little speeches and sentences either for or against morality; and the mistakes to which this habit of looking at details and neglecting the sum total have given rise, are very curious. Many a play, like a man, has acquired a good character by sounding words and lip−professions only. An author will make a well−meaning peer or potentate declaim upon vice or virtue in the abstract, or in cases far removed from common life and every−day occurrences, and gain much credit for the excellent tendency of his drama; while Gay's "Beggar's Opera," which exposes in plain language the disgusting selfishness and utter want of feeling and principle in characters and amid scenes which take place under our very noses, has been more than once hissed off the stage for its *immorality!* So much for consistency.

For my own part I always loved horse−racing, and even when a child, and the qualities of horses were totally

unknown to me, exhibited an incipient propensity for betting by making tiny wagers on the colors of the riders. Since that I have seen many a race, and never found my health, morals, or temper any the worse for so doing. It is a fine sight at all times to look upon a good horse; but to see one of the noblest of a noble species led on to the race−course previous to starting, his polished skin glancing and glistening in the sun as he moves gracefully along, is as glorious a picture of animated nature as a poet or painter would wish to behold. What fire and expression in his eye! what a union of strength and beauty in his finely moulded limbs! How light and elastic his step it seems as if it would scarcely crush the young grass on which he treads. And then to see him matched with another, or others, like himself The anxiety you fell about the fairness of the start the quickened pulse and rapid circulation of the blood during the race, and the all−absorbing interest of the final struggle, are indescribable, and I am sorry for those who have never experienced them. But then, cry your moralists, this occasions betting, and betting is gambling. Such a consequence by no means follows; but admit it for the sake of argument. What is this to the gambling that is carried on on 'change, or other high places of Mammon? Is not the cotton trade gambling? Are not manufacturing speculations gambling? And is not the banking system gambling, or something worse? Yet who ever hears of the immorality of those grave concerns? And as for betting, men will bet on some subject or other, and a horse−race is perhaps the very best thing they can exercise their talents upon, "Most people, till by losing rendered sager, Will back their own opinions by a wager," is true enough, and accordingly men bet on all things on the death or marriage of their friends on the election of their magistrates on their own weight, height, or circumference, or the weight, height, or circumference of their neighbors. Then again the consistency of some very good people who look with horror on the betting of a dollar whether one horse runs faster than another, yet who I know invest large sums in lottery experiments the worst, because the most foolish species of gambling. But the truth is, the world is made up of people who, as Butler says, "Compound for sins they feel inclined to, By damning those they have no mind to."

A volume composed of the lives or anecdotes of celebrated race horses would be an interesting study to the naturalist, the physiognomist, the craniologist, and the philosopher. A race−horse is an intelligent being, and not a mere machine urged forward by a man upon its back. Some of them are as capricious and fanciful as a fine lady, and some as obstinate and self−willed as a doctor of laws; while others again are equally as sensible and knowing as those who bestride them; and from natural good sense, and long and extensive experience, acquire a fund of practical information and intelligence on racing subjects. In numerous qualities, not only physical but mental, they are infinitely superior to many a biped, whose memoirs are frequently obtruded upon the public in two volumes octavo; and I have somewhere read an epitaph on one, which shows that I am not alone in my friendly feelings towards these high−spirited animals.

"Here lies entombed beneath this heap of earth, A gallant horse whose ancestry or birth, Though proud, swells not his eulogy: he shone With genuine worth and virtues all his own. His generous spirit, that with high disdain Brook'd not the chiding spur, obey'd the rein: Meek in his might, though wrong'd, he scorned to deal Vindictive death−blows from his noble heel; Sometimes with tame and drooping neck conveyed The tottering infant or the trembling maid; With dumb regard his bounteous master viewed, And told in looks his honest gratitude. But when the horn's shrill challenge waked the wood, With ears erect and quivering limbs he stood; Forward he flew, the vulgar steeds aloof, The champaign rung beneath his bounding hoof! Nor cliffs nor chasms his daring course restrain, And mountains rise and torrents roar in vain. Sunk is the arch of that aspiring crest, The mane's proud streamers and the panting breast; Mangled and mould'ring in one shapeless heap, Those flashing eyes and thundering nostrils sleep. Reader, whoe'er thou art, whose manly mind Bleeds o'er the ashes of thy mortal kind, Spare but one drop from pity's generous source, Nor blush to shed it for my gallant horse."

EATING.

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 He had not dined;
The veins unfilled, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but, when we have stuffed
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These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest−like fasts.
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Shaks.

Very true: and if old Menenius did not succeed in his application to the inflexible Roman to spare his country, it was not for want of a correct knowledge of the acerbity produced by an empty stomach, and the mollifying effects of good victuals upon the temper; at the same time it presents strange and mortifying images to the mind of the littleness of human nature, and the insignificant causes which are not unfrequently the mainspring of mighty events. "He had not dined," reasons the old man; and to the degree of flatulency and acidity produced in Coriolanus's stomach by his not having done so, Menenius ascribes his rejection of the prayers of the grave senators and virgins to save immortal Rome. It may be that he was right; and perhaps the fate of the eternal city depended materially upon as mean a thing as Tullus Aufidius's cook! "So runs the world away." But the truth is, since the days of Adam, eating has never been, for any length of time, out of fashion; and though abstemiousness is allowed by many to be a virtue, it is one that has been always more praised than practised. For my own part, I think it is rather an unamiable weakness a phantom which haunts the imagination of nervous people, valetudinarians, and such as are continually scheming how to spin out the thread of a miserable existence after all their capabilities for pleasure and enjoyment have passed away. Besides, it is strenuously recommended by physicians, and is therefore to be distrusted, for no man perseveringly labors against his own interest. Moreover, if the looks and tables of our worthy New−York M. D.'s are to be taken as a criterion, it is quite evident that, however they may enforce abstemiousness upon others, "they never set it up to fright themselves." This is, to say the least, suspicious; and I for one conscientiously believe, that if ever water−gruels, weak broths, or vegetable diet comes into fashion, the human species will soon fade away from the face of the earth that living skeletons will be no rarity, and a man of one hundred pounds a monster of corpulency that the poor old world will fall into an atrophy, and that some future Calvin Edson, divested of his superfluous flesh, will personify Campbell's "last man!"

In literature, eating has always cut a conspicuous figure. The old dramatists are filled with soul, or rather, stomach−felt descriptions of rich luscious feasts; and though in those days a Ude or a Kitchiner had not enlightened the world by his wonderful discoveries, our ancestors were luxurious rogues notwithstanding. Only see with what unction Ben Jonson makes one of his characters sum up now unheard−of dishes: "I'll have The tongues of carps, dormice, and camel's heels Boiled in the spirits of Sol, and dissolved pearl, Apicius' diet, 'gainst the epilepsy; My footboys shall eat pheasants, calver'd salmons, Knots, godwits, lampreys; I myself will have The beards of barbels served instead of salads; Oiled mushrooms," &c. and Fielding and Smollett's heroes are good for nothing without their dinner; they must have solid meat and strong drink to invigorate and stimulate them for either war or courtship. Feed them well, or they disgrace themselves make love in a very awkward and insipid manner, and are apt to have their courage called in question.

After this, came the terrific style of writing, of which Mrs. Radcliffe was the head, and indeed, almost the only one worth reading. Novels at this time were so filled with trap−doors, dungeons, secret stair−cases, winding galleries, subterraneous passages, shrieks, and midnight assassinations, that it is presumed these horrors entirely took away the appetites of the persons concerned, for no mention is made of eating, though from the frequent allusions to "measures of wine" and "reviving cordials," there is every reason to believe that the heroes and heroines were addicted to hard−drinking, which habit is bad enough at any time, but particularly hurtful when indulged without a reasonable portion of food, as it speedily destroys the coats of the stomach, and induces a long train of dreadful disorders. Fair and amiable, therefore, as these heroes and heroines unquestionably were, they doubtless ultimately fell victims to the horrid vice of intemperance, notwithstanding the strength of their constitutions, which, it must be admitted, was extraordinary. From all that ever I could make out in these romances, the ladies, though described as fair and fragile beings, whom a summer wind would inevitably pulverize a compound of unimaginable perfections and spiritual essences in white muslin were able, according

to the author, to endure more hardships and privations than a Highland drover, a North American Indian, or a Swedish soldier in Charles the Twelfth's time, and, like a Greenland bear, possessed wonderful capabilities for supporting nature for a long period without nutriment. In my unripe years, when devouring the delectable pages of Anne of Swansea, or Francis Latham, the gifted author of "Midnight Horrors," and the "Black Forest," often have I marvelled when the young lady, who was confined in an uninhabited part of the castle, and had refused victuals for several days, was going to take her dinner. I used to reckon up how long it was since she had eaten any thing, and draw conclusions from my own feelings, and this it was that first staggered my young faith in the truth of novels. When I had made calculations that she must be nearly starved to death, I found in the next chapter the old story over again "an aged domestic entered and placed food before Almeira, from which she turned with loathing, and lost in a sense of her unparalleled situation, continued totally abstracted from all around," &c. Sometimes these heroines absolutely lived for a month on the smell of a boiled chicken; and when their prison doors were at last broken open, and one expected they would be found to be starved, squalid, miserable−looking wretches, it was simply stated that they "never looked so lovely, confinement having imparted a delicate and melancholy tint to those cheeks which " &c. As Hamlet says, "there is more in this than natural, if physicians could only find it out." What an invaluable wife would one of those ladies make for an Irish peasant after his potato crop had failed.

Walter Scott, (heaven bless him!) among his other worthy deeds, has revived the good old practice of eating and drinking upon paper. His personages, one and all, with the single exception of the earl of Glenallen, in the Antiquary, who made his dinner of vegetables and water! are capital feeders; they all eat with a relish, and seem to like what is set before them. There is something hearty in this, and persons with good digestions think the better of them for it. Like sensible people, they all do justice to good cheer whenever they meet with it; and really it is enough to give a person an appetite to read the account of honest Dandie Dinmont's attack on the round of cold beef, Waverley's breakfast in Donald Bean Lean's cave, or the description of the savoury stew prepared by Meg Merrilies in the kairn of Derncleugh, of which the worthy Dominie partakes. It is characteristic of Shakspeare and Scott that they are fond of introducing familiar occurrences like these amid their most wild and romantic scenes, while feebler writers are afraid to do so for fear of destroying the effect, or rendering what is already tame or outrageous, ludicrous.

Of late there is a kind of puppyism sprung up in discoursing of eating, first generated by some of the *petit−maitre* correspondents of the New Monthly Magazine. They discourse about the pleasures of the table in a style of superlative affectation, treat all solid joints as relics of ancient barbarism, and all who partake of them as vulgar and John Bullish, learn the names of a dozen or two French dishes, and make a parade of their love of, and familiarity with, soups, slops, stews, and kickshaws, as weak, insipid, and unsubstantial as themselves. Puppyism in writing and dressing is bad enough, but puppyism on so solemn and serious a subject as eating, is carrying the jest a little too far.

ALBUMS.

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Ye who in albums are required to write,
       Be wise, before you undertake the same;
Remember that whatever you indite,
       Remaineth, to your credit or your shame;
That you had better leave the paper white,
       Than rack your hapless brains with idle aim;
But, above all things, if the book you take,
       Don't wait a year before you bring it back.
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Sands.

Albums are one of the greatest nuisances of modern times. They waylay you, or rather are laid in your way, in every house in the city, in which a young lady turned thirteen, happens to reside. They are as numerous and

tormenting as flies at midsummer, and, like flies at midsummer, the irritating evil cannot be grappled with; for, in both cases, it is apparently so trivial, that all serious opposition and resistance become mighty ridiculous. Yet human happiness is, for the most part, made up of trifles; and it is to be feared that the deduction from the sum total, during the ensuing summer months, on the score of flies and albums, will far exceed that created by anxiety for the temporary welfare of our friends, or our own spiritual concerns. Petty evils and insect troubles frequently vex a person more than substantial grievances. The insignificance of an annoyance gives it a ludicrous character that is very provoking, and frets one to think that he can be so easily fretted. Many a man's nerves are so strung that the tickling of a straw will set him almost crazy; while a heavy contusion brings him to his senses, and he smiles at the pain it occasions. Suppose, for example, a corpulent, choleric old merchant, preparing to take his after−dinner nap in an easy chair, on a sultry day in August suppose sleep gently descending on his eyelids, and gradually and deliciously overclouding his faculties suppose, at this critical moment, a rascally blue−bottle fly effecting his entrance into the room, and commencing to amuse itself by tickling the old gentleman. He hears its ceaseless buzzing in his ears, and anon feels it promenading across his forehead, leaving an intolerable itching wherever it treads. Half asleep and half awake, he impatiently jerks his head, and for a moment puts the enemy to flight; but it is only for a moment, for scarcely has he composed himself to sleep, when he again feels his friend taking a walk down his cheek and across his chin; he instinctively attempts to crush his tormentor, and slaps his own face, while all the time his nerves are acquiring a preternatural irritability. At last, a final attack upon the sensitive organ of smell puts sleep and patience to flight, and he starts from his chair in a highly sublimated degree of rage, chasing the disturber of his peace around the room in a perfect phrenzy. Suppose at this instant the door to open, and the servant to present a letter, informing him of the loss of a richly−laden vessel. He becomes immediately calm and collected. This is a misfortune worth struggling against. He braces himself up for the encounter, and determines to "bear it like a man." Thousands meet death with perfect calmness, but we have high authority that "there was never yet philosopher That could endure the tooth−ache patiently; However, they have writ the style of gods, And made a pish at chance and sufferance."

It is the smallness of the evil, which seems so easily to be got rid of or avoided, but which cannot be got rid of or avoided, that destroys our equanimity; and, it is upon this ground that albums are afflictions of the first magnitude. The person who first invented them has much to answer for. They and steam−boats are the greatest curses and blessings of the present age; the one has been productive of as much trouble and inquietude as the other has of comfort and convenience.

A certain gentleman, who takes ten glasses of brandy per diem, justifies himself by saying, that it is not the use but the abuse of stimulants that is hurtful; and every young lady who keeps an album, at the same time complains that they "are so common." She seems to think that all her sex, excepting herself, are taking liberties to which they are not entitled. A respectable widow in this city has eleven daughters, each of whom maintains an album; and any unfortunate visitor who is caught fairly within her doors, may think himself lucky if he escape with the loss of five effusions. The senior portion of these misguided young ladies are fast verging towards a state of hopeless single blessedness, I am half inclined to believe merely on account of the cultivation of this pernicious habit. They have frightened away their oldest friends, and no male creature ever ventures within their reach. Indeed, what person in his senses would visit a house where a yard of poetry was required to be paid down as a tribute? Though not exactly carried on to the same extent, there are few dwellings in New−York into which a person not gifted (or cursed) with a knack of rhyming can safely venture. It is in vain that a man of an anti−poetical temperament pleads that he "is no poet." "Never mind," cry the fair inexorables, "any thing will do;" though, at the same time, they expect their victim to try his very best. The fearful album is placed before him, he seizes a pen, "Cold drops of sweat stand on his trembling flesh," and in a fit of desperation he "writes himself an ass," for the amusement of all future visitants. Now it is unfair that a man should be violently forced into a state of authorship against his better judgment heaven knows there are enough and to spare who voluntarily expose themselves, and feel no shame in so doing. To such ought to be left the filling up of these records of folly.

There is much in a name, and "album" has now become a hateful sound; yet the idea is not in itself bad, of a young and intelligent beauty preserving the scattered effusions of genius or memorials of friendship in this form.

It is pleasant to see such a book carefully cherished, and shown only as an especial favor to those who may be thought worthy of looking over its treasured pages; but to have innumerable volumes of manuscript scrawls, with which genius and friendship have no connexion, continually thrust upon you to be obliged to listen patiently, smilingly, politely, and to profess yourself pleased with the recitation of two or three dozen desperate attempts at poesy to have the beauties of the several compositions pointed out to you, and to be asked your candid opinion of each, when you dare not for your soul speak an iota of truth and in the end to be required to add your mite to the collection, "suppose it be only two or three verses," are very disagreeable indeed, besides the disgrace of the thing; for nine−tenths of the albums are nothing better than discreditable receptacles for disreputable pieces of prose and poetry that cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, ever hope to attain the dignity of print, or be incorporated in a book form in any other shape.

The alarming increase of these plagues has probably arisen from that love of flattery which has been inherent in every man, woman, and child since the fall; particularly, it is said, in women, though on that head there may be reasonable doubts entertained. But certainly in the majority of cases where a young lady requests you to write in her album, it is only a more delicate way of asking to be flattered. If she be pretty, she likes to have it put on record; if not, she well knows that poets never intentionally speak the truth. A person in the album−way, will have abundant opportunities of seeing the justice of this remark. I have in their pages met with the most glowing and outrageous compliments, and have invariably ascertained that they were indited by people as cold−blooded as tortoises; so true it is that the affectation of passion is ten times as violent and high−sounding as passion itself. One is at present lying before me, a few extracts from which may amuse the reader.

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TO DOROTHY SOPHIA  .
Sweet maid! upon thy softly pouting lip
       The fragrance of nine thousand flowers are strown;
The bee from thence nectareal dews may sip,
       And otto of roses is by far outdone!
Couched in thine eyes one thousand cupids lie,
       Singeing their wings among those burning beams
That dart electric fires into each passer by;
       Poor things! they cannot fly away, it seems!
Would thou wert mine! ah! at that daring thought
       Tumultuous tumults burst my bursting breast
No matter I will soon be where I ought,
       The grave will ope, and then I'll be at rest!

Algernon Augustus Wilkinson Price
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The following is of a more grave and unhappy character, and the construction of the blank verse is almost equal to that of . It displays a fine vein of morbid feeling, and the insignificant parts of speech with which the lines terminate, have an unostentatious and natural effect: Well, be it so! 'tis no consequence, and I at last awake from a blissful but Most deceitful dream of happiness, which Now is flown for ever. I never will by Word or look upbraid you, though my peace is Totally destroyed, and my heart crushed to Shivers. 'T is the lot of virtue to be But half appreciated, and so I Scorn to say a single word about my Most untoward fate. I soon will be a Piece of dull and inanimate clay and All will be well! I've done, but still my Last and latest prayer shal be for no Matter fare thee well! Romeo O. Higgs.

It will be seen how strictly the amiable author of the foregoing has adhered to the only sure and certain rule of making blank verse, that is, being particular in having ten syllables per line. Nothing is easier, and by attending to this simple rule, an auctioneer's advertisement may be taken out of the newspapers, and made into unimpeachable blank verse without any sort of trouble. The manner in which Shakspeare and Milton have occasionally departed from this fundamental principle, is unpardonable. It was my purpose to give twelve or fifteen pages more of extracts, but I defer doing so in consequence of the heat of the weather.

If all, or a portion of the above remarks, should be offensive to the feelings of any lady who keeps an album, I hope she will do me the justice to believe that I certainly meant *hers* to be an exception to these general observations.

CONTENTMENT.

There is perhaps no sounder or more generally acknowledged axiom than that the value of a thing is in proportion to its scarcity. This may be one great reason why contentment has found such favor in the eyes of the multitude; every one setting the highest value on what he had not, and indifferent to the praise which might be bestowed upon its virtues and efficacy, so long as he knew his neighbor no richer than himself. Thus it is, that this thing, whose intrinsic value (except in a very limited degree,) is not worth a cent, has, as a regularly be−praised subject, equalled even Shakspeare's Works, Warren's blacking, or La Fayette. Now I mean to say that as far as the share contentment has in the enjoyment a man feels in eating his dinner, smoking his cigar, or, after his daily labor enjoying the comforts of his fire−side, it is a good; but, I also say, that taken in any extended sense, it is an evil of the first magnitude. To be content is to be satisfied to wish for nothing to aim at nothing, but to rest satisfied in whatever situation you may be placed. Now look at the world as it exists; you will find little or no such thing, and well it is so. What is it that freights the ships beautifies the cities encourages the arts, and promotes the wealth, intelligence, and importance of a free and enterprising nation? Assuredly not contentment. It is a passive principle. and, as such, man can have little sympathy with it. He is an active animal. His pleasures lie not so much in the possession as the pursuit. Is the merchant happier when, quitting the din and bustle of the city, his ships, his freights, and his speculations he hastens to the enjoyment of rural life, purchases a beautiful villa, and looking around him, says within himself "I am content." Is he so? no such thing! He must still busy himself with the news, the business, and the exchanges; or, let him look at home, every thing is wrong, every thing wants improving a part of his house is misbuilt his walks are badly laid out, or a clump of trees spoils his prospect. These are mended, and this gives rise to new wants, and fresh improvements. So he goes on, and dies at last amid all the mighty bustle attendant on the planting of an orchard the cutting of a canal, or the building of a greenhouse. Perhaps the best personification of contentment is a fat London Alderman, seated, after a plentiful dinner, in his easy chair his wine before him his pipe his optics half closed, and not an idea in his brain of either past, present, or future. It is rather to be remarked that it is always confined to "fat, gross men." Contentment and corpulency go hand in hand. There is no analogy between it and leanness. A thin contented man is quite a paradox. Now look at its effects upon human nature. Where is it that all your bold, fiery, active, daring, enterprising spirits are to be found? Is it among your men of bone and muscle, or your men of fat and oil? how many *fat* men are there on record that have ever done a daring deed? Cæsar disliked Cassius for his want of the aldermanic characteristics. "That Cassius is too thin," he exclaims, and again, "although I fear him not, would he were fatter."

Had Milton been a contented man, think ye the world would have been in possession of Paradise Lost. Had Byron been so, would he have written Childe Harold? Would a contented man have painted the Cartoons; or, had Columbus been so, would he have been the discoverer of America? No! were contentment to become in any degree general, its benumbing influence would spread itself over all the active principles of our nature. Can it be supposed that such a lethargic thing and the lofty aspirations of genius could exist in the same person? No! the nonsense of contentment and a cottage is prettier in the pages of poetry than it would be useful in actual life. Look at its effects upon nations. Was the free and fiery Spartan, or the noble Roman, famed for it? Or, to come to modern times, is it not notorious that it is to be found in the greatest degree among the degraded serfs of a Russian autocrat? there is not in the world a more contented class of men, or who have less wish to change their situations than the Russian peasantry. It does and can only exist with ignorance, and where man is free and in possession of his active faculties it flies from him.

END OF VOL. I.

VOL. II.

STREETS OF LONDON.

In few places are the "lights and shadows" of life more strongly and vividly contrasted than in the streets of a great metropolis; where bloated wealth and hollow−eyed poverty trudge side by side, and gay, fluttering vanity and squalid wretchedness gaze strangely at each other. It is dramatic, but unpleasant; at least until custom has produced the callousness of heart requisite to enable a man to look philosophically on all human sorrow, save his own peculiar portion. Before he has arrived at this state, however, a stroll through the streets of a crowded city is apt to be uncommonly beneficial. It generates a series of practical sermons, for which every poor distressed object furnishes an eloquent text, tending to inculcate gratitude for his own station, charity for the miseries, and toleration for the frailties of others. A back street in London shows a man a few of the realities of life. To use a pugilistic phrase, "it takes the conceit out of him." I am sometimes sorrier for my own disappointments than for any person's; and occasionally pity and indulge in the tenderest and most delicate sympathy imaginable towards myself, on account of any trivial inconvenience or privation to which I may happen to be subjected; but I have never entered a London by−lane in this frame of mind without walking out "a wiser and a sadder man" at the other end." There is a vast deal of difference between fanciful or poetical unhappiness and harsh prose misery plain, unvarnished, substantial misery, arising from tangible wants and physical sufferings. It is too much the fashion of the world to exaggerate and swell into undue importance half real and half imaginary mental woes, and to sneer at and undervalue common bodily evils. Your young poets and lady poetesses (heaven bless them!) and indeed all persons of genteel sensibilities, are continually plunging into the extreme depths of desolation on what would appear to a common−sense man rather insufficient grounds. But going arithmetically to work, it will be a tolerably−sized grief which produces as much pain as a prolonged, stinging tooth−ache; and six−and−thirty hours, or upwards, without victuals, must be almost as bad to bear as slighted love, notwithstanding the assertions of sensitive young ladies (who have chicken at command) to the contrary. Indeed, it has always struck me that going without a dinner must be provocative of a vast deal of pathos; and that it is rather unfair to make such an outcry about "woes that rend the breast," while the pangs and twinges of the contiguous parts of the body, on a descending scale, are never taken into consideration by those who have never felt them. If this view of things be correct and it is correct how much intense suffering does the blessed sun look down upon every day! Ah! who that has seen the gaunt, shrivelled frame the sharpened features the bloodless, compressed lips, and sunken greedy eye which famine produces, but has felt sick at heart, and inwardly prayed to be preserved, above all things, from inanition. The omission of even such commonplace things as victuals, will, in an astonishingly short time, convince the most wretchedly romantic youth that ever fell in love, folded his arms, and turned his face moonwards, of the excellent properties, moral and physical, of a beef−steak.

The afflictions which poverty brings with it in the country are as nothing to the infinity of evils in which it enmeshes those who are cooped up in cities. In the country, though the beds of the poor be hard, and their food coarse, and their raiment ragged, they have at least the free fresh air of heaven to blow upon them, and they enjoy the changes and delights which the ever−varying seasons bring around, in common with the wealthiest. The odor of the flower is as grateful to their sense the warble of the bird as pleasant to their ear and the velvet turf as soft and elastic to their tread as to that of the man of many acres. With only the cost of a little care, liberal nature clusters the briery rose about their lowly windows, and twines the graceful woodbine around their humble doors; and not unfrequently in the prime of summer, the mean clay walls of their cottages are completely buried from the view beneath a mass of vegetative beauty and fragrance. The village school gives their children at least glimmerings of knowledge, and the bell of each returning sabbath calls them (seldom in vain) to their simple village church. They have many, very many hardships and difficulties to wrestle with, but they have at least a chance afforded them of being hardy, healthy men and women; and, in the calm of evening (despite of partial and exaggerated statements to the contrary) there are still hundreds of poor peasants that can stand at their cottage doors and feel that content and happiness are not merely empty sounds. But, alas! for the "city's pale abortions;" alas! for the child born amid sin and gin in a confined, filthy London court or alley, down which not

even a straggling breath of pure air, by any accident, ever found its way. What a place for infancy for the gleesome sports of childhood! But such have no infancy they never are children (except in stature). The springs of life are poisoned in the outset, and the mind, as it gradually unfolds, is as gradually soiled and tainted by all the urchin sees, and hears, and learns. It never has the undoubting confidence and frankness of a child, but becomes at once a premature adult in head and heart; and is almost as knowing, lynx−eyed, artful and suspicious as the fully−developed sinners by whom it is surrounded. Where is the wonder if a few more years fulfil its destiny, and bring it to the convict ship or the gallows? The greatest miracle is, that the lowest of the low in London surrounded as they hourly are by debasing influences retain so many human sympathies and kindly feelings as they do, and as they frequently evince towards each other.

Poor wretches! Virtue should have lenity on one hand and toleration on the other, when she overlooks their accounts, and take especial note of the few blossoms of good that spring up in such a wilderness of evil. She ought to act upon the principle I heard laid down by a bloated hackney coachman, as I passed him one cold frosty morning. "Now I likes a man as can make allowances," said he, to an ascetic−looking gentleman, who had hired his vehicle, and was apparently endeavoring to dissuade him from swallowing a glass of gin which he had purchased to settle his nerves, preparatory to starting. "It may all be true what you says, sir, but it's uncommon hard on a poor fellow like me. Now I likes a man as can make allowances!" and without further interlocution he raised the cordial with trembling eagerness to his lips. By the position of the glass he might have half emptied it, when a miserable half−clad female, shivering with cold, crawled by, and as she passed looked wistfully in his face. The look was understood. It touched a sympathetic chord in the gindrinker's heart, and he made a full pause "I say ma'am, you're welcome to a drop this cold morning; it will do you good;" and with something of natural politeness he handed her the glass. The poor creature curtsied, sighed, thanked him, drank it, and went on. There was delirium there might be poison in the draught, but it was given with the kindliest feelings, and the offering, whether for good or evil, was at least accompanied by the merit of a self−sacrifice of no trifling magnitude. The man was evidently a drunkard he might be a blackguard and, I dare say, was altogether unfitted for universal suffrage; but still he had "an eye for pity," and when, poor fellow! he has succeeded in drinking himself into some obscure grave, I trust he will then experience the benefit of his maxim of "making allowances."

Often when tired of walking the noble thorough−fares of London, surrounded by wealth and affluence in every direction, I have turned from them, and taking some lofty church, or other prominent landmark, for a guide, rambled carelessly towards it. I will never forget the melancholy streets I have repeatedly passed through in these heedless peregrinations. Some solely set apart for the most abandoned, inconceivable profligacy; others of good reputation, but in which starving economy was evidently engaged in an unceasing warfare with utter want and destitution. This is the sort of streets where the bankrupt tradesman, the unemployed lawyer or physician, the rejected author, and the slighted artist herd together. Alas! how many "good men and true" have perished in these dreary precincts, unnoticed and unknown? How many of "nature's gentlemen," with their fine, high spirits and inborn love of pleasure, but lacking the means of honorably gratifying their social propensities, have sunk, step by step, into the mire of degradation and debasement, until they became the companions of sharpers, or the oracles of pot−houses? How many a gifted spirit, whose strong integrity poverty could not shake, has worn himself away, "contending with low wants and lofty will" has sickened, perchance of the struggle, yet still borne on for the sake of others, until some slight addition has been forced upon the already intolerable burden, and heart and hope have at once given way, and he has dropped "unhonour'd and unsung," into the common place of repose "where bailiffs cease from troubling, and debtors are at rest." Such like blue−devilish reflections have ofttimes forced themselves upon me while roaming amid these dreary dwellings; and I have always felt relieved when on unexpectedly emerging from their dim confines, I have found myself in the vicinity of the open parks, or other fashionable promenades, where vinegar−visaged adversity dared not show her face, and all was life, animation, and enjoyment, and the brilliant butterflies of fashion (with some admixture of loggerheads) were disporting in the sunshine, pranked out in the newest vanities. It was, to say the least, a pleasant dramatic contrast, with a material improvement in the dresses and decorations.

Among their other attractions, the streets of London are rife with human curiosities; and an ardent zoologist must find it very pleasant employment going about comparing the various specimens of the species, assembled from all parts of the globe. The slim, swarthy−featured Lascar or Malay animals (imported in the East India Company's ships), with their malicious countenances and small rattlesnake eyes, in vivid relief to the hippopotamus−looking Bavarian or Dutch "broom girls;" with faces strikingly similar in form and expression to those of the well−fed cherubs to be met with on gravestones or above altar−pieces; then there are the juvenile countrymen of William Tell, who have come all the way from the borders of "Geneva's blue waters," or alpine heights where the eagle builds in safety, to the streets of London, to grind away, with cruel perseverance, on a disorganized barrel organ; or vainly endeavor, with unrelenting assiduity, to extract music from the still more distressing hurdy−gurdy. Wandering Savoyards too, with their monkeys, and Scotch bagpipers with their appropriate instruments of torture. Of all the heterogeneous mass, however, the most pitiable are the poor image boys the offspring of old Rome! with their lank, sallow cheeks, and large lustrous eyes, pleading, as they best may, in our harsh northern tongue, for the custom of the descendants of the barbarian subjects of their forefathers! I have often been struck with the helpless, desolate look of these poor fragile Italians, wanderers from their own delicious land to a country where they stand all day shivering in the very sunshine, and then creep at night into holes where it were a pity for a dog to lie down and die.

But of all the mendicant classes, which go vagabondizing about, setting equally at defiance old, impotent acts of parliament and the vigilant new police, by far the sturdiest and most numerous are those natives of the metropolis who have devoted their time and talents to the study of music for the public benefit. They have, as may be surmised, no regular engagements or fixed salaries, but roam about impregnating the air with strange noises in every direction. Unlike the Provençal troubadours of old, they are not distinguishable by any particular costume, but rather affect a diversified style of dress. Their capabilities are wonderful. They do not, like Braham, Phillips, Sinclair, or other professionals, confine themselves to any particular style, but range at will through all the subtle varieties of musical composition, from Mozart to Alexander Lee inclusive. If they fall short of vocalists of greater pretensions in some particulars, they have the advantage of them in others. They are never taken suddenly ill no man sins his soul by making apologies for them, and they sing equally with a hoarseness as without it. In one thing they strikingly resemble their brethren of the stage, namely, in the infallible tact and nicety of judgment displayed in introducing airs in appropriate situations; and it is pleasant, amid the rattling of carriages, the rumbling of carts, the heavy rolling of wagons, and the multifarious cries of oysters, hot rolls, and old clothes, to hear a fellow bawling "Oft in the stilly night, Ere slumber's chain has bound me, Fond memory brings the light Of other days around me!" or a waddling old woman, with a strictly feline organ, squalling in the vicinity of Billingsgate, "Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear, Or like a fairy trip upon the green!" At first this class might be confounded with an inferior species in the provinces, commonly called ballad−singers; but their habits are essentially different. The primitive race that used to chronicle the deeds of "Jack Monroe," or narrate how "All in the good ship Rover," they had "sailed the world around," are now nearly extinct in the me tropolis. The present "minstrelsy" of London, seem to execute no other than the newest and most fashionable pieces; and the contrast is, at times; both laughable and melancholy, in returning from the theatre where Vestris, or some of the other sirens of the stage, have been floating before you in an atmosphere of pleasure, and warbling their arch or joyous ditties to delighted ears, to hear some poor homeless wretch, trembling in the heavy dews of midnight, howling the self−same strains to heedless passengers as they hurry past him with a quickened step to their comfortable beds. You scarcely know which to be sorriest for the air or the performer. The contrast too, between the words of the lively, pathetic or bacchanalian melodies which they have ever in their mouths, and their own mean and miserable appearance, is continually giving rise to the most ludicrous associations. It rather makes a man smile to hear a poor hatless, coatless, shoeless wanderer, lugubriously laboring away at "Oh there's nothing in life can sadden us," bleating out "The young May−moon is beaming, love," or dolefully asseverating

"My heart my heart is breaking, For the love of Alice Gray."

"Heaven tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." It must be so; or how these people, exposed to nearly every ill that flesh is heir to, (unless indeed they have become inured to starvation, or else have got into a mechanical habit of

living on from day to day, and do not like to give it over,) continue to keep up their hearts and still face existence, is more than I can possibly conjecture.

CHRISTMAS.

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Heap on more wood! the wind blows chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our christmas merry still.
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Scott.

"A merry christmas and a happy new−year!" How many million times will this good−natured salutation be interchanged, wherever the English language is spoken, before the present and following weeks pass over. It is, to be sure, a mere matter of course, a compliment of the season: but yet, methinks there is more right−good will in the delivery of it than in the generality of compliments: the hearty and jovial animation of the countenance, the frank and cheerful tone of the voice, and the rough and friendly pressure of the hand, go along with the words as a commentary, the obvious import of which is, contrary to the ordinary practice of society, "I mean what I say." There is less selfishness at christmas than at any other time. Men appear to pay more attention to that much−neglected scriptural injunction, "love thy neighbor as thyself," and the cares and schemes of those who struggle for existence in great cities, are suffered to lie dormant for a brief space. The stomach is more thought of than the purse; and when a man thinks seriously of his stomach, with a fair prospect of having his visions realized, his natural disposition dies within him, and he becomes a generous, meek, and equitable animal. Whatever is thought of the poetry there may be reasonable doubts entertained of the policy of Lear's advice, "Take physic, pomp; Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel, That thou mayst shake the superflux to them, And show the heavens more just;" for it is exactly at the time when a man feels most uncomfortable himself, that he thinks least of the discomforts of others; and many a one, who, before breakfast on a cold morning, with no prospect of the fire burning, would not give sixpence to save half the human race from starvation, will, after a satisfactory dinner, talk with unction of the miseries of the poor, and subscribe his dollar without thinking himself guilty of an extravagance. When he is cold and comfortless himself, he is a piece of concentrated selfishness his sympathies are as frozen as his fingers, and he has no superflux benevolence; but as his stomach becomes literally closed his heart is figuratively opened, and he parts with his money with fewer pangs than naturally accompany that disagreeable operation.

There is one essential difference between the christmas of the present times and those of a few years ago, namely the weather. The fine, clear, cold weather formerly characteristic of this season, is now so no longer; and in its place have come mild, sickly, drizzly days, that properly belong to no particular season. It is a pity that fog and civilization should go hand in hand, and that the clearing away of the immense forests of the west should be one main cause why this pestiferous weather is substituted for the healthy, hardy frosts of former times. It is a great drawback; for with what face can any one wish his friend joy, when he can scarcely discern his lineaments through the fog; or ask him to be merry, when saturated through and through with villanous vapor? And then the women! What a pleasant sight it was, on a clear, frosty christmas morning, with the snow crackling beneath your feet, and the sleigh−bells tinkling merrily in your ears, to see some comfortably−clad and comfortable−looking damsel tripping cheerfully yet carefully over the slippery side−walk, with cheeks into which the cold and exercise had sent a glow more deep and rich than the most brilliant carnation! with eyes sparkling and dancing in liquid splendor, and her warm breath playing back upon her face, seeking, as it were, shelter from the sharp air amid her clustering curls smiling and laughing, she knew not why, and cared not wherefore. Now, the scene is changed they "walk in silk attire," with artificial flowers on their heads, and soleless shoes on their feet; picking their steps among the multitudinous small pools which the street−inspector leaves for the accommodation of pedestrians, with faces of a neutral tint, alike different from the ruddy glow of winter and the sunny bloom of summer. But even this change, like every other, bad as it is upon the whole, is not without its advantages: "There is a soul of goodness in things evil, Would men observingly distil it out," and those who are admirers of, and

connoisseurs in delicately turned ankles, have now a better opportunity for more particular and impartial observation.

Poultry is the only thing which does not seem to share in the general joy on the approach of this happy period; and all who have entered deeply into the study of the science of ornithology in general, and domestic *fowlology* in particular, must have observed in the eyes of turkeys more especially, a sort of melancholy presentiment, as if "coming events" had actually "cast their shadows before," and chickens look as if they already beheld the delicate pies, of which they are to form a part. The goose, that most incorrigible bird, it is true, is a goose to the last, turning up a lack−lustre eye at the hand preparing to twist its neck about, and it never occurs to it to flap its wings or offer any resistance until the head is detatched from the body, which, according to the immutable laws of nature, is a little too late. These speculations may seem fanciful, but many ingenious theories have been constructed on as slim a foundation.

How many good things have been said and sung of christmas, from the old poets in Elizabeth's time down to Washington Irving. Indeed, for mirth and music friendship and flummery love and liquor poetry and poultry gaiety and gormandizing dancing and dinner−parties, there is no time like christmas. A spirit of enjoyment an universal freedom from restraint prevails; the most prudent relax, the most frigid melt; even that anomalous class of bipeds denominated "serious young men," are guilty of merriment, and sip their wine and lisp their jokes with impunity. A jovial farewell is taken of the parting year, and a jovial welcome given to its successor. No man attends to his business, unless he be a publican or a pastry cook; and all sorts of profitable employments are looked on as nuisances. Merchant meets merchant, and the price of stocks is not inquired after tradesman meets tradesman, and the shop is unthought of. Friend dines with friend, old intimacies are renewed, differences forgotten, and a spirit of good−will and kindly feeling, well befitting the season, "reigns in all bosoms."

"Merry christmas!" even now thy influence, like a charm, is over all. Now are parties projected in the parlor, while through the kitchen rings the din of merciless preparation now do black cooks rise ten per cent. in the scale of creation, and those who can withstand a hot fire are not to be treated with coolness now do serenaders take their stand in the damp streets, and, like frogs in a fog, their voices are heard through the thick atmosphere, croaking of love and music, in imitation of Spain and Italy, while the noise of neighboring taverns mingles with their melody; and now do young ladies throw open the windows to testify their grateful acceptance of the homage of those weather−contemning swains, and many catch quinsies by this sacrifice of prudence to passion now do superlatively witty jokes pass between young ladies and gentlemen concerning their prospects of matrimony before another christmas now do men eat more than is deemed necessary for the support of nature; apoplexies are prevalent, and the heirs of fat old men look forward with pleasing anticipations now is the air of bar rooms laden with monotonous yet pleasing interrogations of "What will you take to drink?" and no answers are heard in the negative now, as the glass circulates quickly round, friendships become stronger as brains become weaker, and more promises are made than will be kept now are several men seen reposing in the streets, with the pavement for a bed and the curb−stone for a pillow. Peacefully do they slumber! having that within them which makes their flinty couch "soft as the thrice−driven down" and now do the of editors sharpen their pens, and prepare to narrate manifold instances of the "fatal effects of intemperance," in their very best style now do inveterate moralists indite long essays, stating that there have been many changes in the year that is past, and likewise the probability that there will be many more in the year that is to come now do the respectable members of the "calliothumpian band" prepare to disturb the peace and quiet of the republic, and the New−York Dogberries hold consultation concerning the powers vested in them by the constitution; and now, also, is the constabulatory force of the city held in less respect by the juvenile citizens than is due to constituted authorities now do young aspirants to "Tom and Jerry" fame get well kicked, bruised, beaten, and carried to the watch−house, all which they term "sport," and sober, sensible people begin to entertain doubts concerning the meaning of the word now do many more things take place than are "dreamt of in philosophy," and now do I put a period to the apprehensions of the reader by prudently coming to a conclusion.

THE DRAMA AS IT IS.

The drama is a poetry which, in its legitimate scope, must be addressed to all ranks of society must wear the common garb and speak the common language of all. It is the forum where all ranks meet and are but equal; where the base of mankind unlearn their ferocity and divest themselves of their callousness; and where, likewise, the noble and gentle must dispense with artificial feelings, and know, whatever be the shell, the kernel is at best but a man.

Anon.

There are few subjects, if any, that have elicited a greater flow of words, than what is termed the "decline of the legitimate drama." It is one of the most approved and enduring themes extant for small declamation, and has consequently become the almost exclusive property of "smart young men" and unfledged scribblers, who think it looks well to lament the non−enactment of Shakspeare, and to indulge in little frothy vituperations against the bad taste of the public, and the intellectual depravity of the managers, actors, and modern authors. They discuss in the most flippant aad self−satisfied manner a question involving the most vexing and perplexing difficulties, and pass their silly censures and give their witless advice upon a subject of which they are profoundly ignorant. When a satirist, like Lord Byron or Mr. Charles Sprague, or any man of talent, undertakes to lash the vices of the stage, the lack of practical knowledge is overlooked in the display of poetic power; they present us with a forcible picture of what is bad, but without pointing out the *efficient* means of making that bad better; they dwell much upon the faults and follies of the system, because faults and follies are the food of the satirist; and they will even, at times, give very fine advice, which has only the fault of not being practcable. They ought to bear in mind what *Portia* truly and sensibly says, "If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions." Lord Byron, when he dipped his pen in gall, and wrote his "English bards and Scotch reviewers," denounced the stage among other existing follies; but when he actually became concerned in the management of Drury−lane, he found it a great deal easier to censure than amend. And yet now the A. and B. newspaper critics prate about the offence given to their delicate tastes, when a profitable piece of nonsense happens to be enacted, instead of Shakspeare or the "sterling English comedies!" But the best of the joke is, that most of this kind of persons, whom we have had the misfortune to become acquainted with, in reality know no more of the sterling English comedies (except a few of the most popular) than they do of Homer in the original; and as for Shakspeare, their knowledge of him is confined to his Macbeth, Othello, Richard the Third, and a few more of his *acting* plays; while his more imaginative ones, his Tempest and Midsummer Night's Dream, are so much heathen Greek to them; may, one whom we knew, that pretended a most overweening admiration for the immortal bard, actually did not know that he had written either songs or sonnets; and upon being told that the popular song of "Bid me discourse," was one of his, resented the information as an impudent attempt to undervalue his understanding and impose upon his credulity! Yet this is, for the most part, the sort of people that affect a stately supremacy, and talk about managers "dazzling the eyes of the ignorant vulgar," and "catering for the vitiated taste of the public."

Now we are by no means going so far as to contend that the "drama as it is," is any thing like the "drama as it ought to be:" but we do mean to say, that there is an "infinite deal of nothing," or, at least, nothing but unmingled cant, preached upon this very subject. Even at the present day, Shakspeare is played ten times to any other author's once, and would, if the public attended, be enacted still more frequently; and for this simple and satisfactory reason, that his drama has not one half the *expense* of modern pieces, for they have the beauty that "Needs not the foreign aid of ornament;" consequently, the cost of "scenery, machinery, dresses, and decorations," is all saved; and to those who, for want of a genuine admiration of that truly immortal man, counterfeit an ardent longing for his more frequent presentation on the stage, we would say or rather we will tell them an anecdote which, though old, is good and applicable, and may be more to the purpose than argument.

A certain king of France had a very pretty queen whom he loved "passing well," at least, considering that he was a

Frenchman and she was his wife, but still not with such exclusive devotion as to prevent "His spirit hunting after new fancies." A worthy ecclesiastic about the court perceiving this, undertook to lecture his majesty upon the subject, and expressed his surprise that he could slight so beauteous a lady for others evidently her inferior. The king, instead of answering the question, asked the priest what dish he was most partial to. "Partridges," answered the friar, in an emphatic tone, while his eyes glistened and his lips moved involuntarily at the ideas which the mention of has favorite repast called forth "partridges, your majesty." The next morning the worthy clergyman was lodged in prison, and for fourteen days, morning, noon and night breakfast, dinner, and supper partridges and partridges only were set before him, until the gastric juices of the worthy ecclesiastic could no longer endure this horrible monotony, and he exclaimed, in an agony of feeling, that "they might imprison him as long as they liked, if they would only give him something else to eat!" Upon this the king sent for him. "How is this," said his majesty, "that you complain of your favorite fare?" "Partridges are excellent," quoth the friar, "but *always* partridges!" "The queen is excellent," retorted his majesty, "but *always* the queen!" and so the king had his joke, and the priest a change of diet. Now we hope that no person whose imagination particularly qualifies him for finding out a bad moral, will infer from this, that we mean to applaud his majesty's very improper and naughty behaviour; all that is meant to be deduced from the story is, that Shakspeare, *always* Shakspeare, would be neither profitable to the managers, nor pleasing to the public.

The mind of man requires a variety of intellectual food, just as the stomach requires a variety of animal nutriment; and that mind is perhaps the healthiest, and that stomach the strongest, which can enjoy themselves off whatever is set before them: what they lose in extreme delicacy, they make up in vigour. With some people, as the saying is, "all is fish that comes to their net;" if they can get a good tragedy or comedy, so much the better; if not, an opera will do as well; if that is not to be had, why then a broad farce, or a broader melo−drama; or in default of these, even an extravaganza or a pantomime; always provided, that the thing be tolerably good of its kind; and the man who on one night laughs heartily at the extravagance of Hilson, or the extravagant extravagance of Barnes, in some of their "broad−grin" parts, is more likely on the next to relish the passion and pathos, the exquisite poetry and divine philosophy of Shakspeare, than one of those squeamish and pedantic personages, whose "Visages do cream and mantle like a standing pool," who dare not be caught enjoying themselves with any thing save what is of acknowledged excellence, and who turn up their good−for−nothing noses at the efforts of every author or actor who has not as yet received the stamp of public approbation. It is really amusing at times to sit in a theatre and witness the behaviour of one of these gentry to see the air of critical primness which he assumes on the entrance of a celebrated actor, or to observe the smile of supercilious pity which he casts upon some poor wretch beside him, who is thrown into ecstacies by a comic song, a bad joke, Barnes's wig coming off, or any other interesting incident which "Sir Oracle" esteems frivolous. And when two of them get together, the way in which they reflect each other's folly the looks of deep significance that pass between them and the air of conscious superiority with which they survey the ordinary mortals around them, is as instructing and amusing as the play, let it be what it may.

In theatrical matters we must confess that our own taste is by no means particularly fastidious, but is capable of embracing all the different species (not individuals) of the dramatic family, even the tribe most vilified of all, known by the appellation of melo dramas; and though, certainly, this class owns many members too bad for human endurance, yet there are others capable of interesting and exciting the feelings in no common degree. Though there are bad melo−dramas without number, yet a good melo−drama is not so bad a thing. It is a sort of skeleton tragedy, without the stateliness and poetry, where the murders are committed in simple prose, and the villanies carried on without the aid of blank verse. It is the sketch and outline of a tragedy where actions are represented rather than characters delineated, and where every thing is broad and general, coarse and rough, but which when well enacted and kept within the moderate bounds of probability, sometimes excite the feelings to a pitch that prevents sleep during the more interesting scenes. Nay, so very unrefined is our taste, that we cannot join in the prevailing hue and cry against gaudy spectacles and splendid scenery, thinking them very good in their place, and even feeling an unbecoming interest in the "dresses and decorations," particularly of the ladies, for a well−dressed woman is at any time pleasanter to look upon than a dull play. There are, however, some things occasionally exhibited which there is no getting over, to wit, dogs, horses, elephants, and the brute creation in

general real fire and real water, wonderful ascensions from the stage to the gallery, impressive ceremonies of shooting deserters jugglers, rope−dancers and little children these are unalloyed, unmitigated evils.

But though gaud and show, and spectacles and melo−dramas are pleasant enough occasionally and in their place, it is the interest and duty of every one who values sound rational dramatic representations to raise his voice against them when they are too frequently introduced, and assume an undue importance in the evening's entertainment. They are well enough as a dessert after more solid and substantial aliment, but if furnished as the principal intellectual food for the theatre−going public, the inevitable consequence will be depravity of taste, and attenuation of intellect. Let a good tragedy or comedy; which in itself contains enough poetry and passion, wit and sense for any reasonable man for one evening, be first enacted, and then let any popular nonsense most in vogue occasionally follow, by which arrangement all parties will be satisfied. Though the public cannot justly be charged with indifference in respect to Shakspeare, yet it is to be regretted that they certainly do display an apathy towards the genuine old comedies, (ah! they know not the treasures which they pass unheeded by!) yet this, in a great measure, arises from their not being familiar with their merits. Managers ought to endeavour to *create* a taste for the more correct appreciation of the genuine excellencies of the old dramatic authors. Let them not be discouraged by a few indifferent houses, but persevere. If they were to set apart a particular night in each week for the production of a sterling comedy, this would amount to between forty and fifty pieces of real merit in the course of the season an immense acquisition. And if the newspapers and literary journals were to make a point of especially noticing and commenting on that evening's performance, there is little doubt that in a short time it would not only be creditable and profitable to the managers, but creditaand profitable to the public.

THE MAN OF THE FLY−MARKET FERRY.

An indefinite number of years ago I boarded in the Bowery. Our accommodations were, in those days, looked upon as something superior; it being an established rule of the house for not more than six gentlemen to sleep in one room, which to me, who was a stranger to the customs of New−York, appeared in the hot summer nights, a sufficiency. The boarders were principally young men, most of them clerks in drygood stores, and the conversation generally turned upon the quantity of sales they had severally effected in the course of the day, the particulars of which they narrated with an appearance of intense interest, bordering on enthusiasm. I was always of a speculative rather than a practical turn of mind, and I confess those counter and countinghouse reminiscences did not powerfully affect me, though I listened to them in a devotedly decorous manner. One individual alone attracted my attention. He was a middle−aged man, about the middle height, and neither very corpulent nor otherwise, and at first sight there appeared nothing about him to distinguish him from the ordinary run of mortals. He was, however, a singular individual, and had some strange peculiarities. Melancholy had "marked him for her own;" he was evidently a man of many sorrows, and a deep and settled grief seemed to pervade his every action. His appetite was uncommonly good, and he ate more and talked less than any man I ever saw.

He was an inoffensive being; and yet, for some unascertained cause, the landlady "looked loweringly" upon him. As I entered the house rather abruptly one evening, I perceived the middle−aged gentleman and the lady of the mansion in deep and earnest conversation. The tones of her voice were sharp and decided her action was energetic in the extreme her face had lost much of the mild expression and winning softness which characterize her sex, and I distinctly heard her pronounce the impressive words "I have been put off long enough, and I'll be put off no longer!" The middle−aged gentleman sighed profoundly; he was evidently much affected, and without saying a word, he took up his candle, and retired to his bed. Heaven only knows what were his reflections!

Next morning, notwithstanding the severe mental struggle of the preceding evening, not a trace of passion was visible on his countenance. He was calm, though by no means collected, for instead of taking his place next the landlady, as was his wont, he obliviously seated himself opposite a dish of pickled salmon, a fish for which he had always manifested a decided predilection. His mind was in a high state of abstraction the world around was to him as nothing and he helped himself four times from the savoury fish alluded to, without in the least noticing

the inflamed and ominous looks of the hostess. He continued to eat, as it appeared to me, mechanically, long after the other boarders had arisen from the table, until looking around and perceiving that he was seated alone with the lady, who was apparently preparing to open a conversation, with more agility than I had previously seen him manifest, he started from his chair seized by mistake a new hat instead of his old one from the pile in the passage, and rushed out of the house. He came not to dinner, and at tea he was not visible! "Next morn we miss'd him at his 'customed seat, "Along the side, nor at the foot was he: "Another came " but not so did the middle−aged gentleman, and from that time forward he was seen among us no more.

At the expiration of twenty−four hours, the landlady overcame her natural feelings of delicacy, and proceeded to break open his clothes chest, in order to elicit some compensation for sundry pecuniary obligations which she alleged he had omitted to discharge. I was present at the operation: the lock was forced the lid was anxiously raised but alas! an extensive vacuum presented itself. No integuments were there, excepting a few "shreds and patches" at the bottom of the chest in the shape of ancient shirts and fractions of neck and pocket handkerchiefs. This was all that the repository of the middle−aged gentleman contained, setting aside a few sheets of paper which the landlady threw away as rubbish, and which I instinctively secured. On one of them was written the following "Legend," which illustrates in a high degree the morbid sensibility of the amiable writer. Connected as it is with local circumstances calculated to render it peculiarly interesting to the feelings of every New−Yorker, and breathing as it does a tone of the purest morality, I feel it my bounden duty to give it without alteration or addition to the public. The catastrophe is singularly impressive and strikingly applicable to the present high−pressure times. Though I cannot say that I myself recollect the events here recorded, there is strong reason to believe they are not apochryphal, and doubtless live in the memories of many worthy inhabitants of this city. The following is the

MANUSCRIPT.

"I am a miserable individual; my brightest hopes have been blighted and my finest feelings exceedingly lacerated. All my life an unfortunate constitutional temperament has disinclined me from following any useful or profitable employment; and as I inherited nothing from the author of my lamented existence, excepting a good constitution and somewhat of an epicurean taste, I have consequently been subjected to the mercenary importunities of mankind in every city, town, and village where I have resided for any length of time. Even when totally destitute of money, and without the most distant prospect of ever possessing any, they have ruthlessly pressed their claims upon me, until disgusted with their heartless importunities, I have frequently, without vouchsafing a parting word, quitted their domiciles, and wandered no one knew whither. In the course of my shifting, strolling life, I have, as might be expected, met with strange incidents and scarcely to be credited adventures, but among them all I know of none which more powerfully affected me than one which accurred in this very city of New−York, early in the nineteenth century.

"It was on a Sunday morning in the beginning of May, that I opened the door of a house which had become hateful to me, and sallied out into the street. Unconscious of what direction I was taking, chance conducted me into Maiden−lane, and I sauntered down until my further progress was impeded by the East River. It was one of those delicious May mornings when spring, as if mad with joy at effecting her escape from the dominion of winter, had infused an exuberance of life and animation into all creation. The waves were glancing and dancing in the sunshine across the beautiful bay of New−York, and the fresh breeze came sweeping over the waters. The denizens of the city were thronging across to Long Island to "Gulp their weekly air," and many aspiring young men were seated aloft in their buggies, sulkies, and other vehicles with names of equal euphony, awaiting the arrival of the boat. A friend of mine, who happened to be going that way, entreated me to accompany him, and as he satisfied all pecuniary demands, I entered the gate, and took my station by the toll−gatherer, with whose appearance and manners I was very much struck in passing, particularly his slow and solemn way of receiving the money tendered him, and, notwithstanding the agitation and impatience of the passengers, his deliberate manner of returning the change. He was a man apparently about forty−five; his person was round, fat, oily, and somewhat loose and swampy; the original hue of his face was gone, and it was now a combination of many colors, in which

red and purple predominated; its prominent protuberance was truly Bardolphian large, bulbous, and succulent; on it "Brandy had done its worst! Nor gin, nor rum, nor any spirituous liquor, Could touch it further."

"The bell had rung for the last time, and the gate was slowly closing, when a long black column, which on nearer approach assumed a little the appearance of a human being, was seen making its way, with all possible expedition, down Maidenlane, in order to catch the boat, but whether it would succeed or not was a very dubious point. One thing was against it; the wind was blowing freshly up the street, and though the body, from its thin, hatchet−like appearance, was well adapted for cutting through an opposing current of air, yet the pressure upon the whole surface was evidently too much, for at every squall the long attenuated legs kept plunging in the wind, but without making any progress. It was like a boat pulled against a strong tide, which the rowers prevent from receding, but with all their exertions are unable to advance an inch. Fortunately, however, just as the small bell had rung to put on the steam, the breeze slackened, and the attenuation was enabled to reach the gates of the ferry. It proved to be an interesting and somewhat dyspeptic−looking young man, or rather the "sketch and outline of a man," for he was evidently as yet only a design. Like an onion run to seed, his altitude was uncommon, but his circumference a mere joke; and what added to the length and diminished the breadth was, that he had encased himself in a long−waisted black coat, which it was his pleasure to button tightly around him, and bestowed his nether extremities in a pair of fashionable pantaloons, familiarly denominated "tights," of the same sombre hue. I must take upon myself to say that this latter act was extremely injudicious, because the young man's legs were not particularly straight they came in contact at the knees, but instead of descending perpendicularly, branched off so as to form the figure which geometricians call an isosceles triangle, and which is commonly defined by the term "knock−kneed." His face was pale, thin, and uncomfortable looking, and he had altogether the appearance of having been dieted on vegetables and water during the winter months. He was such a being as Falstaff meant when he talked about a "forked radish;" or like what pretty Perdita had in her mind's eye when she exclaims "Out alas! You'd be so lean, the blasts of January Would blow you through and through." How he had contrived to weather the blasts of January, and attain the month of May, is one of those inscrutable mysteries of nature, which the more weak blinded man attempts to solve, the further he goes astray, until reason is swallowed up in conjecture, and "nothing is but what is not." I can only vouch for the fact, that the month was May, and he was still a sentient being.

"When the thin young man presented himself at the gate of the ferry (which was done in less time than it has taken me to describe him,) the contrast between him and the fiery−faced ferryman was most marked and striking. The latter looked at him as if he thought he was shortly bound for another world, and I myself was partly of the same opinion; be that as it might, he still evinced a laudable interest in the pecuniary concerns of this, for notwithstanding the larboard chain of the boat had been unloosed, and they were preparing to do the same with the starboard, he presented the man of the Fly−market ferry with a five dollar bill of the Catawaba bank in Alabama, by which procedure he calculated not only to secure his passage gratis, but have the bill discounted at a cheaper rate than it would cost in the regular way of business. But alas! how short−sighted are the schemes of mortals, as will be made apparent hereafter. The man of the Fly−market ferry was seemingly prepared for all contingencies of this kind, for drawing from his side−pocket a large greasy−looking roll of bills, he slowly and deliberately proceeded to select the most suspicious and unbrokerable banks. Just as he had accomplished this to his satisfaction, and given back four dollars, and ninety−six cents, the starboard chain was unloosed, and the boat proceeded on her way. The young man first saw that the change was all right, and then rushed precipitately forward, and I verily believe would have succeeded in reaching the boat, had it not been decreed otherwise; but just as he had got half−way down the gang−way his foot slipped, and he fell prostrate: his bones rattled violently in his skin, and the hand which contained the change came in forcible contact with the ground its powers of tension relaxed and the valuable contents were precipitated into the water!

"I have lived long I have wandered over a great part of the habitable globe, and I have seen human misery and suffering in every variety of shape and degree, but such another picture of unqualified wretchedness as the thin young man presented when he found his cash was "buried in the briny tide," and that he had lost the boat, I have not seen. (Owing to the absorbing interest of this melancholy affair, I myself had lost my passage, but not being in

any particular hurry, this was a small consideration.) The stranger collected his limbs together and rose slowly from the ground, and in doing so a ray of sunshine glimmered through the gloom of his unparalleled situation, for he perceived a solitary sixpence, that had escaped the fate of its companions, lying glittering on the edge of the dock; he stooped to pick it up, but before his agitated hand could grasp this fraction of the metallic currency, a young, dirty, ragged, embryo−state−prison varlet, who was lounging about, pounced upon it, and transferred it to his own pocket. The young man naturally enough demanded the restitution of his property, but this sprout of original sin, in the most solemn manner, and with every appearance of truth, sturdily denied all knowledge of the transaction. "This was the unkindest cut of all," and the young man gave way under it. Stunned by the heavy and quick−succeeding blows of fate, he staggered he knew not whither, and most unfortunately through the gates of the ferry, which instantly closed upon him. This immediately recalled him to a sense of his situation, and he attempted to return through the door−way, but such a proceeding encountered the decided opposition of the man of the ferry. The stranger was eloquent, and he poured forth a fervid torrent of words he implored the ferryman by every tie, divine and human, by all that links society together by the confidence of man in man, to take his word that he had already paid his passage, and let him pass; this the man of the ferry undoubtedly remembered, but he was not legally bound to do so, and moreover, he also remembered the Catawaba bank bill, and peremptorily refused all re−admittance without a preliminary fourpence. The stranger finding words of no avail grew frantic, and attempted to force the passage *vi et armis*, but the man of the ferry pushed him back, at the same time unfeelingly exclaiming, "No you don't!" His cup of bitterness was now full to the brim and one drop over, but tears at length came to the relief of the sufferer, and he wept! The ferryman "beheld the dew−drops start, They didn't touch his iron heart," and the unfortunate finding all was of no use, dashed the tear from his eye, turned his back on the scene of his misery, and bent his way up Maiden−lane. One consolation was left him amid all his wretchedness the wind was now in his favor, and he proceeded without difficulty. On coming to the corner of Pearl−street he turned along, and the interesting, dyspeptic, thin young man was lost to my sight, perchance for ever.

"My tale draws fast to its tragical conclusion. I went over in the next boat, remained in Brooklyn that night, and returned the following morning. On arriving at the dock, I perceived that many people were congregated together, and also that another individual gathered in the fourpences. On inquiry I learnt that during the short interval of my absence, the man of the ferry the author of so much misery, had been summoned to another world. The manner of his death was simply thus. After the boat had stopped running on the preceding evening, he wended his way, as was his wont, to a neighboring tavern, where he proceeded to "pour huge draughts of aqua−vitæ down," in a way that would have petrified any unsophisticated man to behold. In this course he persevered for some time, and then to crown the whole, undertook, for a trifling wager, to swallow a pint of fourth−proof brandy at a draught. It was rather too much for him, but he had a thirst for distinction in that line; he attempted the feat and succeeded, though he immediately sunk upon the floor in a state of insensibility. The next morning when he awoke, he felt dry and feverish, and a pitcher of cold water happening unluckily to stand near, he proceeded to deluge his inward man with its contents. The result was such as might naturally have been expected under such circumstances. His inside being heated like a furnace, and no sooner had the cold water come in contact with it, than an immense quantity of steam was instantly generated; there being no safetyvalve, the unfortunate man, like an overcharged boiler, instantly exploded, and the animated mass, which, but a few short hours before, I had left full of fire and spirits, was shattered into a thousand pieces, and scattered over the floor of the porter−house. Fortunately no lives, excepting his own, were lost by the explosion. A coroner's inquest was held on the body, and a verdict brought in that "the deceased came by his death in consequence of his ignorance of the power of steam."

The moral to be deduced from this event is obvious. Let no one who has had a predilection for ardent spirits and there are but too many who have such predilections drink copiously or incautiously of cold water, lest the result be similar, and they too share the fate of the MAN OF THE FLY−MARKET FERRY.

EVILS OF EARLY RISING.

It seems to be the laudable endeavor of a great portion of the present generation to prove their forefathers fools; this being the way in which they choose to evince their gratitude for the benefits they have derived from the labors of those who have gone before them. Accordingly, from the author of Devereux downwards, they are employed in running full tilt at what it is their pleasure to term "popular fallacies." Now, notwithstanding we can travel ten miles an hour quicker than those who lived before us, I, for one, cannot help thinking that our ancestors knew something; and am therefore particularly cautious of impugning, or even entertaining doubts of the soundness of any good old maxim that may seem to have received the sanction of wiser heads than I ever expect mine to become, even in these ready−made−knowledgedays. But there is one thing which has been much advocated by doctors and moralists, (not, I suspect, without sinister motives on the part of the former,) namely, "early rising," which I never could see the utility of, and which has only to be placed in a proper light to show at once its folly and impropriety.

Let the merits of the case be examined. It is the custom of those who defend this baneful practice to appeal rather to the fancy than the reason, and to sketch a highly romantic and altogether ideal picture of the pleasures of early rural walks, &c. They talk of green fields, purling streams, warbling birds, and healthful breezes, invariably winding up with a florid description of the glories of the rising sun. Now I myself, from dear−bought experience, happen to know something of these matters; for though, with one exception, I have not seen the sun rise for many years, yet in early life, when I "thought as a child and acted as a child," I was seduced by empty rhodomontade, to adopt the pernicious practice of early rising, until a heavy cold, caught by roaming about the fields at an unseasonable hour in search of health and mushrooms, settled upon my lungs, and came pretty near making my early rising a prelude to an early grave. But suppose a man up and dressed before the sun, (and here I will not dwell upon the soft, delicious slumbers that have been broken and frighted away by his harsh and unnatural conduct,) suppose him up, dressed, out of the house and away to the fields. When he gets there, these fields are, to be sure, green enough rankly green, but the dares not venture into one of them; or if he does, especially should the grass be luxuriant, he might just as well go a bathing with his nether garments on: he dares not pluck a wild flower from the hedge−side, for on approaching he finds that "Black snails and white, Blue snails and gray," are pursuing their slimy peregrinations in every direction; the birds do not warble at that early hour, but on leaving their warm nests, flit uneasily from bush to bush, shaking their plumage, and twittering in a way certainly not calculated to raise his feelings to any ecstatic pitch. Even the cows, whose slumbers he has disturbed, arise slowly and sullenly from their damp couch, look grimly at the worshipper of nature, and proceed, in a discontented manner, to slake their thirst by nibbling the grass. These discomforts probably rather damp his feelings, and he proceeds forthwith to select a dry spot on the turnpike−road, where he stands, with his hands in his pocket, gaping at the sun getting up, and fancying himself very much delighted; though everybody knows, that for richness and beauty one sunset is worth a dozen sunrises. After this he makes it a point of duty to walk and lounge about for three or four hours, leaning over some farmer's gate−way watching the chickens, with their eyes half open, picking up stray worms, or the ducks gobbling houseless snails, when he goes home wet and weary, and finds the sensible part of the family enjoying themselves with toast and coffee. As all foolish persons dislike to confess their folly, he proceeds to state that he has had "such a charming walk!" thereby not only sinning his miserable soul before breakfast, and giving the father of lies a decided advantage for the rest of the day, but inducing other unsuspicious victims to follow his scandalous example.

There is more truth than poetry in this plain statement of the case, which will be found correct nine times out of ten, even in the most favorable season of the year summer; what then must an early morning's walk be through the chills and drizzle of spring or the substantial fogs of autumn? As for winter, the idea of a man leaving his warm bed, and wading through ice and snow without the prospect of any thing but a frost−bitten nose, is so abhorrent to the natural and common feelings of humanity, that it may well be doubted whether any one but an hypochondriac or a lunatic could execute or conceive such a measure.

Can any thing be more preposterous than the advice not unfrequently given, to "go to bed with the sun and get up with the sun?" It is clearly contrary to the visible intentions of Providence. Before the sun rises, the night dews lie heavy on field and forest. Nature is drenched: and the sun is kindly sent forth, as it were, to mop up the world, and make the earth dry and comfortable before it is necessary for its tenant, man, to come abroad. With his warm beams he proceeds in the work of exsuction, and draws up all the raw and unhealthy vapors out of our way: and any man who unnecessarily intrudes himself into his presence when thus transacting his morning's business, well deserves what he generally gets, a chilly reception and an inflammation of the lungs. Yet people will punish themselves in this way, and bear it all as if they were suffering in a good cause! If you remonstrate with them on their folly, they will take pen, ink, and paper, and prove to you, by the rules of arithmetic, how many years of active existence a man adds to his natural life by getting up regularly four hours before the rest of his fellow−mortals, only forgetting to deduct the four hours he loses by going to bed that much sooner, in order to indulge his strange, out−of−the−way propensities.

If a cause is to be judged by its advocates, few, I believe, would stand worse than early rising. You never meet with what is called "a good fellow" among early risers. It is either your old bachelor, who is, to be sure, more excusable than any other class of men; or your morose worldly husband, who prides himself on his domestic virtues, because he sleeps over the fire after supper, and goes to bed at nine o'clock; or your thin, bilious, poetical and dyspeptic youth, who fancies he is an admirer of nature, and therefore comes abroad to see her in her most disagreeable forms, and also to beget an appetite for an extra egg or an additional muffin at breakfast. But the most amusing thing is, the credit such people take to themselves for these departures from the ordinary regulations of society. They invariably narrate the history of their morning exploits to one who loves his bed with an air of conscious rectitude, and with that "sort of satisfaction, Men feel when they have done a virtuous action," though wherein consists the virtue of one man putting on his clothes three or four hours before another, I am utterly unable to conjecture. But so it is, and they pride themselves upon it, as if it were one of the cardinal virtues, and like charity, covered a multitude of sins.

My prejudices against this habit were greatly augmented by the shock my feelings received from witnessing it carried into effect on a highly improper occasion. I was, a summer or two ago, invited to a wedding, a few miles in the country, having an off−hand acquaintance with both bride and bridegroom. The former was very pretty and agreeable, the latter very pedantic and disagreeable. Many people thought him a genius, and he himself inclined to that opinion. He was busy with an epic poem, was an inflexible early riser, and invariably ate dyspepsia crackers at breakfast. His conversation always turned upon one subject, which was himself. This subject he divided into two parts, one of which was an unsparing narrative of his literary labors, and the other, a particular account of the state of his stomach. How he had contrived to steer between these two divisions, and carry on "his whole course of wooing," I cannot comprehend. Be that as it might, a set of joyous spirits were congregated together at the wedding party. The wine circled gaily, and the song and jest passed merrily round. At a reasonable hour the ladies and junior and senior gentlemen retired, leaving about a dozen of us too well contented with things as they were to think of leaving them so soon. Time flew unheeded by, and the bright sun and four o'clock in the morning found us singing in full chorus, "Fly not yet, 'tis just the hour!" when happening to cast my eye into the garden, judge of my surprise at beholding our friend the "gay bridegroom," perambulating the gravel walk a little way from the house. Struck with astonishment, I spoke not a word, but rushed from the room and made towards him, filled with fearful forebodings of some dire mishap. On my anxiously inquiring what was the matter, he seemed surprised at the question, and civilly stated "that nothing was the matter that four o'clock was his usual time for getting up that he found it conducive to health that he had eaten three quarters of an ounce too much at supper that the rising sun was a glorious spectacle, and that nothing aided the digestive powers so much as an early walk." As he proceeded I looked in the reptile's inanimate face there was not a spark of fire in his dull gray eye, his turned−up conceited−looking nose was tipped with blue, and I thought of the truth of what the scripture says, "we are but clay." I remonstrated with him on the brutality and cruelty of his conduct; but he seemed to have no notion of endangering his health for the satisfaction of any created being; and I left the animal, or rather vegetable, sticking among the cabbages, admiring the beauties of nature, while I betook myself to my alas! solitary pillow.

In the course of time two events occurred, one of which did not surprise me the other did. My friend, the bridegroom's wife, insisted on a separate maintenance, and my friend, the bridegroom, published a volume of poems, which, upon opening, to my utter amazement, I found were almost all on amatory subjects. He discoursed of "love and dove," and "kiss and bliss," and strolls by moonlight, (he always went to bed at ten,) and ardent hopes and fiery passions, in a way that would have outdone Catullus and Thomas Moore, only that his were merely words without ideas, which certainly improved the innocence of the poems, however it might destroy their effect. There were also two or three bacchanalian songs, concerning "circling cups" and "rosy wine," (he always drank cinnamon cordial diluted with water,) &c. &c. At the time of receiving this, I was busy with "an essay attempting to form a judgment of the characters of authors from their works." I read half a dozen of my friend's poems, after which I folded up my manuscript, laid it on the fire, and said nothing more about the matter. Ever since that time I have entertained a decided abhorrence of early rising in every shape, and never contract an intimacy with any man who gets up before six in summer and seven in winter.

SUMMER.

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The sultry summer days are come, the hottest of the year.
Of lemonade, and iced cream, and spruce and ginger beer;
Heaped in the wooden tea−gardens the thirsty cits they drink,
Then from their pockets draw their hands and slowly pay their chink.
The cooling evening breeze comes not when the scorching sun has set.
And fat men wipe their face and cry
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"the warmest day as yet!"

It was clearly shown by Hone, on his trial for parodying St. Athanasius's creed, that parodying any thing did not necessarily infer disrespect towards the thing parodied, and it is upon this ground that I take the above liberty with the beautiful lines of one of America's sweetest bards. Well, after a long, dull, hot and cold, equivocal spring summer, fervid summer, has come in earnest. The minds of the citizens area at length relieved from the uncertainty which for two months pervaded them, namely, whether to fling the windows open, or order fire to be put into the grate; and the last slight lingering tinge of morning or evening chill has vanished away. Phoebus, for half the day now glares fiercely and intensely upon Broadway, and the hot flag−stones, retaining and reflecting his beams, burn the soles and crack the upper−leathers of the many boots and shoes that pass over them. The tide of emigration has set strongly in from the south, and sultry−looking planters are obliged to walk in the vicinity of dandy negroes, which by no means tends to cool their tempers. As the year rolls on, things good and bad come mingled together fruit and flowers and drouth and dust cloudless days and sleepless nights scorching suns and southern breezes musquitoes and Clara Fisher. A given quantity of prose and poetry, setting forth the good and bad qualities of spring, summer, autumn, and winter, is as periodical as the seasons. Spring seems to be the favorite of the poets, who themselves, for the most part, live upon hopes and promises, rather than substantialities, and have therefore a very natural sympathy with this very promising season. There certainly is something delightful in the general awakening of nature from the long dead sleep of winter; and the first blossoming of the flowers, the first warbling of the birds, and the genial warmth and freshness of the first spring days bear an inexpressible charm along with them; but to a worldly and unromantic disposition, partial to palpable realities, the taste of fruit is more acceptable than the scent of flowers, and a promise of a good thing not so good as the good thing itself. In so far summer is better than spring; but, in truth, despite of a calm temper and a thin jacket, the weather is horribly, I may say, awfully hot. Ladies are seen gliding down Broad−way clad in garments of "woven winds," and gentlemen go perspiring and glistening along in white jean. Now are thick tufts of hair upon the cheeks found to be a serious inconvenience, and lo, the whiskerless rejoice! Now is the mercury in the sun at a fearful altitude, and the corporation are above fever−heat in the shade. Now are the citizens bent upon imparting useful information, and, as they meet, each "shakes his fellow by the hand," and says unto him "this is hot weather," to which the other responds "it is so!" and they pass on their way. Now do people, contrary to all custom, wish for "cold comfort," desiring, like King John, to be "comforted with cold." Now do the engine−men on board of steam−boats think lightly of the feats of Monsieur Chabert, the fire−king, wistfully do they gaze upon

the river; and if a hissing, fizzing, whizzing sound is heard in the water, the captain cries out, "a man overboard!" Now do stout gentlemen, after a hearty dinner, look as if they were going through the process of distillation, "larding the lean earth as they walk along." And now three impertinent questions in succession from any man is a legitimate excuse for assassination. Now are all kinds of fiery, passionate writing in disrepute, and Captain Parry's "Narrative of an Expedition to the North Pole" meets with a ready sale; and now do worthy editors unfeelingly request their correspondents to put pen to paper and draw forth the fevered thoughts of their fermenting brains. Now may all people, who persist in drinking unmixed brandy or Irish whiskey, be given up by the "Temperance Society." Now are those who talk wrathful politics kicked out of society, and tragedy is eschewed as tending to heat the blood. Now do people prefer broiling at the springs to broiling in the city, and travel post−haste to keep themselves cool and comfortable, though, at the same time, an account in the newspapers of a man having voluntarily run a mile in ten minutes would be regarded as apocryphal. Now do editors cease to threaten to horsewhip each other, and a sedate drowsiness pervades their columns. And now young ladies who are obliged to behave decorously, and mind their p's and q's in the presence of old withered maiden aunts on whom heat makes no more impression than on an Arab of the desert, are in a very uncomfortable situation. Now are long stories unlistened to and cayenne pepper disused. Now do cooks blaspheme, and dealers in fish and other perishable commodities are troubled in spirit. And now, in short, do nearly all the ills that heat can engender, afflict the perspiring inhabitants of this republic. My advice to them is be patient and winter will come; or, what is equally to the purpose, though better expressed by some great moralist or other "be virtuous, and you will be happy!"

THE EPICUREAN: A GASTRONOMIC TALE, INTERSPERSED WITH SUTTABLE REFLECTIONS.

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The qualms or raptures of your blood
Rise in proportion to your food;
And if you would improve your thought,
You must be fed as well as taught.
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Prior

It was on the evening of a dull, damp, dreary, weary, melancholy, miserable day, towards the latter end of November, when Titus Dodds, esq., of Cornhill, merchant, closed his counting−house door, and proceeded homeward to his residence, No. 42 Brooke−street, High Holborn, in quest of palatable nutriment. The prospect before him was any thing but alluring. All surrounding substances, animate and inanimate, wore a most wretched and wo−begone aspect. The streets were greasy and slippery, the half−washed houses looked lonely and cheerless, while the Bank, the Mansion House, the Exchange, and other awkward and well−smoked edifices, as seen by the equivocal light of four o'clock, presented a peculiarly grim and repulsive appearance. The chilly, drizzly atmosphere penetrated to the very marrow of the shivering citizens as they crawled along to their respective domiciles, causing the most unpleasant alterations in the "human face divine;" cheeks and noses exchanged their appropriate tints; and many well−meaning, inoffensive people, whom their worst enemies could not charge with literary propensities, looked intensely blue. The shopmen sat behind their deserted counters, buried in profound meditation; street minstrels, vocal and instrumental, suspended their unfeeling persecutions; the starved, gaunt, miserable hackney and stage horses, from whose spavined limbs the "speed of thought" had long since departed, stood trembling, and ruminating doubtless on the "flowery fields and pastures green" of their infancy; while their red−visaged proprietors clustered together in small groups around the doors of the adjacent gin−shops, in impatient expectation of a customer.

"A coach, sir, a coach!" cried a dozen voices, as Mr. Dodds approached; but he strode onward without deigning a reply, followed by the bitter maledictions of his disappointed fellow−creatures.

But it is time some explanation was entered into of the character and habits of the hero of this history.

Mr. Titus Dodds was a plain, honest, kind−hearted, sensible−enough sort of man. When a census of the population of the metropolis was taken, he counted one; but excepting on those occasions, never attempted to cut a figure in the world. If one asked his opinion respecting the domestic and foreign policy of the cabinet, he used to reply, that he was no politician; if another requested his views upon controversial points of religion, he would answer, that he was no theologian; and if any one desired to know his opinion concerning the probability of finding a passage round the North Pole, he would say, he thought it likely it might be discovered some time or other, adding, however, by way of qualification, that it was a great chance if it ever were. Holding these inoffensive tenets respecting law, divinity, politics, and science, and professing a total ignorance of poetry and the fine arts, he managed to get through the world with considerable ease and comfort to himself, and little or no inconvenience to his neighbors. As he was provided with an heiress to his small property, he was not troubled with the civilities and delicate attentions of friends and relatives; and as he made it a rule to keep out of debt, few people, of course, felt an interest in his fate.

Such was the appearance which Mr. Dodds presented to the superficial observer; and such indeed was his real character, as far as it went; but beneath all this placidity and quiescence lurked strong passions ardent desires unconquerable longings. It seemed as if all the sharp points of his character had flown off and concentrated themselves under one particular head. The fact is, Mr. Dodds liked his dinner; so much so, indeed, that were I inclined "to waver in my faith And hold opinion with Pythagoras," I should surmise that the soul of the famous Parisian *gourmand*, the Abbe C. after quitting the body of that dignitary, had crossed the channel, made the best of its way to Brooke−street, High Holborn, and taken up its residence, for the time being, in the person of Mr. Titus Dodds. He was none of your showy, superficial fellows, that dilate with counterfeit rapture upon the pleasures of the table merely to gain credit for superior discrimination and delicacy of palate; he was none of your gastronomic puppies, that prate everlastingly of the impropriety and horrid vulgarity of brown meats and white wines of the indelicacy of cheese, and the enormity of malted liquors. No he was a man who had a real, simple, and sincere love for the birds of the air, the beasts of the field and the forest, and the fish of the seas, rivers, lakes, and fresh−water streams; and one gifted at the same time by nature, with an eminently lively sense of the pleasing essences and grateful flavors which are capable of being extracted therefrom. He did not like or dislike or admire or abhor, according to the caprices or mutabilities of fashion. His tastes were formed by long experience, aided by much patient, minute, and subtle, though quiet and unobtrusive analyzation and investigation; and provided his dinner was to his liking, he cared little of what metallic substances those modern substitutes for fingers, yclept forks, were composed, or whether the number of their prongs corresponded with the prevalent notions of propriety on that subject. In fact, he was that rare thing an independent man, without the slightest taint of obstinacy or stubbornness. Though not above learning from, he was no slave to the dogmas of cookery books; he honored their authors he respected the labor and research displayed in their pages; but their most specious or authoritative doctrines were alike insufficient to shake his principles or unsettle his ideas of right and wrong. Like a wise man, he ate what he liked best, cooked as he liked it best, without the slightest reference to what the world in general, or his friends in particular, might say about the matter.

To a philanthropist to a man with an enlarged love for the human species, a Howard or a Shelly, it would have been a pleasing sight to see Mr. Titus Dodds, after the honorable fatigues of the day, sit down to what he most worshipped ducks stuffed or impregnated with onions. To have marked the smile of calm though intense satisfaction which overspread the countenance of the good, middle−aged man, as he gazed upon them; to have noticed the waters of pleasure involuntarily overflowing his eyes and trickling down his cheeks, as the delicious though pungent odors emitted from his favorites, steamed round his head and proceeded up his olfactory department to his brain; to have listened to the long−drawn sigh (certainly not of sorrow,) with which he eased his o'erfraught breast, as he drew himself up to carve; to have observed the slowness, or additional emphasis, with which he masticated the choice morsels all this, I say, would have done their hearts good, and would have convinced even the veriest misanthrope, that the world was not altogether the huge den of misery which he took it to be; but that even the most humble and unknown individuals have often sources of pleasure within themselves, of some sort or other, which enable them to bear the burden of life with resignation, and lay it down at last, like the misanthrope himself, with reluctance.

Titus Dodds (as has been previously mentioned,) was a man in easy circumstances, yet he had not often ducks for dinner. If any are curious to know the reason, it will be a sufficient reply at least to the matrimonial portion of the querists to state that Mr. Dodds was a married man. Mrs. Dodds was by no means a contradictious or contumacious helpmate; but still she had a will of her own; and in addition to this, notions had been infused into her by Mrs. Alderman Scales, the butcher's wife, regarding the extreme vulgarity of such a dish; and though Mrs. Dodds was a woman under the middle stature, she perfectly detested any thing low. Touching the onions, she was peculiarly pathetic in her remonstrances, inasmuch as they frequently brought tears to her eyes; but Titus was firm, and occasionally carried his point. He had succeeded in doing so on the day on which our story commences (and ends,) and the last words that ran along the passage, as he closed the door after him in the morning, were "*precisely* at five."

But to return to Mr. Dodds, whom we left just entering Cheapside. Scarcely had he proceeded as far as Bow Church, when the dense fog, which had been brooding over the city for the last twelve hours, and resting itself on the tops of the more elevated buildings, came tumbling down all at once, bringing with it the whole of that day's smoke, which had been vainly endeavoring, since the first fire was lighted in the morning, to ascend to its usual station in the atmosphere. As soon as this immense funereal pall was spread over the city, things fell, as was naturally to be expected, into immediate and irremediable confusion. Pedestrian bore violently down upon pedestrian, and equestrian came in still more forcible contact with equestrian. Cart overturned cart coach ran against coach shafts were broken wheels torn off windows stove in; passengers shouted and screamed, and the language of the drivers, though copious and flowing, became characterized rather by energy than elegance. But a London fog cannot be described. To be appreciated it must be seen, or rather felt; for it is altogether impossible to be clear and lucid on such a subject. It is the only thing which gives you an idea of what Milton meant when he talked of "darkness visible." There is a kind of light, to be sure, but it only serves as a medium for a series of optical delusions; and for all useful purposes of vision, the deepest darkness that ever fell from the heavens is infinitely preferable. A man perceives a coach a dozen yards off, and a single stride brings him among the horses' feet, he sees a gas−light faintly glimmering (as he thinks) at a distance, but scarcely has he advanced a step or two towards it, when he becomes convinced of its actual station by finding his head rattling against the post; and as for attempting, if you get once mystified, to distinguish one street from another, it is ridiculous to think of such a thing.

At the end of Cheapside there was a grand concussion of wheeled vehicles, and Mr. Dodds found some difficulty in preserving that intimate connexion which had so long satisfactorily subsisted between his mortal and immortal parts. The danger of being jostled, overturned, and trodden under foot, confused, unsettled, and perturbed his local ideas considerably, so that, instead of holding his way along Newgate−street, in a westerly direction, he pointed his nose due north, (up Aldersgate−street) and followed it according to the best of his ability.

"They will be overdone!" soliloquized Titus; and he groped vigorously forward, until, as the clock struck the appointed hour of five, he found himself at the Angel at Islington, just about as far from his domicile as when he left his counting−house. There are limits to the power of language, and therefore I shall leave Mr. Dodds's state of mind, on making this singular discovery, to the imagination of the reader. But there was no time to be lost. He struck his ratan on the pavement, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, inquired out, as his nearest way, St. John's−street Road, and plunged at once into its mysterious recesses. 'Twere painful and vain to tell of his dismal and dubious wanderings in those complex regions which lie between the aforesaid road and Gray's Inn; suffice it to say, that he at length succeeded in reaching the latter, and began once more to entertain hopes of seeing his home again, when he became aware of something in his path, and a voice from the mist thus broke upon his ear:

"Heaven bless your honour! poor Pat O'Connor, Ploughing on the sea, Lost his precious sight, by lightning in the night! Poor Pat O'Connor begs for charity! Ah! give him one poor halfpenny!"

Mr. Dodds was a patriotic man; in his way; and a disabled prop of the naval power of his country seldom appealed to him in vain, but, on this occasion, he passed on, and the man with no eyes paused in his strain to

bestow a passing benediction on those of Mr. Dodds.

"For the love of mercy spare a trifle to a poor widow with seven small children," said a miserable object seated on a door−step. Mr. Dodds was a charitable man, but he delayed not.

"Mind that are puddle, sir, and valk over this 'ere plank," vociferated a little scrub−headed urchin, the proprietor of a frail deal board, which he had placed across "the meeting of the waters" from two or three street−ends, to benefit travelers, and serve his own pecuniary purposes. Titus did so, and passed over the confluence of the kennels dry−shod. "Remember the accommodation plank, sir," bawled the boy, half−imploringly, half−indignantly, as he perceived Mr. Dodds's body in motion on the opposite side. Dodds was far from being an ungrateful man, but he sought not for copper. At length, panting, wearied, worried, and worn out, he found himself, as the clock struck six, at Middle Row, Holborn, a full quarter of a mile from his habitation.

A skilful portraiture of human suffering, up to a certain point, is far from unpleasing, and rather beneficial, arousing, as it does, the hidden sympathies of our nature which might otherwise remain dormant; but when it passes this point, when it becomes of agonizing intenseness, minute description is then shocking and repulsive. We will, therefore, quit Mr. Dodds for the present, and shift the scene to his residence.

The accumulated wisdom of ages has recorded that there is nothing so deceitful as appearances. The chilliness and serenity of the outside of Mount Etna give not the slightest hint of the volcanic fires roaring and raging within; and as little did the demure, quiet appearance of 42 Brooke−street, High Holborn, betoken the agitation which prevailed therein. The causes of this agitation were threefold. Mr. Dodds, as has been before stated, ordered dinner precisely at five, and as his wife, clock, and cook, were tolerably well regulated, there was a reasonable prospect of his saying grace about that time. But wives are not infallible clocks are not chronometers cooks are not impeccable. Mrs. D. had been flatteringly invited to give her opinion upon some new purchases of Flander's lace, made by her neighbor Mrs. Blenkinsopp. Where lives the woman that can tear herself from lace? The consequence was, that Mrs. Dodds was half an hour past her time in issuing her orders to the cook; the cook was discussing the benefits derivable from triennial parliaments with the aforesaid Mrs. Blenkinsopp's housemaid, who was a septennialist, and a quarter of an hour more was lost without settling the question after all. To crown the whole, the clock, which had heretofore conducted itself in a commendable manner, thought proper to come to a full stop, and ten minutes elapsed before the cook was aware of the resolution it had taken. As soon as Mrs. Dodds became fully conscious of this unfortunate concurrence of circumstances, the house, as the saying is, "was hardly large enough to hold her," although it contained many apartments of respectable proportions.

What a short−sighted creature is man! He knows not what is best for him. Had Mr. Dodds only been aware of these seeming misfortunes, how would he have felicitated himself on this eventful evening.

Seven minutes had now elapsed since the authoritative voice of St. Giles's had bawled out to the surrounding districts, "six o'clock," and Mrs. Dodds began to be seriously alarmed at the most unaccountable absence of Mr. Dodds; so much so, indeed, that faint visions of the unbecomingness of widow's caps kept involuntarily flitting across her imagination. Being a notable, prudent personage, she placed her smelling−bottle on the table, laid her white muslin−cambric handkerchief beside it, and arranged the easy armchair at a convenient distance so that she might not be found altogether unprepared, in case it was announced to her that she was a desolate woman. Just at this juncture, however, the street−door opened, and a heated, flurried, perspiring piece of animated nature, bearing a striking resemblance to Mr. Dodds, rushed in, and made the best of its way to the drawing−room, but nothing (at least to the purpose) met its eager glance.

"They can never have eaten them," exclaimed Dodds, (for it was he) "Oh no, no, no! they could not, would not, durst not!" and, without tarrying for the slow medium of servants, in order to effect a communication with Mrs. Dodds, away he sallied, in order to know the worst at once, in quest of his stray lamb or, to speak with greater agricultural precision, his ewe, for she was long past the flowery days of lambhood.

"Titus Dodds!" cried Mrs. Dodds, (she called him "Titus" in her loving or juvenile moods; "Dodds," when she wished to be familiar; " *Mr.* Dodds," when she was ill−tempered or imperious, and "Titus Dodds," when she aimed at being singularly impressive,) "Titus Dodds, where *have* you been?"

"It matters not," replied Titus, in a tremulous voice, "it matters not! I suppose all is over, and there is nothing but cold meat in the house well, well!"

Far be it from me to violate the sanctity of domestic privacy, by detailing the conversation which ensued. It is sufficient to say that a mutual and satisfactory explanation took place the ducks were finally served up, done to a turn, and Titus Dodds was indeed a happy gentleman. The partner of his past life contemplated the subdued rapture depicted in the countenance of the man of her choice, as if she were very well satisfied with the turn affairs had taken; while their pretty daughter Bessy, a lively girl, with an amazing relish for a piece of snug humor, paused in the midst of a cut off the breast, took in the pleasantry of the scene at a glance, and then went on with her occupation. It was, as I said before, a scene that a philanthropist would, indeed, have gloried in contemplating. "Oh happiness! our being's end and aim!" how strangely and incongruously dost thou mix thyself up with the fabric of things! Wealth and power, and glory, ofttimes give thee not, and yet thou may'st be extracted (as has been shown) from even the commonest commodities. Independent creature! the high and mighty magnates of the earth command thee to their footstools, but thou turnest up thy nose, and strayest away unto some peasant's homely hearth; and, when it so pleaseth thee, thou leavest the emperor on his throne, the peer in his palace, the beauty in the ball room, and takest up thy abode in uninviting habitations, amid the nameless children of obscurity. Democratic divinity! I gratefully worship thee, for I am even now sensible of thy presence; and it may be, that thou hast, this very night, deserted the luscious soups and fragrant wines of some luxurious alderman, to hover over the simple mutton−chop and sparkling bottled ale, that await my acceptance, as soon as I have attached my brief and insignificant signature to this humble tale, destitute of a plot and unprotected by a moral.

TOBACCO.

In all countries, Christian, Mahomedan, Jewish and Pagan, some foolish abomination or other has, in the dark ages, sprung up amongst the people, no one knows how, and been perpetuated, no one knows why. It is not my intention to illustrate the art of spinning−out in writing, and impose upon the public by entering into minute details, and citing grave authorities from cyclopædias, to show how the followers of the prophet first came to eat opium, the inhabitants of Cochin China *whang−te*, or any other parallel case, but confine myself closely to the subject more immediately under consideration a subject which, it may be said, is in every man's mouth, and "comes home to the bosom and business of all."

It is strange what a strong propensity nature has implanted in the human species, from infancy to old age, to convey all sorts of substances into that orifice which serves as a port of entry for the stomach. Even the small weeping and wailing babe, no sooner grasps with its tiny and unsteady hand any thing eatable, than its cries are stilled, and it carries it instinctively to its mouth; while, beyond all question, a mother's most infallible recipe for assuaging the grief of the hardy urchins around her, is a substantial slice of bread and butter. It is pleasant to note the sudden transition from grief, or rather mechanical crying, to joy, which takes place in a little fellow as soon as a pacifying piece of victuals is placed in his hand. How his face lightens up, and his bright eyes sparkle and glisten through the moisture which overflows them, while ever and anon the "big round tears" unconsciously leave his silken eyelashes, and "Course one another down his innocent nose." It is a pretty study for a painter. The capacities for eating possessed by young children at a tender age are immense many of the young rouges will continue stuffing from the rising to the going down of the sun, with a *gusto* calculated to excite the astonishment of an epicure and the horror of a valetudinarian. The swallowing capabilities of a man, however, are by no means so great, though his early objections to letting his jaw−bones remain in a quiescent state continue equally strong; he has, therefore, adopted various ways of indulging this propensity without danger to himself, and among these,

masticating tobacco stands strikingly conspicuous in this section of the globe. To such an extent is this carried, that not only are thousands of acres of fertile land devoted to the purpose of raising it, but ships are fitted out and sent across the ocean; and men, esteemed by statesmen and philosophers of an inferior order on account of their color, are torn from their home and wives and children, in order to cultivate a weed for other men of another color to put into their mouths and then take out again!

To me tobacco appears a very unodoriferous and anti−poetical substance. To rebut the latter charge it may be urged that Byron, the greatest poet of the age, was partial to it; but it must be remembered that Byron used it only as a medicine an antidote to rotundity in small round balls, in order to allay the pangs of hunger when his lordship chose to fast, to prevent his growing, like Falstaff, "out of all compass out of all reasonable compass." No tobacco is death to poetry and poetical associations wherever it comes in contact with them. Fancy, for an instant, a fine clear sabbath morn in some of the snug sheltered villages on the Connecticut river, the bell from the simple spire summoning the hardy yeomanry, far and near, to the house of prayer. Fancy a venerable old man trudging along the narrow pathway that runs winding through the sweet−scented meadows which lie betwixt his home and the spot consecrated to the service of his Maker, with his smiling happy family tripping gaily at his heels. He feels the benign influence of nature in the balmy air, and is glad, though he almost deems cheerfulness a sin at such a time, while the rising generation find their hearts leaping with frolic glee as the delicious southern breeze, laden with the merry music of birds and the breath of flowers, comes sweeping over the bold hills and beautiful valleys. There is poetry, deep and pure, in such a sight. But suppose, for an instant, the old man, or any part of the male progeny, "*chew*" faugh! what a jar it gives the feelings it is like a discord in a strain of music, or a blot from a sign−painter's brush on one of Turner's landscapes. It brings you at once from the poetry of life to the harsh prose the scurvy reality and you see nothing but an old farmer and his tobacco−munching sons lounging along, employed in transferring large quantities of that detestable weed from one side of their mouths to the other, and ever and anon staining the bright young grass and pretty wild−flowers with their impure squirtations as they pass on their way.

Much is said of the influence which females exercise in this country, but it is, we fear, over−rated. Powerful as may be their commands and entreaties, and strong as may be their charms; it is reasonable to suppose that the charms of tobacco are still stronger, or they would doubtless have banished it from civilized society long ere this. It is shocking to think of a delicate creature with lips "like two young rose−leaves torn," having them at any time come in contact with those attached to what out of courtesy is called the mouth of a man, but which, in reality, is nothing better than a damp tobacco−box. Yet there is much kissing going on in the world for all this.

It is curious what strange and childish notions will perpetuate an evil. Drinking, gambling, &c. are enticing in the first instance, but all agree that the use of tobacco is dreadfuly disagreeable to the young beginner; yet boys will imitate the actions of men; unfortunately it is considered manly to swear, drink mint juleps, eat tobacco, and smoke cigars; and thousands of beardless, puny creatures are led away by the desire to appear older than they are. Poor children! Why do not their parents whip them and put them to bed early for doing such naughty, filthy tricks? Solomon says, "he that spareth the rod spoileth the child;" and it would be better for themselves and their offspring, if the worthy inhabitants of this city would pay a little more respect to Solomon's sayings; though, alas, with what consistency can a man correct his son for the very abominations he himself indulges in? It must be left to that indefinite power of education which it is the fashion of the hour to set forth as a remedy for all disorders and irregularities. One thing is clear; so much expectoration must be highly injurious to half−grown boys, and many of them, with wasp waists and the mere outlines of a face, look as if the liquor they are so fond of extracting had mingled with the current of their young blood, and was the cause of tobacco−colored complexions. We are very sorry for Messrs. Lorillard, but, as small political editors with seventeen bad subscribers say "our duty to the public imperatively commands us to speak out."

BOY−MEN AND GIRL−WOMEN.

These are two species of the human family not yet distinctly classed or named by naturalists, and must, therefore, be designated by compounds. The individuals which compose them, are hovering between the last stages of boy and girlhood, and the first dawnings of a more mature state of existence full−grown children, or incipient men and women. They are the unfinished portions of humanity which poets and sentimentalists have, from time immemorial, sung and said so much about, though for what especial reason is more than many worldly people are able to discover. Poets are fine fellows; but a love of truth, or a desire to represent things as they really are, is not to be found in the list of their good qualities. They warp and twist their materials, to suit their own purposes, more than a theological disputant or a petty sessions lawyer, and build a towering structure on a slighter foundation than a purblind antiquary. They are much given to the use of hypotheses; and after they have once supposed that a thing *can* be so, they immediately set it down that it is so. Exaggeration is another of their foibles: with them a glimpse of goodness signifies perfection, and a glimmering of sin the essence of iniquity; and it is in consequence of this that they come to make such delightful and diabolical pictures out of nothing at all. Some of the cleverest of them have, at one period or other of their lives, met with two or three charming young girls, just "bursting into womanhood," or a few intelligent boys, and, being great generalizers, they have taken it for granted that all were so; and thus it has come to pass in English poetry, that this is celebrated as the most delectable stage of existence. It is a state that may or may not be pleasant enough to those who are passing through it, but it is by no means productive of much pleasure and gratification to those with whom they come in contact; and whatever prose or poetry may say to the contrary, I think worldly experience will bear me out in upholding that boy−men and girl−women, are neither more nor less than bores of very considerable magnitude.

The girl−woman is generally a rather pretty creature, dressed in something between a frock and a gown, made of white muslin, with a pink sash round her waist. Her face has lost the free and unembarrassed expression of childhood, without having obtained the self−possession and dignity of woman. The graces of her person are as yet but half developed; her shoulders are sharp and angular, and her arms long and unpleasantly slender. She is too mature to wear her hair in a *crop* , and too childish to have it piled in towers of curls and combs on the top of her head. Indeed, let her dress be what it may, it appears alike unfit for the stage through which she has just passed, or the one on which she is about to enter. Her intellectual faculties and conversation are in an equally uncertain state; and the person who addresses her is sorely puzzled how to hit the right medium between juvenility and maturity. She has not made up her mind whether she likes Byron or skipping−rope best; but decidedly prefers Mrs. Opie to the author of Waverley. If you talk of school, you offend her; and yet she knows not how to discourse about any thing else so that all the conversation consists of an abrupt observation and an embarrassed rejoinder. If she can be prevailed upon to venture more than six syllables at a time, she has a bad habit of speaking unpleasant truths, and afterwards looking distressingly conscious, not exactly knowing whether she has done right or wrong. She sits on her chair, holding in one hand a white pocket−handkerchief, and not a little perplexed what to do with the other; with an eternal simper hanging around her mouth, ready to be aggravated into a laugh upon the most trivial occasion. If any body tells a joke with a grave face, she looks grave too; but is mightily tickled with the hymeneal allusions and matrimonial witticisms of which the more mature part of the company are delivered. She does not understand or appreciate worldly knowledge, yet she has school learning enough to find you out if you talk foolishly. In short, she is altogether in a very unsettled state, filled with childish reminiscences and womanly aspirations, and is, when a man feels grave or low−spirited, one of the most unendurable annoyances with which he can well be afflicted.

But if your girl−woman is an undesirable individual, your boy−man is one of the greatest nuisances in civilized society. There is something charming about the female sex at almost every period of their existence; and even in town a *very* young lady, though certainly a subject for apprehension, has some redeeming points; while in the country, after a scamper in the fields, or a chase after a bird or butterfly, with her eyes filled with fire and animation, her cheeks glowing with health and exercise, her clustering curls dancing in the wind, and her pretty bonnet hanging loosely and carelessly on the back part of her head, she is a truly beautiful and poetical object. But

your boy−man is a monster wherever you meet with him. In the country he is an "unlicked cub," a lout, a bumpkin; in town, a half made up coxcomb, an unfinished puppy, a thing with nearly all the vices and follies of a man, without his sense or passions. It is his oath that rings loudest in the tavern, and his tongue that is most clamorous in its demands for strong drink to destroy his puny constitution, merely because he thinks it looks manly. He is altogether a foolish and contemptible creature; for even his vicious habits do not afford him pleasure. He does not, like the real voluptuary, "roll sin like a sweet morsel under his tongue;" but he counterfeits bad habits, and will drink and smoke, though both be unpleasant to him and make him sick, merely because older people do so; and this it is which prevents him from ever becoming what it is the height of his ambition to appear a man. Then the swearing of these grown children is perfectly disgusting. From a man, borne away by passion, or from an old sailor, to whom it has become a trick of custom, and who, moreover, seems a sort of perperson privileged to wish his eyes no good, a few anathemas do not come with so bad a grace; but to hear these would−be men repeating, like parrots, all the vulgar oaths that low blackguardism has invented and perpetuated, merely because they have arrived at the dignity of shaving, is very nauseous. These too are the small fry that swarm about billiard−rooms and theatre−lobbies; that open box−doors and stand in the doorways adjusting their ringlets, much to the discomfort of shivering ladies and rheumatic old gentlemen, imagining all the time that the eyes of the whole audience are turned to the particular spot which they occupy. They are, indeed, take them altogether, simply the most empty, impudent, noisy, impertinent, obtrusive set of varlets that can be imagined, and are not ashamed of any thing except having no whiskers.

OLD ENGLISH COMEDIES.

"Comedy is a graceful ornament to the civil order; the Corinthian capital of polished society. Like the mirrors which have been added to the sides of one of our theatres, it reflects the images of grace, of gaiety, and of pleasure double, and completes the perspective of human life."

The above sentence, it is presumed, was written with reference to the comedies that held possession of the stage in the days of our unenlightened ancestors, some century and a half ago; for, if applied to the three and five−act farces which modern manufacturers impudently baptize by the name of "comedies," and which the present generation are well contented to receive as such, instead of a graceful truth, it becomes a piece of caustic irony, from the pointed severity of which neither the public nor the playwrights of the year eighteen hundred and twenty−nine have wherewithal to shield themselves. Without at all canting about the "good old times," it must be conceded on all hands, that whatever may have been the faults and deficiencies of our ancestors, and however well assured the present self−sufficient race of mortals may feel, of their general superiority, they are at present at an immeasurable distance behind them in every department of dramatic literature, but more particularly in comedy. Formerly a comedy was a work of genius a green leaf added to the literary coronal of the land; it was then composed of sparkling wit and rare invention of characters rich and racy, yet natural; and of incidents gay and sprightly, yet probable; and was, indeed, a mirror to show "the very age and body of the time, its form and pressure." Now, what *is* a comedy? Messrs. Morton, Peake, and Poole can best answer that question. "Ay, tell us that, and unyoke." It is a thing where the broad and coarse extravagancies of farce are jumbled together with mawkish and lachrymose sentimentality, where the characters are caricatures vilely executed, and the incidents precisely such as could not by any possibility ever have taken place where the dialogue consists of puns, slang, stray jests, and flowers of rhetoric from the circulating libraries, with a copious infusion of ordinary slip−slop conversation where the jokes are all practical, and stumbling over a chair, or drawing out a ragged pockethandkerchief, are among the happiest inventions of the author; and though, at times, a few gleams of humor may shine athwart the gloom, yet wit, who is a little more aristocratical and choice in his company, absents himself altogether. And what is it that makes this farrago of abominations escape the fate decreed against all sinful transgressions? It is *stage effect*. To this every thing is sacrificed this the authors have studied, and this they understand, and hence the secret of their disgraceful success.

It is not meant, however, to be said, that this and this alone strictly applies to the three gentlemen mentioned

above, though any one who will take the trouble of *reading* their works, (particularly Morton's) will find that a great part may be truly applied to most of their productions. They are mentioned by name because they are the three *best* of the numerous herd of stage writers of the present day; and Poole, in his *Paul Pry*, has even given us a glimpse of better things. True, the dialogue in that piece is meagre enough, but there is a good deal of broad humor and no sentiment; the situations are extremely laughable, and the character of the inquisitive Mr. Pry himself very cleverly sketched. It would be well if we had more pieces like this, instead of such plays as "Town and Country," which Kean honored and brought into notice by personating the mouthing and melancholy hero, and which example many clever actors have since inconsiderately followed.

But, alas! for the dashing gallants and wits that glitter in the pages of Wycherly, Congreve, Vanburgh, and Farquhar. Their day, it would seem, is gone for ever; and what have we in their place? Look at modern comedy, and in nine cases out of ten you will find a variety of the "Tom and Jerry" species for its hero; some heedless spendthrift, worthless but not witty enough for a rake; who commits all sorts of folly with impunity through the space of five acts, and then ends by laying his five fingers on his bosom, and informing the dramatis personæ in general, and the young lady in white, whose hand he of course receives, in particular, that "though his head may have erred, his heart is still in the right place!" What the deuce have the audience to do with his heart? It is from his head that they expect entertainment, and if they are disappointed in that, what satisfaction to them, after the infliction of his slang and impertinence in the place of genuine wit and spirit, is the information that he intends to reform and live decently and soberly with his wife?

But objections, and in some instances, on good grounds, have been raised to the representation of the older dramatists, on the score of indelicacy; though it is one which might easily be obviated by judicious pruning; and, after all, the gay and polished libertinism of some of the old comedies is not half so indelicate, and not one quarter so disgusting, as the vulgar liberties so frequently taken with modern would−be fastidious audiences, and which they not only suffer, but chuckle over with evident satisfaction. But the old comedies have a bad character on this account, and we all know the force of the proverb "give a dog a bad name," &c. There is too much truth in what a clever writer has said, that "the cant of delicacy has done thrice the injury to the drama that sheer downright fanaticism has ever done; and shallow refinement is ten times more hopelessly inaccessible than the prejudices of the narrowest bigotry." Even George Colman the younger, who ought to have known better, and who in his younger days was by no means fastidious, has joined in the pestilential cry, that has been one great cause of driving the gay and sparkling Thalia from the stage, and substituting a Merry Andrew in her place.

IMITATION.

All men are of opinion that they have a will of their own, and nothing vexes them more than any assertion to the contrary. The great majority are "led by the nose as easy as asses are;" yet as they trot along in the wake of some shrewd fellow, who is in turn led by some still shrewder than himself, they actually imagine themselves free agents, that their opinions are their own, and that their actions are the result of those opinions. This delusion is universal and very complete, and, (heaven knows the reason,) it appears to be the most provoking thing in the world to awaken any one from it. Tell a man that he is a sad profligate, and he is proud of the appellation; but tell him he is an honest well meaning gentleman, though somewhat liable to be guided by the example of others rather than his own judgment, and he gets into a perfect fury, and asks you what you take him for? A monkey is an imitative animal, but nothing to a man, who is at once the most servile copyist in creation, and a sturdy asserter of his moral independence a being who tells you it is his pleasure to do so and so, *because* "every body does so." He sacrifices his ease and convenience, to do as other people do; and eats, drinks, and sleeps, not when it suits himself, but when it pleases others. The fashion of the hour is a moral despotism, whose omnipotent decrees he dares not dispute, however curious a figure he may cut in obeying its mandates. The effect of this is often singular in consequence of the inappropriateness of the fashion to the individual, or the unhappy attempts of the individual to assimilate with the fashion. In dress, for instance, it is strikingly so. Some lady and gentleman of sufficient notoriety to entitle them to "set the fashion" for the season, array themselves in such garments as they think best

adapted to their figure and complexion, and such as will give prominency to their beauties, and throw into the shade their defects. As soon as they have arranged this to their satisfaction, it becomes "the mode;" and the whole tribe of bipeds, great and small, thick and thin, short and tall, judiciously follow their example without any reference to the shape or color heaven has given them. You will see a brunette blackening her complexion by bringing it in violent contrast with straw−color and lilac, because it is the fashion; and a *blonde*, looking sickly and consumptive, by having glaring orange, purple, or dark green, in the vicinity of her delicate skin: you will see a long column of humanity, of no thickness at all, with a broad−brimmed beaver on his head, and a sporting−jacket on his back; and a short, pursy, corpulent individual waddling along in a swallow−tailed coat and steeple−crowned hat, all because it is the fashion! Yet these people imagine they have a will of their own.

In literature the imitative principle has been, and is, in full operation, though it is perhaps half intentional and half unconscious. A master−spirit starts from the crowd of men, strikes out some new course, ranges through unexplored and unthought of regions, and there reigns an object of wonder and admiration. Immediately a whole troop of pigmies attempt to tread in his giant footsteps, imitate his faults, exaggerate his defects, and imagine, before they advance one step up the hill of fame, that they are nearly at its summit. It will be in the remembrance of all, when Byron was in the zenith of his glory, what an immense quantity of second−hand misanthropy was afloat among the poetasters; how they all set to work to draw their own portraits for the amusement of the public, and what a precious set of good−for−nothing vagabonds they made themselves out to be. They were all, according to their own story, made up of splendid errors and useless virtues, and were unanimously unhappy. It was for a time a most ludicrous evil; for nothing can be more ridiculous than to see a small mind playing the egotist, and describing the agony of its feelings at the same time that it is hunting for a rhyme, and seeing that the line contains the requisite number of syllables. This folly has in a great measure past away; and the Waverley imitation fever, which succeeded, has been much more rational in its motives, and creditable in its results. True, historical novels have become almost as much a drug in the market as fashionable ones. The public is beginning to get tired of the portraits of defunct kings, queens, and courtiers; and the number of great men that have been resuscitated and made to speak in the first person singular, has become alarming. Indeed, our novelists are perfect literary resurrection−men. Many persons, because the great magician, Walter Scott, can raise the spirits of the past, and make them act and speak as they were wont, think they can do the same but the public do not. It is far from pleasant to see these liberties taken with the mighty dead, except by one as mighty as any of them, Shakspeare excepted. Still there has been much talent, learning, and research displayed in works of this description, by Horace Smith, Mr. James, and others, which might have gained for their authors great credit with posterity, as they have already with the present generation, had not their merits been overshadowed by those of their immortal prototype. As it is, they will as surely go to the "oblivious cooks" as every word of this essay will be forgotten next week by the people who read it. For our own poor taste, after Sir Walter Scott, in the present age, give us Washington Irving's portraits of great dead men. His Wouter Von Twiller, William Klieft, and Peter Stuyvesant, are three as finished pictures in the fine, quiet, rich old Dutch school as any one need wish to look upon.

But the greatest field for imitation is theatricals, and here it is of the very worst species. The beauties of a great actor are never attempted to be copied; they are too difficult; but any unfortunate peculiarity or bad and vicious habit is seized upon with avidity and fondly cherished. Because John Kemble was troubled with an asthmatic complaint, all the Rollas, Catos, and Hamlets that came for some time after him were likewise troubled with asthma, and a short dry cough; with Macready came the almost ridiculous stateliness of gesture and fastidious arrangement of the garments, without any of his fine qualities; and Kean's fame has been the means of introducing many a young man on the stage, who could do nothing but imitate those little *Keanisms* and physical defects which occasionally disfigured his beautiful intellectual acting. A would−be vocalist, with the voice of a raven, thinks himself a good deal like Braham, because in singing he can hold his hat precisely as he does, and has succeeded in catching a few of that gentleman's peculiarly awkward gestures. Talking of singing is the prevailing admiration of Italian music and performances counterfeit or real, or a little of both? Is it in imitation of the English who imitate the French in this respect, or is it a genuine indigenous feeling? The Italian is a noble school of music, and it would be gratifying to perceive a gradual relish for it; but it is apt to create mistrust to see the exuberance of admiration expressed for it all of a sudden by a large party of people, nineteentwentieths of whom

are neither familiar with the music nor the language; and we are afraid there *is* some truth in the anecdote now whispered round the city, of a party of musical cognoscenti having been thrown into a fit of enthusiasm by what they supposed to be an Italian gentleman's manner of giving a composition of Cimarosa's, but which, words and air, eventually turned out to be a genuine Welch ditty, howled out by one Taffy ap Shenkin, of Glamorganshire! Certain it is, that many things pass off with great *eclat* when sung in a foreign language by signors, signoras, or signorinas, which would sound viley from the mouth of plain Mr. Jobson, Mrs. Brown, or Miss Dobbs. The blunt tradesman had really some reason to be astonished when on inquiring if "signorina" did not literally mean in Italian "great singer," he was given to understand that it was merely equivalent to the simple English word "Miss." We recollect a gentleman of the name of Comer, formerly of this city, who used to sing an Italian air with American words to it "When the banners of freedom are waving" without producing any marked effects; but no sooner did the same gentleman replace the Italian words, "*Non piu andrai,*" than it was instantly recognised as something extremely fine, and vociferously encored. Now, without meaning to undervalue worthy foreigners who reach these shores, it is probable that there is no small quantity of affectation in the admiration expressed for them, and that the majority applaud without having any definite idea on the subject, in imitation of the few who are supposed to know. Such foreigners are, at the same time, both overrated and not sufficiently appreciated overrated as a whole, and not appreciated in detail, for what is really meritorious. Our harsh northern dialect may not be so well adapted to musical composition as that of the "sweet south," but it does not follow that every Italian composition and singer must of necessity be superlatively fine; and allowing our general inferiority, a song in a language which a man understands, will always, affectation aside, be more grateful to his ear than the mere tinkle of soft sounds. The one, indeed, goes no further than the ear, while the other, through the medium of the understanding, reaches the heart, and any song that does so is worth twenty others that do not. If people would take the trouble to consult their own judgments, feelings, and common sense on such subjects, instead of being carried away by vague ideas and learned−looking words, they would find it to their interest; as it is, they let others inoculate them with opinions which in time they come to believe their own.

AN EVENING AT THE THEATRE.

It is a pleasant thing for any one who is fond of plays and players, after the cares and business of the day are satisfactorily over, to find himself snugly ensconced in a quiet and comfortable corner of a box five minutes previous to the rising of the curtain, with a fair prospect of three or four hours' rational amusement before him. An evening so spent is good for the health, spirits, and understanding, and leaves the morals just about where it found them, neither much better nor worse. The stage, like every thing that has been made much the subject of controversy, has been greatly overrated, both for good and for evil, especially in regard to the impression it makes upon a gentleman's virtue. Its opponents have accused it of clearing a man's morals out of him in the most wholesale and expeditious manner; while its advocates, in the opposite extreme, contend that it possesses the singular property of filling a person with as much morality as he can well hold; and rather more, indeed, than he can decently and profitably get along with, as this world is constituted, without injuring his wife and family, and being obliged to "eat his mutton cold." The truth is, that both parties have written more nonsense about the matter, than is wholesome to read; and both have volunteered much solemn foolishness and ill−tempered declamation in their zeal to serve the cause of truth. The one will gravely cite as an argument, and a case in point, that "the three young men who lately robbed their employers to a considerable amount, were very frequently in the habit of attending the theatre;" to which they might, with equal propriety and sagacity, have added, that these three young men were regularly in the habit of eating their dinner, and that the greatest depredator had long evinced a strange and suspicious partiality for roast pig; the one being as logical a deduction of effects from causes as the other. Then the Solomons, on the opposite tack, balance this by quoting certain cases, where "Guilty creatures, sitting at a play, Have, by the very cunning of the scene, Been struck so to the soul, that presently They have proclaim'd their malefactions;" as if a chance word spoken in a church or a tavern, a hay−field or a fish−market, might not just as easily have touched the tender point, and awakened "That power within the guilty breast Oft vanquish'd, never quite suppressed, That unsubdued and lurking lies, To take the felon by surprise, And force him, as by magic spell, In his despite his guilt to tell."

Another favorite argument with those who denounce the stage is, that vice is often not sufficiently punished or virtue rewarded. But does this never happen in real life? and who is then to blame? It certainly does, and much more frequently off the stage than on; for dramatic authors in general, make no scruple of sacrificing both probability and possibility in their zeal to mete out poetical justice to the misbehaved persons of the drama. That man's principles must be very weak and wavering who can be swayed either one way or the other by a few words, and the passing of a picture before his eyes; and he must have a strong natural bias towards roguery, who finds his virtue giving way on seeing a vicious gentleman now and then get off scot−free on the stage. Such a one is not a whit safer in witnessing the proceedings of a court of justice; because, though nineteen rogues out of twenty be condemned, the twentieth may hold out a temptation to iniquity, by escaping in consequence of a flaw in the indictment. For my own part, I am well content to spend a few hours pleasantly at the theatre, without fretting about whether there has been any visible addition to my small stock of virtue, provided it does not suffer diminution. Men's morals are not like coal fires, requiring to be constantly stirred up and trimmed, to prevent their dying away or going out entirely.

But let who will argue or declaim, it is, as we said at first, a pleasant thing, after a day spent in harassing and jangling pursuits, to pass an evening at the theatre, and is as refreshing to the mind as a warm bath to the body, clearing away the little petty cares and vexations that business is so apt to engender and leave behind. Like the bath, it is only relaxing and enervating when immoderately indulged. There are more important things than plays even the best of them in the world, and it is by no means a good sign to see a young man lounging about a theatre. His education ought to be completed, and his mind stored with dry though necessary facts and useful information, before he takes an unlimited range into that region of passion and imagination, else, in the voyage of life he will be as a light bark with more canvas than ballast, on a stormy sea, liable to be upset by every squall that blows.

But to a tolerably well regulated mind, what mines of inexhaustible and invaluable wealth are concealed behind that green curtain. Beyond that the bloody Richard and gallant Percy, the wronged Othello, the moralizing Jaques, the monster Caliban, the mediatative Hamlet, honest Jack Falstaff and ancient Pistol merry Rosalind, the pretty Perdita, the gentle Desdemona, and how many other thousands of pure and base, and great and glorious spirits having a living visible existence! There the spirit−stirring passages gleaned from records of antiquity are treasured up, and the warriors and sages of old again live and breathe, in the picture of the poet. The curtain rises, and lo! spare Cassius and gentle Brutus again walk the streets of Rome. The centuries that have elapsed are as nothing, and the spectator is present at the fall of "mighty Cæsar." Or a drum is heard, and the thane of Cawdor once more treads the "blasted heath," to be met by the prophetic greetings of the weird sisters. Now if a man be not very wise, and altogether above being instructed by Shakspeare and other worthies, there is certainly something to be learnt from this, and such as this. The drama is, in truth, a stupendous creation; and let its decriers say what they may, it will ever remain amongst the proudest and mightiest works of civilized man. True, all is not gold that glitters, and with the pure ore of Shakspeare, and the brilliant sparkling gems of Congreve and Sheridan, are mixed up the tinsel of Reynolds and the brass of Morton; but they are easily separated by those who are not afflicted with a total mental blindness, and to those who are, the one is just as good as the other.

But, independently of the stage, what ample scope for study and observation does the audience afford to any one who takes the trouble to observe his species! What a field for the painter, the physiognomist, and the caricaturist! What faces are to be seen how rich and broad is their expression when those who own them once get fairly interested in the business of the scene, and become unconscious of all else beside. A countryman's, for instance, when a comic song is sung, or a juggling trick played, how he sits, his head jerked forward like a crane's, as if to get it as near the scene of action as possible, his shoulders up to his ears, his distended mouth dividing his face into two portions, and his eyes as convex as a lobster's; then when the affair reaches the climax, the monstrous twistings and contortions of his visage, and the convulsions of his body rolling to and fro under an uncontrollable storm of laughter, are more amusing than any thing on the boards. Again, where is there a more charming picture than that of a fine girl watching, with intense interest, the escapes or sufferings of the hero or heroine of the piece; her graceful neck inclined forward, her small delicate hand unconsciously grasping the front of the box, her sweet

lips slightly parted, and her beaming eyes fixed with tender earnestness on what is passing before them. This the artist may copy, but he cannot go on and pencil down the various shades of sorrow and joy, anxiety and hope, that flit tremulously over her beautiful face. In this world of cold and ceremonious observance it is a treat to see such a girl; she is unsophisticated; and the chances are, that her understanding is better, and her feelings warmer and purer than those who evince more coldness and circumspection. Then there are the coquettes, with their pretty, and the fops with their ridiculous affectation; the solemn gravity of many at a joke, and the merriment of some at a murder; while others are troubled with the most strange and unfortunate peculiarities. There is one individual in the habit of attending the Park, that is afflicted with a hissing Natty Bumpo laugh, which is heard both loudly and distinctly: this places the owner somewhat in the predicament of the fiends in Paradise Lost, who, when desirous of giving applause, found they could only send forth hisses. Whenever any thing very laughable takes place, or an actor plays exceeding well, and the house is in a roar, a loud venomous hiss is heard, and the people all turn indignantly around towards the place from whence the sound proceeds; but the involuntary culprit is never suspected, for he appears, and really is, enjoying himself as much as any of them.

But, of all the persons who come to a theatre, the most to be dreaded and avoided are those that are possessed with a talking demon; such as Ophelia characterizes as being "as good as a chorus." Though a curse to all, they generally bring their particular victim along with them some simple friend to whom, during the progress of the play, they detail the whole history of the plot what has been done in the last scene, and what is to be done in the next what the several characters have just said, and what they are going to say remarks on the author off−hand criticisms on the actors, accompanied with short biographical notices of both, together with a running commentary on different parts of the audience, and their own private opinion on affairs in general and all this miscellaneous gabble conveyed in that most abhorrent of all sounds, a quick buzzing uninterrupted whisper. Any man who wishes to hear the play, and can sit patiently beside one of those annoyances, has more meekness than Moses, more patience than Job, more forbearance than Socrates, and no nerves at all.

A VOYAGE TO EUROPE.

Washington Irving crossed the Atlantic, and wrote a beautiful piece thereupon, entitled "The Voyage," which delighted every one. The natural consequences ensued. All the gentlemen who crossed the Atlantic afterwards, concluded to do as Washington Irving had done, and delight every one likewise, so that in the course of a short time there was no scarcity of marine narratives; and the dwellers in great cities, on both sides, had very particular information afforded them of the perils of such as "went down to the sea in ships" during the summer months. These adventurous men and predestined authors kept a regular diary of the days on which they ate lamb, and the days on which they ate chicken, and the days on which the pecuniary concerns of the captain were benefited by the disorganized state of their system, and they subsisted on rice−water and hope: they severally furnished a description of the ocean in a calm, and a description of the ocean in a storm, for which latter purpose the ocean was afflicted with more storms from May to September than sailors ever heard tell of. They stated, for the first time, that the sea was the "symbol of immensity" that the water was green on soundings, and "cerulean blue" off; and added their testimony, founded upon actual observation, to the mass of evidence already before the world, that it contained many whales, sharks, porpoises, and other fishes, to which were appended brief touches of natural history as they went along, and invariably a piece of fine writing concerning "sunset on the ocean," giving an account how that every−day luminary "goes down behind the wilderness of waters." They moreover let the reader have a minute insight into the state of their feelings, the workings of their bosoms, &c. as they leaned over the ship's side, gazed upon the vasty deep, and thought of the friends and home they had left behind them; and also their vague and very extraordinary speculations concerning the land that lay before them all which, is it not to be found expanded over an infinite number of pages in the infinite number of "Letters from Europe," which quietly repose on the back shelves of the establishments of Messrs. Bliss and Carvill, Broadway, and other incautious booksellers?

Such being the state of things, it would ill become an humble individual to affect singularity by breaking through

an established rule; and the subscriber, therefore, under the impression that it is a debt due to decorum and mankind, proceeds to inform the human race of what he saw and suffered. If I am not as interestingly minute as some of my predecessors, it must be attributed to the unfortunate fact of having lost a valuable "daily journal" overboard, in which the most trivial circumstances were carefully noted down, with appropriate moral reflections attached to each, and the following are therefore merely general recollections thrown together without order or discrimination.

In the first place, I hate the sea as much as Satan is said, in catholic countries, to hate holy water; and, notwithstanding all the fine poetry that has been written about it, think it, in every respect, the greatest bore in creation. To me, to be "Once more upon the waters, yet once more," brings a miserable feeling of lassitude and confinement, rather than of freedom and exultation. It is the most weary, dull, monotonous, unsociable place upon which human beings, with any kindly warmth in their hearts or blood, can sojourn. There is not any thing with which the imprisoned spirit can sympathize. On land, though that land be as sterile and barren as the banks of the river Jordan, or the most unfertile parts about Cape Cod, there is still some inanimate object or other to which the heart can attach itself a rock, a tree, a bubbling spring, which, after familiarity hath made it pleasant to the eye, we are loth to leave behind and glad to see again. Sterne hath beautifully, and no less beautifully than truly said, that man must love one thing or another, and that for his own part, were he in a desert he would love some cypress; but his affections would be sadly puzzled on what to fix themselves in the watery deserts which separate country from country. The dark waves keep tumbling over and over each other, for ever changing yet still the same, till the fatigued eye turns sickeningly away from this very blue prospect. You even feel sorry for the sullen, noiseless birds that keep eternally wheeling and floating above the curling billows, and regret the doom allotted them figuratively to seek "their bread upon the waters," or, what is pretty much the same thing to them their fish. With all their exemption from the murderous sports of man, how unenviable seems their fate, compared with that of the land birds. They have no constant mate expecting them at evening time no home no warm nest into which they may creep and fold their weary wings and be at rest; but when the close of day puts an end to their piscatory pursuits, they squat themselves down upon the cheerless waters with but small assurance of being a live bird in the morning, should some shark or other fowl−loving fish pass that way before they are awake and on the wing. Well; there is retribution in the deed why should not the destroyer be destroyed? they have preyed upon fish, why not fish prey upon them?

To all who rave and make poetry about the beauty and delights of a summer sea, I especially recommend the middle of the Atlantic during what is appropriately enough termed "a dead calm" the ship rolling lazily and heavily from side to side, the sails flapping drowsily against the masts, and a burning, blistering sun sucking the melted pitch and rosin out of the seams of the deck. Of all the suicidal situations in which man can be placed, I think this decidedly the most tempting; and believe, if life could be ended by a wish, few of the unhappy passengers would see the shore again; but fortunately it requires some little energy some slight exertion to drown yourself, and really you are so very listless so completely unstrung, that a man cannot be at the trouble of tumbling himself overboard. But then, cries the landsman, what a delightful resource must books be in such a situation. Alas! alas! your mind is as debilitated as your body, and just as incapable of bending its faculties to a salutary purpose. Shakspeare, Milton, Byron, or any thing nervous or exciting, is not to be borne; and about the strongest mental food that the mind can digest in this predicament is a diluted love−story in an "Annual." I, for one, am very fond of reading, but I could not do it here: I laid myself down on the deck, ate almonds and raisins, and thought of Job.

Some people prefer a strom to a calm; but their demerits are so equally balanced, that, like the Frenchman who had to choose between hanging and drowning. I cannot make up my mind to give the preference to either. True, the roaring of the wind, the tearing and splitting of the sails, the violent evolutions of the vessel, and the unique blasphemies which strike the ear from various quarters, with the probability of speedily being among the fishes, tend to arouse the spirit, and stir up, as counsellor Phillips might say, "the green and stagnant waters of the soul;" while the yesty ocean, ever and anon dashing over the ship and wetting you to the skin, is unquestionably sublime; but some how or other I never could relish the sublime much when it interfered materially with my

personal comforts; and am unromantic enough to own that I would rather be seated snugly in a decent inn at the foot of a Swiss mountain than identify myself with the icicles at the top of it; so, in a storm I hold it to be a better thing to go below, doff your drenched garments, fix your berth so that you cannot roll an inch either one way or the other, and quietly betake yourself to the arms of Morpheus, rather than stand gaping at the unceremonious ocean, who repays your sincere admiration in a very unhandsome manner by throwing cold water in your face.

No the sea, whether in storm or calm, or enveloped in fog, or in its most favorable state curled with a fresh fair breeze, has few attractions to those who spend more than six hours upon it at a time. Our captain, an old sailor, declared that every day he passed there he considered a blank in his existence. What is there in this be−praised element to give pleasure? In crossing the Atlantic all your amusements are not such as are connected with the sea, but such as serve to draw your attention from it. Chess or drafts, backgammon or cards, are the resources called in to while away the tedious hours; for after you have seen one of mother Carey's chickens, a shoal of porpoises, a shark, and a whale, you have seen about all that is to be seen. At first, like other landsmen, I was very desirous to "see a whale;" but I soon found that, according to the laws of optics, a porpoise alongside of the ship was just as large and as good a sight as a whale half a mile off, which is about as near as they generally venture; while all you mostly see of the rascally sharks is a fin, or the ridge of a brown back peeping above the water. The eye tires of even the finest prospect; but here you are compelled to gaze day after day on water and sky, and all that can be said of the latter is, that it is very blue and that there is a great quantity of it.

It may be thought from this that I am no friend or admirer of the sea; but few like it more than I do on the land, the only place, I believe, where people really fall in love with it. Nothing can be finer than to live in a highly cultivated tract of country merely separated from the sea−coast by a high range of sand−hills. The change in the scenery is so instantaneous, and so complete so very different, yet both so surpassingly beautiful, for few things can excel, in picturesque effect, a bold and animated line of coast. How freshening it is in the summer time, after roaming through orchards, meadows, and cornfields, to cross the barren sand−hills and find yourself on the lone sea−beach, with no human being within sight or hearing. How pleasant to roam to some favorite spot and there lie and watch the clear sparkling tide come rolling in over the smooth sand, forcing its way swiftly up a hundred tiny channels to dream over again all the wild legends of the mighty element before you the storm the battle and the wreck, and the hair−breadth escapes of those who have been cast away upon it to be lulled to slumber by the murmur of the slight waves breaking upon the shore, and making most sweet yet drowsy music in your ear this *is* delightful; and I have even enough of the hardi−hood of boyhood to love it in its rougher moods on a raw and gusty November day, when the seagull comes screaming to the cliffs for shelter, when the wave bursts in thunder at your feet, and the thick fog is whirled from the water like smoke by the tempest on such a day there is something far from unpleasant in standing on *terra firma* and watching its manoeuvres. Besides, it is such a glorious preparative for a warm, comfortable fire−side and a hearty supper but from passing any length of time on it in ships, or other smaller vessels called, for unknown reasons, pleasure−boats, heaven preserve me and my posterity, (should I have any.)

I have by no means drawn a jaundiced picture, discolored through the agency of disturbed bile, for though occasionally visited by that most horrible of afflictions, sea−sickness, I am better off in that respect than nineteen out of twenty. What must be the state of those wretched individuals who add enduring sickness or continual qualmishness to their other stock of sea comforts, I cannot even venture to conjecture. Persons thoroughly in this state will receive any intimation of the ship's going down with perfect unconcern they do not set their life at a "pin's fee." Some Athenian said, when he found the comfortless way in which the Spartans lived, that he no longer wondered at their fearing death so little; and it is only on this principle that I can account for the unnatural tranquillity with which men hear of the chance of running foul of an iceberg, or any other agreeable casualty; while half the peril, when on land quietly enjoying the good things of the world, would perturb their spirits considerably, and cause many retrospective glances towards their past state of existence, and great dubiosity touching their future prospects.

Land ho! we have just come in sight of the southern point of Ireland a few more hours will bring us into the English channel, and the unbounded joy of all on board is the best commentary on the pleasures of the sea. Ah! land, land! we all gaze upon the country of turf and potatoes as wistfully as if it were one of the "islands of the blest;" and the snuffing of the cow in the long boat, as she scents the green herbage afar off, approximates towards the borders of the pathetic. I am circumspect in the choice of my company, and it is consequently seldom that I have any thing to say to the "heavenly nine" or they to me; but on the present occasion I felt something unusual the matter with my brain, and as soon as the evening shades fell, and I could see land no longer, it relieved itself by the following effervescence:

LINES ON COMING IN SIGHT OF LAND. "Land, land ahead!" the seamen cries, "Land, land!" re−echoes round: And happy smiles and glistening eyes Repay that joyful sound. The dull and cheerless sea is past The warm earth meets our view at last, With summer's glories crown'd. Now ill beshrew the twilight gray, That shrouds it from my sight away! Well, let it fade, as fades the light Along the sullen sea; Yet through the watches of the night My thoughts will turn to thee. The fresh green fields the swelling hills The music of the gushing rills The humming of the bee: And scenes and sounds to memory dear, Are in mine eye and in mine ear. The carol of the merry lark Rings through the morning air; The honest sheep dog's wary bark Guarding with watchful care His flocks upon the green hill side: The milkmaid too, with modest pride And pretty anklet bare, Tripping along the dewy green, Is no unpleasant sight, I ween. These, and ten thousand scenes like these, Are passing o'er thy breast. Oh for the wave of thy green trees To shade my noontide rest! The pleasant rustling of the leaves, The warbling of the bird, that weaves Above me its trim nest While cooling breezes float along Laden with fragrance and with song. And glorious autumn's golden fruits, And summer's lingering flowers, And the sweet woodbine's graceful shoots Twining round rustic bowers; And friends long loved through absent years And kind eyes sparkling mid their tears, Like April's sun and showers Await me there. Cease, heart, to swell! Thou salt and bitter sea, farewell!"

LONDON THEATRES.

Drury−Lane and Covent−garden are two magnificent temples for the representation of the legitimate drama. Taste and elegance are conspicuous in whatever appertains to them; and though both houses are richly ornamented, the most fastidious critic would be puzzled to point out any thing gaudy, glaring, or obtrusive. The contrast between the chaste simplicity of their common scenery, and the glittering coarseness of that of the minor theatres is very striking. The greatest fault of both is their size; great physical powers being absolutely requisite to make the singing and acting effective in the more remote parts of the house. The interior of each being in the shape of a horse−shoe, the stage is consequently much smaller in proportion to the audience−part than that of the Park theatre, which is semicircular. The saloons and lobbies are uncommonly spacious and splendid. The principal saloon at Drury−lane is one large mirror, the walls being entirely covered with glass. Next in reputation to these stands the Haymarket, nearly the size of the Bowery, and bearing about the same relation to Drury−lane and Covent−garden, that the Chatham in its best days did to the Park. The English Opera−house lately burned and now rebuilding its name sufficiently indicates the purposes to which it is appropriated. The Italian Opera−house is not yet open for the season, but is, I understand, by far the largest and most splendid theatrical establishment in London. Then there is Astley's in the quadruped line, where dramas written by asses are played by horses where the business of the scene is transacted *en croupe* , and ladies are courted and tyrants are slaughtered at a three−quarter pace or a full gallop. Sadler's Wells, once famous for heroic actions and *real* water, swearing and tobacco. Here ships were nightly wrecked and long−boats overturned; and sailors continually employed in jumping over−board to save beauty and innocence, in wet white garments from a watery grave. The performers were a species of amphibious animals, and passed half their time in fluids; and the best swimmer was, next to a Newfoundland dog, the most important personage in the establishment. Here it was that the "Courageous Coral Diver, or the Shark of the Gulph of California," had such a successful run. The "Humane Society for the recovery of drowned persons" allowed, I believe, their drag−nets, warm flannels, stomach−pumps, and other apparatus to be kept in readiness at this theatre, in case of accident; but still they could not prevent the coughs, colds, catarrhs,

and pulmonary complaints incident to such an otter−like state of existence the *real* water was therefore discontinued the sea was sunk, and the ocean is now made of carpets and painted sail−cloth, as in other establishments.

Besides these, there is an infinite number of minor theatres, with the names of half of which I am unacquainted. Some of the major−minors are highly respectable, and not unfrequently have first−rate talent on their boards; but the minor−minors are, from stage to gallery, an unmixed mass of ignorance and vulgarity. Here is performed that species of "national drama," which was wont to be enacted at the Lafayette and Mount Pitt circus before they were purified by fire; and which is still to be seen at the Park and Bowery, much to their credit, on holiday nights, where the several parties have it all their own way; and the most glorious and decisive victories are obtained by the tremendous carnage of one half of the supernumeraries, and the craven cowardice of the other; and where the enemies of valiant Englishmen and courageous Americans are humbled into the dust before them, much to the credit of the very patriotic and enlightened audiences. Here, as on your side of the water, instances of almost incredible prowess are as common as can be; and an enemy's first−rate is frequently boarded and taken by a single midshipman, or a young officer alone cuts a whole detachment to pieces, except that the curtain falls amid shouts of "England for ever!" instead of "Hurrah for Jackson!" I had been so long accustomed to hear all the love and liberty and heroism and bombast proceed out of the mouths of gentlemen in blue jackets, that it at first seemed strange to hear gentlemen in red declaiming in precisely the self−same strain. However, it must be said for the Londoners, that these *direct* national puffs are not tolerated at decent theatres. The victories of his majesty's forces are almost entirely confined to places patronized for the most part by butcher's boys, dustmen, draymen, and coal−heavers.

The principal source of profit, however, to nearly all the minor theatres, is the "supernatural business," or representation of demoniacal dramas. But here no narrow national feelings prevail justice is equally dealt out to all; and in the last scene the devil has his due, let the culprit be what countryman he may. The mythologies of all ages and nations have been raked up, and the evil spirits with which they abound re−produced upon the stage. It is really fearful to look upon a dead wall, covered with play−bills, and read the dreadful announcements for the evening's *amusements*, rendered terribly distinct by ominous red and sombre black type of gigantic stature. Some of the managers ground their claims to public patronage and support on the immense expense they have been at in order to do justice to the views of the interior of the infernal regions; and one spirited lessee has actually constructed a false or double stage, which, at the termination of the piece, sinks down with the particular fiend and victim of the evening, amid cataracts of flame spouting forth from the side−wings. The enacting of demons has become a regular branch of theatrical business; and Mr. O. Smith, a man with an unamiable countenance, and a voice horrifically hoarse, is as distinguished in this line as Kean in tragedy, or Liston in comedy. "The prince of darkness is a gentleman," says Shakspeare, but two−thirds of his representatives in London make him out little better than an illiterate scoundrel. It is rather too bad on the most serious occasions, to hear the father of all evil transposing his *v*'s and *w*'s, and leaving out his *h*'s, in the true cockney style, unable even to pronounce his own proper place of residence in a correct manner.

The public appetite for gloomy horrors is at present perfectly ravenous. I know not how to account for this, except by attributing it to the alarming increase in the consumption of pork which has taken place in the metropolis within these few years. This species of animal nutriment is the favorite food of the lower orders, and I am inclined to think, generates more diabolical tastes and propensities than "flesh of muttons, beeves, or goats." How is it possible that a person who banquets off pork sausages and heavy porter, and then swallows two or three drams of spirits of turpentine, miscalled gin, can have his sensibilities aroused by such slight provocations as wit and humor? Is he a man to be tickled with a straw? What is a joke or a scrap of sentiment, or a lively conceit to him? You might as well give a glass of delicately flavored wine to an habitual bibber of fourth−proof brandy. Take him to see "Much ado about nothing," and he thinks the play well named or "As you like it," and he likes it not. No he pays his money and goes to witness "The Infernal Compact; or, the Fiend, the Victim, and the Murderer!" he puts his hands in his pockets, and criticizes the vagaries of Mr. Smith, in his favorite character of the "Demon of the Valley of Skulls," (as performed by him fifty−seven successive nights, with distinguished

approbation!) These monstrosities have been of gradual growth. First came "Cherries and Fair Stars," "Visions of the Sun," and similar tales of enchantment; but these were soon found to be mere moonshine, and a class of melo−dramas was got up where "murders were done too terrible for the ear." The Newgate calendar was regularly dramatized, and a most atrocious state of things prevailed for some time; but, as the anti−temperance man goes on regularly to increase the strength of the dose, as his acuteness of taste decreases, so the managers, after blunting the feelings and perceptions of the public, were obliged to resort to still stronger stimulants, and hence the present sulphureous state of the stage. But even this is beginning to fail. Notwithstanding the "infernal abysses," by the help of chemical substances, which throw on the stage a strong glare of red, blue, or yellow light, are rendered, as the term is, "highly effective," insomuch, indeed, as to produce a strong impression on any person unused to such exhibitions, the cockney surveys the whole with critical coolness, until a superabundant quantity of flame elicits some such exclamation of admiration as "I say, Bill, vot do you think of that 'ere? My eyes!" delivered in a tone of voice which evidently shows that the view of the place of punishment before him has not made any impression on the mind of the speaker in regard to his own ulterior prospects. If the stage at present actually shows "the very age and body of the time, its form and pressure," the millenium is much further off than many people suppose.

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"I must speak in a passion, and I will do it in King Cymbyses' vein."

Shakspeare.

If Socrates, or any other sensible ancient, could be resuscitated, and have half−a−dozen flaming rhapsodies on the benefits and blessings of the "press," put into his hands, what a glorious and mighty change would he suppose had taken place in the ordering of public affairs, since the time when the Athenian rabble were led by the nose by every noisy demagogue who chose to spout nonsense to them in their market−places. How the good man's heart would be filled with rejoicing as he read glowing descriptions of the tremendous capabilities of this mighty engine, wielded solely for the benefit of mankind, and of its unwearied exertions to disseminate useful information and correct knowledge of political events to the meanest citizen of the state! He would suppose, that with this almost omnipotent power arrayed on the side of virtue, and watching with untiring vigilance over the true interests of all, that this wicked world must have been transformed into a sort of Utopia since his time a place from which all prejudice, venality, corruption, and sycophancy were swept away, and where the governors and the governed would emulate each other in their exertions for the common weal. But if, after perusing the aforesaid rhapsodies, the said Socrates could have a quantity of newspapers taken indiscriminately from different parts of the country placed before him, there is strong reason to believe that an attentive perusal of their elegant contents would materially change his opinion. He would find the gentlemen presiding over one half of the press stating that the other portion of their editorial brethren were, without exception, the greatest set of rascals, scoundrels, rogues, thieves, and vagabonds that ever existed on the face of the earth; and that they were the most vile, the most degraded, the most contemptible miscreants that could, by any possibility, disgrace humanity. On the other hand, he would find the party accused in these gentle terms, asserting that their assailants were well known to be such infamous liars, so totally destitute of every spark of honesty, so stained with infamy, so branded with convicted falsehoods, as to render any thing they might say unworthy of the slightest notice. Poor Socrates would be sadly puzzled, and think there was more in this than he ever "dreamt of in *his* philosophy," and that truth still kept her ancient station at the bottom of a well. He would find these virtuous vehicles of knowledge and information made up of quack advertisements, dreadful murders, dreadful poetry, Joe−Miller jests, and editorial personalities; in the latter of which he would see all the coarseness of his old enemy Aristophanes ten times trebled, without a single redeeming sprinkling of his wit and humor; and he would be lost in utter amazement to find that the very worst and most ignorant portion of the people (according to their own showing) had been, by some strange fatality, elevated to instruct and amuse the rest.

There are some subjects which it is necessary to aid by a slight stretch of the fancy, or a little exaggeration of

language, in order to give them point and effect; but to describe, just as it is, the manner in which editorial warfare is carried on in the country papers of the United States, other words than are to be found in Walker or Webster must be sought for; they are too tame, too weak to convey any idea of these Billingsgate personalities.

"A beggar in his drink,
Would not bestow such terms upon his callet,"
as the worthy conductors of the press think proper
to bestow upon each other. Wherein the utility
the advantage of all this to the public, or what is
more, to themselves, consists, it is not easy to discover.
If they are what they say they are, would it
not be their policy to agree and keep it concealed,
and not blazon forth each other's infamy to the
world? And what has that world to do with their
disreputable quarrels and low abuse, farther than to
laugh at and despise them for it? the public of this
day, as of yore,
"care not a toss up
Whether Mossop kick Barry or Barry kick Mossop;"
and after looking on for some time, and amusing
itself with the noise and sputter of the enraged belligerents,
come to the conclusion that they are both
contemptible creatures, and pay no further attention
to the matter. In fact, nine−tenths of the papers
have, by this degrading conduct, in a great measure
lost the power of affecting character either by
praise or censure: there are many who pay no sort
of attention either to what they say of public men
or of each other; and if there are still those who,
making a deduction of ninety−nine per cent., think

"there must be *some* truth in what the fellow says," their number is fast diminishing. A paper is at present lying before us, from which better things might have been expected, as it is published in a decent neighborhood, and contains some good reading matter, in which, amid two−thirds of a column of abuse, one of the most moderate sentences is, that his opponent is "a liar by nature and a thief by profession." After going on for some time with unabated spirit in this strain of unmitigated abuse, he winds up with the following magnificent piece of composition. "If the river Amazon were made to run through his (his opponent's) soul, more time would be taken up in cleansing it of its depravity and filthiness, than was required by the ancient river to cleanse the celebrated stables, wherein a thousand oxen had been stalled for almost as many years!" This appears to be only one of a series of articles on the subject! and the offence, as far as we can make it out, for which all these hard words are let loose, seems to have been the copying a paragraph without due credit, or something of the kind of equally vital importance to the community. We have not seen the replication to this choice *morceau*, but presume it will be in the same style of impassioned and elegant invective.

Now is not this and such as this abominable? and hundreds of instances could be pointed out of still greater magnitude, in which the personal appearance and family connexions of a man are ridiculed charges of not having paid his tailor's bill, or any thing else, no matter what, that depravity can invent or blackguardism utter, are put forth. Opprobrious epithets from such sources, when applied to those who have been long before the public, and whose characters are well and favorably known, can do but comparatively little harm; they may exclaim with Brutus,

"I am armed so strong in honesty That they pass by me as the idle wind, Which I regard not;" but suppose an honorable and sensitive man, just commencing his career, attacked by one of those literary scavengers, what exquisite pain must it give him to find himself dragged forward and slandered in this manner. And he has no redress; he cannot reply, or at all events if he does, it will be a most unequal match, for he will be temperate in his

language, and anxious not to assert any thing but what is strictly true. It would be like a gentleman neatly dressed in light−colored unmentionables and white kid gloves, engaged in a combat of throwing mud from a kennel with a ragged and tattered miscreant; his adversary, from being well practised at the game, throws ten handsfull of dirt for his one, and quickly bespatters him all over, while the few additional pieces that he could send, would never be discerned on his opponent's already soiled and filthy garments. The best way certainly for those who are well enough known to afford it, is to pass all such attacks over in absolute silence. Blackwood's Magazine, whose personality has at least always prostituted humor and ability to make it go off, has never been so enraged by any of the retorts of its adversaries as by the real or affected contempt of the Edinburgh Review. Notwithstanding the virulent abuse that has from time to time been bestowed upon it, the Edinburgh has never, since the commencement of Blackwood, let it appear that it was conscious there was such a journal in existence.

We are not very sanguine in anticipations of any speedy and effectual change for the better in this world of ours; but we do think the time is fast coming when, with a few exceptions, this custom of the present race of public journals in the United States will be regarded with unqualified contempt. There are already symptoms of better things. Most of the city papers in New−York, and indeed in all large towns, have lately amended their ways considerably in this respect, though they were never one quarter so bad as their rural brethren; and there are several journals that are respectable and entertaining repositories of news, knowledge, literature, and fashion, while their trifling disputes are conducted in a pleasant and gentlemanly spirit. Clashing interests and party views will always preserve some portion of personality in the world; but it would be more agreeable to all concerned to settle their little affairs of the pen by good−natured raillery, light repartees, and polished sarcasms, such as pass in decent society, in preference to vulgar slang and porter−house figures of rhetoric. Let such contests be carried on like two gentlemen engaged in a bout at foils, in which both exert their utmost skill and ingenuity, in a friendly temper; and when a "palpable hit" is given on either side, let it be courteously acknowledged, and then try it again; and not like a couple of ragamuffins in the street, who fight and tear themselves to pieces for the amusement of the spectators.

MR. LISTON.

"Curse that incorrigible face of yours; though you never suffer a smile to mantle it, yet it is a figure of fun for all the rest of the world."

Of all the actors I have ever seen, Kean and Liston appear to me to be the greatest, and to have the least in common with others of their species. Of the two, perhaps Liston is the most original. He is the Hogarth of actors; and like that great painter, has been more highly than justly appreciated. Not that either have been too highly thought of "I hold the thing to be impossible" but the broad, rich humor, which is the distinguishing characteristic of both, has, from its prominence, thrown their minor good properties onto the shade. Hogarth, to the qualities peculiarly his own, added the rare merit of being a chaste and skilful colorist, (the most difficult thing to be attained in painting, considering it purely as an art,) and was, moreover however generally such an opinion may be entertained not the least of a carcaturist. Neither is Liston, notwithstanding it pleases certain pragmatical persons, who, I humbly apprehend, know nothing about the matter, to assert the contrary. There are now, as in the days of William Shakspeare, those who discountenance all cachinnatory movements as unbecoming; regarding gravity as the only outward and visible type of that great inward accumulation of wisdom, which generally lies too deep to be ever discovered. These people think because Mr. Liston occasionally plays coarse and foolish parts in coarse and foolish farces, that Mr. Liston is, consequently, a coarse and foolish fellow, and only fit to amuse the uneducated vulgar; and as "grimace" and "buffoonery" are the two standing words used in abusing comedians, let their faults be what they may, they have not unfrequently been applied to Liston. Now if any one be free from what is meant by these two words, as set down in many dictionaries, it is this actor. The merits of his unparalleled countenance are passive, not active; and distortion would only render that countenance common−place, which in a state of blank repose, is intensely ridiculous.

The great merit of Liston is his earnestness. Kean does not appear more earnest in Othello than does Liston at the loss of a pocket−handkerchief, or being overcharged a shilling in a tavern−bill. His whole soul seems to be absorbed in an affair of this kind. He does not bustle about or put himself in a passion in order to make the audience laugh at the ridiculous nature of the circumstances, as other actors do; but all the faculties of the man's mind seem concentrated to endeavor to convince or persuade, as the case may require, solely to save the said shilling, or regain the said handkerchief; and it is the contrast between the disproportion of the exercise employed and the importance of the object to be attained like the wars of the Lilliputians and the Blefuscudians that is so supremely ridiculous. Fools may say that this is merely admirable foolery it is a great deal more. It is a shrewd satire upon humanity, turning into burlesque the lofty pretensions the power and knowledge and wit and wisdom of mankind, and presents a *stronger* and truer picture of the littleness of man and his pursuits than a thousand homilies. Even Heraclitus, could he look at Liston, would laugh to see the "noble reason" and "infinite faculties" of one of the "paragon of animals" utterly prostrated by the loss of an inside place in a stage−coach; and he would indeed exclaim with the poet, though in a very different sense, "what a piece of work is man!" I think I never saw or read a more forcible exemplification of the importance a man's feelings and actions are to himself, and the less than the shadow of a shade they are to the rest of the world, than is to be witnessed in a farce where Liston alights from a coach top, and is followed on to the stage by the driver for the customary gratuity. Those who have traveled in England may have remarked the manner in which the coachmen receive what the traveler may be pleased to give them. While he is getting the money from his pocket Jehu is all attention; but the moment he has received it, his business is over he turns upon his heel, and all traces of the giver pass from his mind for ever. Liston detains the coachman, (and you can see in his countenance the vital importance he attaches to what he is about,) in order to draw the distinction and durably impress it upon his mind that his (Liston's) giving him a sixpence was by no means a compulsory measure, but a pure and spontaneous emanation of generosity, or, to use his own phraseology, "*h*entirely *h* optional." A person standing on the brink of a running stream on a cold day, seriously employed in "writing his name in water," would be accounted insane the attempt to write munificence and generosity on the coachman's mind, is equally futile; yet how many in the world make these and similar efforts who are not accounted crazy, and whose last will and testament stands good in law.

There has been much said about the ugliness of Liston's physiognomy. I do not think it such as can be fairly termed ugly; yet it is a face that a sensitive sculptor would faint to look upon a large mass of inanimate flesh, with only an every−day mouth, a most insignificant nose, both as to size and shape, and a pair of lack−lustre eyes to diversify the blank and extensive prospect, but the word "ugly" gives no more definite idea of it than the word "beauty." It is a paradoxical face, most expressive in expressing the absence of all expression; yet at times *combining* the expression of the most inveterate stupidity with concentrated conceit and supreme self−satisfaction, in a way that has never been equalled. There are many who, by the common play of the muscles or contortion of the features, can counterfeit stupidity and conceit, in a greater or less degree, at separate times; but not one who, like Liston, can at the *same* time make you feel perfectly assured not only that the personage he is representing has not an idea, but also, that all attempts to make him sensible of that fact, or to inoculate him with one, would be altogether hopeless. His voice is as unique as his face; and the deep sepulchral croak, in which he narrates petty grievances, leaves you no choice whether to laugh or let it alone. There is a farce, entitled "Comfortable Lodgings," in which he enacts the part of a rich and hypochondriacal Englishman, traveling to get clear of an *unaccountable* melancholy, and to learn to enjoy himself like other people, and describes one of his peculiarities with good effect. In answer to his servant's inquiry of "Lord, sir, why can't you laugh, and do as other people do?" "Laugh!" he exclaims in a tone from the bottom of his chest, and with the bitter emphasis of a misanthrope "laugh! I cannot laugh! I cannot do as other people do! When I look around me (looking at the pit with a dull stare) I see every one laughing and merry, (a fact,) while my face remains as immoveable as a face carved on a brass knocker!" "Do as other people do?" he continues "I can't do as other people do. Even in the packet−boat, when all the passengers were as passengers who had never been at sea before usually are, I tried to be like them! but I could not! I looked on a *disappointed man!*"

Incomparable Liston! Thou hast been a benefit and a luxury unto the melancholy inhabitants of this great city for many a day! Thou hast refuted the trite axiom that "money will not purchase pleasure;" for what man in London

town, for the last twenty years, who could put his hand into his breeches pocket, and find therein three shillings and sixpence, but could say unto himself, "Liston plays I will hie me unto the theatre and forget my cares lo! I will laugh!" And if laughing promoteth (as physicians affirm) the healthy action of the biliary organs, from what floods of acrimony and ill−will hast thou cleared the livers of men! Even exquisites, as they looked at thee, have been awakened from their state of graceful torpor, and the corset laces of fair ladies have been cracked in twain. Thou hast pleased alike the well−judging, the ill−judging, and those who take not the trouble of judging at all. As the Persian saith "may thy shadow never be less!"

FANNY KEMBLE.

The rising hope and promise of the drama the bud the blossom the half−blown "rose and expectancy" of the theatrical world the pledge to the rising generation, that, in their time, at least, Juliet shall not lie buried in the tomb of the Capulets, or Belvidera's sorrows be entrusted entirely to regularly broken−in, thorough−paced, tragedy hacks. I am well nigh tired of the mechanical woes and shallow agonies of every−day tragedy of picturesque and passionless attitudinizing of storms of grief, according to the stage directions "cross to R. H. and burst into tears;" of violent beating of the cold and insensible breast, and knocking of the clenched hand upon the empty head. I am tired of the mere pantomime of the art, without feeling or common sense tired of vehemence and impetuosity, instead of passion; and particularly tired of hearing such easy work characterized as the "flashes and outbreakings of genius." To me, gross and habitual exaggeration seems to pervade nearly all the tragic exhibitions on the stage; and if this be so, it is sufficient evidence of the absence of feeling. Genuine feeling never exaggerates. Those who are really touched by the parts they assume, may, from that very cause, be so little master of themselves as to fail in giving a finished portrait of the character they have undertaken to represent; but they never, by any chance, fall into the opposite fault of "o'erstepping the modesty of nature," and becoming more violent than the hero or heroine of the scene would have been in reality. There is generally, however, an instinctive propriety about true passion, which leads those under its influence to do neither more nor less than they ought to do; whilst the less easily excited feelings of others wait upon the judgment, and it becomes a matter of calculation how much grief or energy must be used on certain occasions. But it is invariably your hacknied, cold−blooded actors, without either passion or judgment, and who off the stage laugh at any thing like enthusiasm in their art as ridiculous, that "out−herod Herod," and affect a superabundance of feeling to conceal their utter want of it; just as ladies of questionable character make an over parade of delicacy; or, indeed, as pretension of any and every sort seeks to conceal the absence of what it has not by an ostentatious display of the semblance of the quality it would be thought to possess.

Now Miss Kemble does not exaggerate. I have watched her closely, and have never, according to my notions of things, seen, either in look, voice, or action, the slightest attempt to impose upon the audience by extravagance to extract, as it were, their sympathies by force, and storm them into approval. She is not yet, in some respects, so "effective" an actress as others of infinitely less ability that is, she does not so well understand how to produce a sensation by "points" and "situations." She has yet much to learn and something to unlearn; but she has that within her which cannot be taught, though, parrot−like, it may be imitated genuine passion, delicacy, and feeling! and all that is necessary for her to do to become a great actress is, in acquiring the necessary business and technicalities of the stage, to preserve pure and undefiled those rare qualities. This is no easy task. Acting is an art in which the noblest results have to be effected by the most unromantic means. Bombastes Furioso itself is not so much of a burlesque as the rehearsal of a tragedy. To say nothing of Macbeths and Othellos in surtout coats and pepper−and−salt pantaloons, and Lady Macbeths and Desdemonas in fitch tippets and Leghorn flats, the continual recurrence of trivial directions in the midst of agonizing speeches "when I do so, mind you do so" the familiar and unseasonable colloquialisms, the everlasting appeals to and from the stage manager, the scoldings and the squabblings, are apt to fritter away all enthusiasm in people of ordinary minds, until they become a kind of speaking and attitudinizing machines mere actors and actresses, who occasionally produce an effect by the beauty of the language they deliver, or from the situations in which they are placed; but who are, for the most part, incapable of duly appreciating either the one or the other. It is only those whose feelings lie too deep beneath

the surface to be ruffled or worn away by the habits and jargon of their profession, and who, when the curtain rises, step upon the stage creatures of another element, that really become great actors. There are plenty of anecdotes of Kean afloat, weighty enough of themselves to apparently controvert this assertion; but however that wonderful creature may now have become hardened by habit, he must have been at one time terribly in earnest, and the effect which he still creates is produced by a faithful recollection and copy of the feelings which originally agitated him. It is to be hoped that Miss Kemble will become a *great* actress, and that the artificial education, of which she has yet much to receive, will not destroy the natural beauty and freshness of her mind. At present her personations are rather distinguished by feminine sweetness and delicacy, and quick and violent transitions of passion, than by sustained force and grandeur; but there is something occasionally in the tone of her voice in her dark expressive eye and fine forehead, that speaks of the future Queen Katherine and wife of Macbeth. Her Juliet, with some faults, is a delightful, affectionate, warm−hearted piece of acting; and she is decidedly the least mawkish and most truly loving and loveable Belvidera I have ever seen. The closing scene of madness, where others fail, is her greatest triumph. The tones of her voice, when playfully threatening Jaffier, might almost touch the heart of a money−scrivener. She is the only Belvidera I have beheld play this scene twice. They all contrive to make it either excessively repulsive or ridiculous, and somehow or other manage to bring to mind a very vivid picture of Tilburina in the Critic; while their invariably going home in the midst of their distresses, and after a partial touch of insanity, to put off their black velvets and put on their white muslins to go completely mad in, because, as that lady says, "it is a rule," by no means tends to do away with this unfortunate association of ideas. Miss Kemble is at present the sole hope of the English public in tragedy. She must not disappoint them, for, if she does, there is no one else on whom they can turn their eyes. But when it is considered that this is only her second season that she is yet but a girl of eighteen or nineteen, it may be fairly said that she has already done sufficient to justify the most sanguine expectations.

MADAME VESTRIS.

Arch, easy, impudent, pert, sprightly, and agreeable, with a handsome face, a delicious person, a rich, musical voice, and an inexhaustible fund of self−possession, this vivacious lady has pleased, and continues to please on every stage, and in every department of the drama in which she appears. She suits all tastes. It is impossible for any one to dislike her; and just as impossible, I should think, for any to become enthusiastically fond of her acting. There is no depth, nor power, nor sensibility about her. Neither is there the aping or affectation of these things. She is, emphatically, a *clever* actress, which stands in about the same relation to a great actress as an epigrammatist to a poet; or a shrewd, worldly man to a wise one; and her being a more universal favorite than others of a higher order of merit, is only another proof of what has been proved some thousand times since the world began that success is a very fallacious test of ability, for the simple reason, that the more the kind of merit is upon a level with the intellects of the majority of the judges, the more likely it is to be appreciated. The lady's talent is purely executional, and has nothing to do with the higher province of conception indeed the characters in which she generally appears are not conceptions but copies, or copies of copies of the ephemeral whims and vagaries of the passing hour trifling and agreeable, and well suited to the prevailing light and superficial taste in theatrical matters; for, without cant, it is light and superficial. I have been told that she plays Rosalind. I should like to see her do so for curiosity's sake; for I cannot imagine a more pleasant and amusing performance, and at the same time more decidedly different from what it ought to be, than Madame Vestris's Rosalind. She will be the arch, lively, free−spoken, wellbred lady of the French court to the life; but any thing rather than the wild, daring, susceptible, romantic Rosalind.

Two−thirds of Madame Vestris's notoriety has arisen from the facility with which she can un−sex herself, and the confident boldness with which she makes her bow to the audience in breeches. It is all very well that she does so half measures are very perplexing and disagreeable; and if a lady makes up her mind to wear this article of apparel, either in public or private, the more decidedly and gracefully she does it the better; but still there must be some affectation in the raptures of the town at witnessing the same. To be sure, no one buttons a coat, adjusts a cravat, wears a hat, handles a cane, or draws a pair of gloves on in the true spirit of knowing and irresistible

coxcombry equal to Madame Vestris; and it is really pleasant to sit and see those manly airs and graces played of by a woman, affording, as it does, conclusive evidence that such deep−laid schemes to ensnare the admiration of the fair sex do not always escape detection; yet still the skill and observation requisite to do this may be rated too highly. But Madame Vestris has better, though perhaps weaker claims than this, on the public favor. She has the ability to make wearisome common−place passable, frivolity agreeable, and sprightliness fascinating a never−flagging joyousness of spirit, and an almost promethean power of imparting a portion of her exuberance of life and animation to the walking, talking, mechanical blocks by which she is occasionally surrounded. To use a striking, technical phrase, she "keeps the stage alive." Her motions are graceful in the extreme, and like a greyhound or a thorough−bred racer, she cannot put herself in an awkward attitude. Her chambermaids have an archness inexpressible; and, if it be a merit, (a stage one it certainly is,) no one equals her in a certain quiet and unutterable mode of giving a *double entendre*. As a singer, Madame Vestris is deservedly admired. There is a hearty, sensible, straight−forwardness in her manner, and an absence of quackery and pretension in her style that is extremely agreeable. She is a good enough tactician to know exactly what she can do, and though a spoiled favorite, discreet enough seldom to attempt more than she can, with credit and safety go through with a rare merit. Her voice is none of your common, thin, clear, unsubstantial organs, but of a full, round, rich, satisfying quality; her *manner* of giving the arch, and what may be called dashing songs, she is in the habit of singing, is charming, and the effect of the whole voice, look, and action delightful.

There is another particular in which Vestris is unrivalled, though, from the extraordinary notions of delicacy prevalent in the western hemisphere, wherein you are located, I almost despair of making myself understood. I mean as regards the symetry of those portions of the human frame which are situated between the knees and ankles, but which it is the custom of the country never to name by the right name, except when attached to the bodies of inferior animals, such as dogs and horses; though wherein consists the harm, even when speaking of a lady, of plainly using the monosyllable beginning with an *l* and ending with a *g*, with an intermediate vowel, I cannot say, but leave it to people much better acquainted with delicacy and metaphysics, than I pretend to be, to determine. But this I can say, that after having repeatedly looked upon those two unmentionable pieces of humanity belonging to Madame Vestris in the most critical manner, I think them, as far as my judgment goes, perfect in every point. Madame Vestris is also highly accomplished in other matters, being mistress of both French and Italian.

PASTA, TAGLIONI, ETC.

Who has not heard of Pasta? The "glorious Pasta" the "divine Pasta" the "immortal Pasta" the Pasta whose fame has reached every part of Europe where a musician lives or an opera−house exists; and who, despite of professional rivalries and jealousies, is allowed by universal acclamation by competent and incompetent judges to have "touched the topmost point of greatness" in her profession? After an absence of three years from England, she made her appearance at the King's theatre, upon which occasion nearly all the beauty and fashion of the metropolis assembled to welcome her return; together with a few individuals, like your humble servant, neither particularly beautiful nor fashionable. I cannot say but that I attended rather to appease my feelings of awakened curiosity than from any sanguine anticipations of pleasure, because I thought that my ignorance of the Italian language would be a drawback, not to be counterbalanced by the talents of the actress, or a bald English translation of the opera; but, without any affectation, I can safely say I came away as much gratified as astonished, and as much astonished as a person of an equable temperament can well be. Pasta is certainly *sui generis*. There have been many good actors and many good singers, but such an union of musical excellence and Siddonian power, passion, grace, and majesty does not, never did, and it may be, never will exist again in the same person. She stands alone: no comparison between her and any other will hold good though not so much on the score of inferiority as dissimilarity. The piece selected for her *debut* was Mayer's grand serious opera of Medea, a part with which Madame Pasta has become identified, and of which she holds undisputed possession. All who have the slightest smattering of *classicality* are familiar with the history of Jason and the Golden Fleece: his desertion of his lawful spouse Medea, his subsequent bigamious conduct in espousing the Princess Creusa,

and the fearful retaliation of his ex−wife. The dramatist has followed the old story or fable very closely; and the predominating passions are consequently love, jealousy, rage, and revenge, with a suitable climax of horror. I have seen many fine performances, but I never saw one in which the actor appeared more terrifically in earnest than in this instance. She was a complete whirlwind of the passions: a southern vehemence pervaded every look and gesture; yet, for all that, there was not any thing in her acting in the slightest degree overstrained or artificial, or which the most phlegmatic spectator could point out as not justified by her situation in the scene. In the first act, when endeavoring to prevent Jason's marriage, she is merely a sublime termagant; and it is only in the second, after all her efforts prove fruitless, and she resolves upon revenge, that her real triumph commences. Certainly nothing could be finer or more touching than the irresolution with which she regards her children when meditating their murder her alternate fierceness and tenderness her unavailing wish that she could only kill the father's part in them the deadly hatred with which she regards them as Jason's offspring, and the love and pity into which she relapses as she feels that they are likewise her own. Despair was never more truly or beautifully personified, than, when about to strike the fatal blow, she suddenly feels a mother's fondness tugging at her heart−strings her uplifted arm falls powerless by her side, her head sinks upon her bosom, and she stands a few seconds as in a trance helpless and desolate. The voice of Jason, heard in pursuit of her, rouses and lashes her into fury, bordering on insanity, and the unnatural murder is at length consummated. I have somewhat of an Indian contempt for gesticulation on ordinary occasions, holding it to be Frenchified, frivolous, and ridiculous; and all kinds of attitudinizing are my especial abhorrence. If ever I be executed for murder, it will be for discharging a pistol from the pit of the theatre at some fellow who, at the sight of a ghost or an injured friend, has thrown his legs and arms into what he conceives a beautiful position, and loth to give the audience too little of a good thing, continues them in it, until the applause his evolution has excited subsides, to the entire destruction of the illusion of the scene. But action, when there is heart and soul in it, and when every movement is apparently the result of the feeling of the moment, is an universal language; and it is extraordinary what a sensation may at times be produced by the sweeping of an arm or the pointing of a finger. Pasta is continually in motion. I do not know whether she wants *repose* in other parts in Medea the violence of the passions called into play will not admit of it but there is a grace, variety, and fiery vehemence in her gestures and manner, the very opposite of theatrical calculation and display. Some of her attitudes are the very essence of the "sublime and beautiful." She appears to have something else to think about than how the extremities of her person are conducting themselves. The closing scene, when, after the murder of her children, she confronts Janson, throws the dagger reeking with their blood towards him, exclaiming, as he turns away with horror, "Ha! traitor dost thou shun me?" is perfectly appalling. Of Pasta's astonishing voice it may be said that its claims to pre−eminence rest rather upon its enormous power than its *quality* not that it is deficient in the latter respect, but the former is its distinguishing characteristic; the manner in which it fills and rings through the immense opera−house is wonderful. It is, in the lower tones, what is termed a "veiled" voice that is, in plain English, rather husky; but this, which to others would be a serious disadvantage, is, on many occasions, of signal service to Pasta, particularly in depicting the stronger passions, such as despair or horror; the upper tones are remarkably full and clear, and all that can be desired. Upon the whole, she is one of the wonders of the age, whose merits have not been overrated; and, if ever she cross the Atlantic, I am not afraid that what I have ventured to say in her behalf, will appear at all exaggerated.

London is certainly a pleasant place in many respects you *can* have the *very* best of every thing if you desire it, and merely for paying extravagantly for it. As soon as the first singer in the world, *in her line*, had withdrawn her claims to public attention for the evening, the first dancer in the world, to wit, Taglioni, put in hers. Do not be afraid! My enthusiasm about her was only transitory, and I am not going to be eloquent or tedious (as the discriminating or foolish reader may think me) in her praise to any alarming extent. Besides, there is nothing astonishing about Taglioni at least according to the common acceptation of the word nothing to gape and wonder at; and in any of the minor theatres in London, or elsewhere, I have no doubt she would be accounted immensely inferior to Mademoiselles Celeste, Constance, Heloise, and other spinners around on one leg, who unblushingly call themselves dancers. Her style is rather distinguished by ease, grace, and elegance, than energy and spirit. She has not the fire or nimbleness of Ronzi Vestris, but her manner is more refined; and she has less of the trickery of the art than even that polished *danseuse*. Perhaps there are as many points of resemblance between Taglioni and Mrs. Austin as can possibly exist between two accomplished mistresses of such widely different *arts*

. (Every thing now−a−days, dancing, tailoring, and cookery comes under the comprehensive head of "arts and sciences.") Both exhibit the same heedlessness of mere effect, and appear to have about an equal contempt for what the French term a *tour de force*. A degree of languor, almost amounting to indifference, seems to pervade both, and both achieve the most difficult triumphs in their art with so little effort that the uninitiated spectator remains almost unconscious that any thing uncommon has been accomplished. Both, in short, belong to that scarce and valuable class of public characters who seek rather to delight than astonish who appeal rather to the good sense and good taste of the few than the "ignorant wonder" of the many.

PLACIDE.

Doubtless three as good actors as Hilson, Barnes, and Placide, are to be found; but it would be extremely difficult to get three together with qualities so finely balanced so excellent, yet so dissimilar, that in whatever requisites one is comparatively poor, another is proportionably rich three who will play with equal spirit and effect in the same piece, and appear as frequently together without jostling each other. There is something pleasing, and to those who know any thing of the everlasting feuds and jealousies of a green−room, something astonishing in the uninterrupted harmony with which, season after season, these gentlemen, "labor in their vocation." They are a worthy triumvirate three public benefactors, to whom the citizens ought to be grateful; for their talents have often given them pleasure in exchange for care; and many a merry hour and joyous laugh has been the result of their exertions.

Four or five years ago, Placide's abilities were but little known. He had risen from the lowest walks of the drama, and, as is common in such cases, the admiration of the audience did not keep pace with his increasing merit. They were slow to believe that one whom they had long been in the habit of regarding as not above mediocrity, could ever attain excellence, and strangers were often astonished at the slight estimation in which he was held. This is human nature: we are unwilling to give up early impressions, or retract expressed opinions. Had a strange actor of equal merits and some reputation, appeared before the same audience, he would instantly have become an object of unmingled admiration. This, however, could not last, and the unequivocal ability displayed by Placide in some parts *commanded* praise praise attracted attention, and that was all that was wanted. Since that time he has steadily and rapidly advanced in public estimation he has never once receded, and his course is still onward.

To speak of Placide apart from the character he represents, is difficult. We know that there are a string of set phrases going the rounds of the press, concerning actors "identifying themselves with the part they play," and "losing themselves in the character they represent," &c. and, in some sense, this is true, seeing that they frequently lose themselves, the character, the author, and the audience; but in reality, there is not one man in a thousand who possesses the gift of making the audience forget the actor in the part. Even in Kean it was sometimes wanting. It is the highest kind of praise; and as it appears to be fast becoming a settled rule, that all praise, to be worth the having, must be in the superlative, a quality that is peculiar to the few, has been awarded without scruple to the million. Indeed, so very loosely and indiscriminately are these phrases applied, that we should not be surprised to see one of them tacked to a commendation of Barnes, who seldom or never "identifies" himself with any thing, but simply plays Barnes, let him appear in what he will; and so amusing and successful is he in that character, that he cannot do better than stick to it. But Placide has in truth the faculty of appearing to be the character he assumes; and we would instance as a strong proof of the soundness of this assertion, that of all the imitations of celebrated actors that have been given in this city, not one has been attempted of Placide. And why is this? For the simple reason that he has no peculiarities common to *all* his characters, and the imitation would not be recognized unless the audience had seen him in the part imitated. Not so with many Barnes, for instance. Let a good imitation of him be given in *any* character, and though nine−tenths of the audience have never seen him in that peculiar character, the general resemblance will be instantly appreciated.

In articles like the present, which must of necessity be brief, it would be impossible to enter into a minute examination of the various excellencies of Mr. Placide, in the wide range of parts in which he appears. There are

three distinct classes in which he is without an equal, namely, old men, or rather middle−aged gentlemen, drunken servants, and kind−hearted, simple country lads. As a sample of the three we would instance the Marquis in the Cabinet, Antonio in the Marriage of Figaro, and Zekiel Homespun in the Heir at Law. In the last he would probably be successful either at Drury Lane or Covent Garden. Upon the whole, he is a fine almost a faultless actor, with a rich natural vein of humor, free from the alloy of buffoonery.

BARNES.

It will not be easy for us to forget the first time we saw this actor. Going into the Park theatre one evening after the performance had commenced, we perceived a person on the boards conducting himself in what appeared to us a very extraordinary manner; though it is not easy to find words clearly to explain what that manner was. He was moving his body across the boards in a most eccentric fashion, throwing his limbs into all sorts of unimaginable positions, ogling, squinting, puffing out his cheeks, and alternately elongating and contracting the muscles of the thin and narrow face of which he was the owner, with the most ridiculous and ludicrous rapidity. The business of the stage was at a stand, and the other actors appeared to wait with exemplary patience for the termination of those curious proceedings; and then they, and this person in particular, played out the rest of the scene in a discreet and proper manner. The people around seemed to take all in good part; while we were lost in astonishment, and knew not which to wonder at most, the impudence of the actor, or the passiveness of the audience. Hinting as much to a gentleman in the vicinity, he smilingly replied that "it was Barnes;" the announcement of which piece of information he seemed to consider as a perfectly satisfactory explanation of what had taken place or of whatever might take place.

Verily, there is much truth in the saying, that "custom is second nature." When Clara Fisher first appeared in this country, every one noticed and talked about the slight lisp which it was then averred she had, though now, nine−tenths of her admirers will deny that any such peculiarity does, or ever did exist. So, though in a greater degree, with Barnes. Custom has so reconciled us to his ways, that we can at present sit and see the manoeuvres with which he intersperses his part, played off, scarcely conscious that they are the same which formerly excited our unmingled astonishment; and if asked to speak of him as we now see him, we should say, that he is one of the most amusing, extravagant, and extraordinary actors we have ever beheld. In the main, he is undoubtedly a man possessed of real sterling comic talent, though not of the most polished kind. He has all the spirit, drollery, and coarseness of one of Cruickshank's caricatures. His buffooneries (if for the lack of another term, so harsh a word may be applied,) are the best species of that bad genus, inimitable of their kind, and less offensive than those of any other actor; and he has so intermixed them with every thing he does, that there is no separating the good from the bad, the wheat from the tares, so that his best efforts are sprinkled with defects, and his worst marked with many redeeming qualities. No man takes a liberty with his audience so frequently as Barnes, and no man does it so well, Others stop half way, as if conscious that they were doing wrong, and fail; Barnes, on the contrary, treats the audience like an old friend places unlimited confidence in their good nature, and succeeds; for they seem to feel that it would be unkind to repay this confidence with any thing else than a laugh at his good, bad, or indifferent jokes.

It would be folly to say that Mr. Barnes was any thing like a faultless performer, but he is a great deal better than many who approach nearer that character. He is an original, and one whom you like sometimes, even in spite of your judgment: and, let him play what he will, his appearance is always welcome.

There are two classes of persons who form an undue estimate of Barnes. First, the vulgar, who admire prodigiously and applaud vociferously, the contortions and distortions of his visage, and are, for the most part, incapable of admiring any thing else; and, secondly, the over fastidious, who, pretending to an extraordinary purity of taste, judge him by his defects rather than by his merits, and, for a few unseemly excrescences, condemn a man of first−rate talents as merely a low actor. This is injustice in the highest degree. In nearly the whole of the extensive range of characters he sustains, the sterling ore is in the proportion of ten to one to the alloy; and in all

the shades of old men, he may be pronounced uniformly good. There is a truth in his conception, and even a minute delicacy of finish in his representation of the lowest and most degraded stages of humanity of extreme dotage and drivelling imbecility, that are superlatively fine. In old misers too, rascals clinging with desperate inveteracy to this world and its concerns, yet fearful and anxious about the future trembling at eternity and grasping at a guinea such as Nicholas, in Secrets Worth Knowing, or Silky, in the Road to Ruin, he is altogether unequalled: the tottering step the greedy, ghastly, and suspicious look and the sharp, broken, and querulous voice, form an impressive and pitiable picture of human nature; and yet Mr. Barnes's reputation is founded less on these than on far inferior efforts, such as Mawworm, &c. There is another class of old men, of a vigorous, passionate, and self−willed temperament, such as Restive in Turn Out, and Col. Hardy, in Paul Pry, in which he is nearly if not equally happy.

Upon the whole there is a very great deal to admire in Barnes, with scarcely any thing, when once familiar with him, that is really offensive. And his faults too are not altogether his own, but are in some measure continued, if not created, by the public. For instance, when, as Sir Peter Teazle, in the screen scene, he relates the unkindness of his wife, and is moved to tears, the audience invariably catch at the application of the handkerchief to his eyes as an infallible one for them to laugh, thinking that the griefs of Barnes must of necessity be ludicrous; and, do all he can, he cannot make them comprehend that it is possible for him to enact a part where it is necessary to go through a little decorous sorrow, and affect to shed tears in earnest. As it is very hard for a man to have his griefs laughed at, Barnes in turn laughs at grief; and a dose of him in the evening, taken the last thing before going to bed, is as good an antidote for the spleen as Colman's "Broad Grins."

HILSON.

We now come to the last, though assuredly not the least, of the comic trio, whose efforts, as much as any thing else, have gained for the Park that high character which it at present enjoys; for it is not the half−dozen appearances of an eminent performer that give an enduring reputation to a theatre, but the combined and well−directed efforts of a fixed company. There is a strange way of acquiring histrionic fame in this land, by a curious process denominated "starring," which is carried into effect somewhat in this manner: a man, after cogitating upon the subject, becomes impregnated with a high opinion of his own very moderate abilities, and determines forthwith to enlarge his sphere of action; he packs up his baggage and goes forth, scouring over the country in all directions, and becoming at intervals visible, for a few nights, first at one city and then at another; this continues for some time, when the gentleman returns, invested with all the privileges and immunities of a *star*, and impudently "lords it o'er his betters," though by what claim of metaphysical reasoning a man becomes more ably qualified to play Shakspeare or Sheridan by travelling a few hundred miles in a steamboat, is not exactly apparent. But so it is, and these luminaries at present abound. Stars, forsooth! (the use of this *slang* term is very disagreeable, but there is no helping it;) why nine−tenths of them are no better than tallow candles rush−lights who emit a feeble, twinkling ray, till they come in contact with some slight change in the breath of public favor, when they disappear on the instant, and nothing but smoke remains. They ought to be snuffed out by the dozen.

We have wandered away from the subject more immediately in hand, being filled with virtuous indignation against those theatrical pedlers, in whose behalf a great portion of the public sneer at their more modest and stationary brethren; as if locomotion were a virtue and a change of intellect was the consequence of a change of air. Mr. Hilson is no star, and the New−York people ought to be thankful for it; or what would they have done for their Nipperkins, Numpos, Figaros, Paul Prys, Drs. Ollapod and Pangloss, and a whole host of worthies that nobody else can play; together with a hundred parts that might be mentioned in which he is unrivalled! Hilson's humor is not of the sly, quiet, and unconscious kind, like Placide's nor of the broad and familiar, like Barnes' it is of a more bustling and vivacious quality, and in parts full of gaiety and motion, shifts and stratagems such as intriguing footmen or lying valets he is in his element. No man has a finer or quicker eye for the ridiculous: there are a number of things which take place in the business of the scene that do not admit of previous study, and

Hilson sees in a moment where a look or motion will add effect to an accident, or heighten the absurdity of a situation. This is of great advantage to him at all times, but more particularly in characters of a burlesque description, such as *Bombastes Furioso* and *Abrahamides*, which he performs to admiration.

But there is another ground on which Mr. Hilson may be taken, and on which he possesses an immense advantage over his two comic brethren, Barnes and Placide, namely, in the exhibition of strong deep feeling, and rough violent passions; and this is, perhaps, his most perfect line, being altogether free from the follies before noticed. What effect he gives to the dead−weight character of *Rolamo* in Clari! and in stern, blunt and unfortunate veterans, of every description, he has the field all to himself there is no competitor to contend with him. Who is there that has seen his *Robert Tyke*, and forgotten it? Unfortunately we never beheld the late John Emery in this, his favorite part, though we have Rayner, his successor at Covent Garden, and a number of others, but not one of them is to be compared with Hilson. This character is, perhaps, the best of Morton's crude conceptions. Tyke is a malefactor and a low and reckless vagabond, though still with some remnants of better feeling hanging about him; and, when his remorse is awakened by circumstances, it requires a person of no common mind to depict the passions and sufferings of the uneducated villain. There are plenty who appear in it that can display a superabundance of bodily exertion, and do very well if you will accept gesticulation for feeling that can rant and foam at the mouth that can look like ruffians, act like ruffians, and gabble bad Yorkshire; but all that is not playing Tyke. Very little is hazarded in saying, that, in the United States, there is but one man who can do justice to Robert Tyke, and that man is Thomas Hilson.

CLARA FISHER

When nature quits the even tenor of her way to form a prodigy, and manufactures clay out of the ordinary routine of business, to which long habit has accustomed her, she generally does herself no credit, but instead of a beauty spot, drops a blot upon the fair face of creation a wart an excrescence. Her commonest freaks in this way are giants and dwarfs learned pigs calves with two heads, which those with only one throng to see or calculating youths, like famous Master Bidder, who go through the arithmetic without flogging, and know by intuition that two and two make four. But of all her prodigies, the precocious theatrical prodigy is the most to be dreaded and avoided. It is in general a pert little creature, which has been taught to repeat certain words like a parrot, and drilled to imitate certain actions like a monkey, and is then stuck upon the stage for "children of a larger growth" to gape and wonder at, and applaud for no better reason than because it is six years old and two feet odd inches high, as if all man and womankind had not been, at one period of their lives, just as old and as high. To sit and witness the abortive attempts of such animalcules, when there are full grown men and women in the world, is about as sensible as to eat green fruit when one can get ripe. We always eschewed these small evils; and though having numerous opportunities, could never be prevailed upon, same few years back, to go and see the then little Miss Clara Fisher represent Gloster, "that bloody and devouring boar;" Hamlet, Shylock, or any other appropriate character; and hearing that she was on her way to this country, we thought Mr. Simpson had done a very foolish thing, and made many wise predictions to the effect that she would be found altogether worthless and good for nothing. Perhaps no one ever entered a theatre more full of prejudice than we did against the young and blooming girl, just bursting into womanhood, who at that moment came forward upon the stage, and dropped one of the most graceful curtsies that ever woman made, to the admiring audience. We expected to see something small, impertinent, and disagreeable; but instead, here was a sight of all others most grateful to the eye a beautiful female exerting herself to please, and a load of unkindly feelings was at once swept away. The first three acts of the piece (The Will) exhibited some agreeable acting, though nothing extraordinary; but when, in the fourth, she gave "The Bonnets of Blue," with all the fire and enthusiasm of a devoted follower of "Charlie the chief o' the clan," an instantaneous and total renunciation of all preconceived opinions took place; and before she had finished her personation of the four Mowbrays, we were thoroughly convinced that Clara Fisher was one of the most natural, charming, clever, sensible, sprightly actresses that ever bewitched an audience, and to that opinion we ever have since firmly adhered.

In form and feature Clara Fisher is neither dignified nor beautiful, but she is irresistibly fascinating, and that is better than all the dignity and beauty in the world. Her form is finely proportioned smoothly and gracefully rounded, with more of the Hebe than the sylph about it, and when in motion most flexible and waving. Her face, as was said of Mrs. Jordan's, "is all expression, without being all beauty." There is no word that will exactly characterize it: "pretty," is unmeaning, and it does not strictly come up to the idea conveyed by the word "handsome." It is at all times, however, a very charming face, even when in a state of calm repose; but when the passion of the scene stirs the mind within, and that mind is reflected in the countenance when the eloquent eye is lighted up by feeling, and the smooth cheeks clustered with smiles and dimples, then that face is indeed lovely. In appropriate gesture and action she is most "express and admirable." This is, in fact, one of her most prominent characteristics; and if we were asked in what particular Clara Fisher was superior to any other actress, we should answer, in the perfect grace and freedom of her motions. In this respect she is a little English Vestris; and if any one doubts it, let him pay particular attention to the singularly appropriate beauty of her action in singing the spirited Scotch ballad before alluded to: the toss of her head which accompanies the utterance of the word "hurrah," is precisely the one thing that Matthews cannot imitate.

She is one of nature's actresses. Perhaps no one ever so completely possessed the faculty of mobility, or entered with more keen enjoyment into the spirit of the part represented. Her whole soul appears to be in every thing she does, and we believe it is not only so in seeming, but in reality. From the infinite variety of characters in which she appears, it would exceed all reasonable bounds to enter into an analysis of them. The days of her *Richard* and *Shylock* are, it is to be hoped, over for ever, though there were many sensible things in both these parts correct conceptions and original and spirited readings, which older heads might adopt with advantage; but it was vexing to see a young and beautiful girl in such a part as Shylock, and the better she played it, the more provoking it was. In comedy there is a glorious and boundless prospect before her, and it is there she appears most perfectly at home. To the high−flown fashionable dames of genteel comedy she cannot as yet do justice, though the time may come when she will do so. One thing is against her. In the lady of high life there is much that is artificial. Now Miss Fisher is *too natural* for such characters; her spirits are too wild and untameable to be "cabin'd, cribbed, confined, bound in," by the ordinances of a highly polished state of society. Her fine ladies are consequently full of brilliant points excellent in detached scenes and sentences, but not in keeping as a whole. In parts where nature has fair play, such as *Peggy* in the Country Girl, or *Phebe* in Paul Pry, "none but herself can be her parallel." How different from these, yet how delightful in itself, was her *Viola* in Twelfth Night. We were never before so conscious of the extreme sweetness of her "small, delicate voice," as when giving utterance to the exquisite poetry which Shakspeare has put into the mouth of "brown Viola." It was in truth "most musical, most melancholy."

The reputation of Clara Fisher has, in a great measure, been built on her representation of the more eccentric parts of the drama, such as the *Mowbrays*, *Little Pickles*, &c. and of their kind they are perfect specimens of dramatic excellence. Some may think these are at the best but trifling affairs; we do not. A delineation true to nature is a rare thing, and well worth looking after in whatever shape it is to be found. Miss Fisher has rather a *penchant* for male attire, which is not to be wondered at, for it becomes her well: all other women whom we have seen wear the inexpressibles in public, cannot forget their sex, but betray throughout a smirking consciousness that they are feminine, and are of course for the most part awkward and embarrassed; she appears to forget her dress and all other minor considerations in the character she is representing.

Before coming to a conclusion, a few words about her singing. Perhaps no one with such limited powers of voice, ever equalled Miss Fisher in the effect which she gives to a song. She not only sings it, but acts it in the most arch and spirited or tender and impressive manner. Her face is a mirror where every sentiment of humor or feeling expressed in the verse is reflected. What a delightful piece of pleasantry is her "Fall not in love;" and how tame and vapid any of her little simple ballads sound when sung afterwards by vocalists of superior pretensions. But there is no end to her varied qualifications, and there seems to be scarcely any limit to her powers.

RONZI VESTRIS.

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  When you do dance, I wish you
A wave o'the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that; move still still so, and own
No other function
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Shakspeare.

We were born upon a spot of earth where feet are used for prosaic rather than poetical purposes, and where they are looked upon merely as appendages which it would be singular and inconvenient to be without. Independent of the ordinary business of life, walking and running matches, leaping, or any other hardy and vigorous exercises, were the affairs in which their services were commonly required; though, to be sure, the people did at times assemble, and voluntarily undergo and perform a violent and eccentric motion, by them termed dancing; but, as regarded all the graceful uses to which feet, and the limbs to which they are more immediately attached, might be brought by scientific cultivation, not an idea was entertained, and not a glimmering of light had been diffused on the subject. Dancing was there in a primitive state, or rather, it was worse like the Russians, hovering between barbarism and civilization, with all the bad properties of both, and little of the good of either. The freedom and untaught grace of nature were gone, without any of the beautiful combinations and surprising achievements of art being substituted in their place. To a spectator, it seemed as if the parties engaged (the men at least) were, without any perceivable reason, subjecting themselves to a rough and somewhat disagreeable exercise. By a violent exertion of the muscles, the body was forced bolt−upright into the air, whence, as soon as the impetus had ceased, it returned as speedily as possible to the floor, which it no sooner touched, than another desperate effort again propelled it upward, and so on, until nature was exhausted. We had indeed at times misgivings if this could really be dancing; an art that was said to consist of a series of the most skilful and picturesque movements; and as we read of the Asiatic girls, the Greeks, Herodias, Mercandotti, Deshays, and others eminent in that line, we marvel exceedingly; but any expressed opinion on the subject was instantly put down by a reference to the high professional character of the two gentlemen who had the superintendence of the heels of the springing generation in that portion of the globe.

In the course of time we beheld many professional artists (English ones) at theatres and other public places, and always felt relieved when they got through their work; and the performance of the Winnebago Indians nearly convinced us that dancing in all nations, whether savage or civilized, was a foolish abomination. The appearance, however, of Hutin, and the French *corps de ballet*, threw some light upon the subject. The dancers of a nation of dancers were brought to the American shores to expound the mysteries of the *Academie de la Musique*. The essence, the quintessence of dancing, was what was expected, and had Vestris never appeared, it might still have passed for such. Here, at least, was some approach to an union of grace and agility; while the boldness and novelty of the spectacle threw the audience into a state of most undignified surprise. They did not know exactly what to make of it, but took it for granted that it must be superlatively fine, and consequently counterfeited an exuberance of admiration; but when, in the *pas seul* of "I've been roaming," Hutin came bounding like a stag from the top to the bottom of the stage in about three springs, the connoisseurs in the pit were really amazed; they looked into each other's faces for information, but not finding any, grinned a smile of approbation; and many were heard to give utterance to the oracular exclamation of "no mistake!" a term by which no small portion of the inhabitants of this city intimate their sense of excellence in any shape.

But Vestris, the exquisite Vestris appeared, and all that had gone before seemed poor in comparison. With a form cast in nature's happiest mould, and a face to match; with "Motions graceful as a bird's in air;" with a step as free as fancy, agile as an antelope, and elastic as a bow, who was to be compared with her? When contrasted with her, the movements of all the rest were sharp and angular. Their performance was a collection of brilliant points hers one uninterrupted piece of perfection. We did not want to see her dance, only to behold her in motion. She could even do that hardest of all things violate nature gracefully; for it must be owned that some of her attitudes are

such as nature never dreamt of, though this is a fault, perhaps, inseparable from the French school. Of the faults of that school she has less than any of the rest, especially the practice of twirling rapidly round on one foot to please the vicious taste, and gain the good−for−nothing applause of those whose ignorant wonder is excited by this vulgar and marvelously ungraceful trick. In the slow parts of some of the dances her action is in reality the very "poetry of motion:" the swell and fall of the summer sea the waving grace of the rich meadow when the breeze passes gently over it the peculiar sweep of the branches of the willow, which, even at their largest growth, seem constructed of the most delicate fibres or, indeed, any thing that is most beautiful in motion, is, at times, not more beautiful than Vestris. And, as the music takes a quicker and bolder measure, with what nerve and confidence she spurns the boards and throws herself in air! When we think of it, we look at the pedestals on which our own trunk is supported, and "inly ruminate" what quantity of cultivation would be necessary to enable them to accomplish such feats!

There is another advantage in seeing Vestris, particularly to persons whose ideas, like our own, are involved in more than Egyptian darkness concerning *pirouettes*, *entrechats*, &c. and who might expose their ignorance and get into an awkward dilemma by asserting that Estelle was better than Ravenot, or Ravenot better than Estelle. When Vestris is before them they are safe. They can lean back at their ease assume a knowing and intelligent look nod complacently at the execution of any surprising manæuvre, and indulge in the most sweeping eulogiums without fear of committing themselves; for she is "such a dancer Where men have eyes and feelings she must answer."

RICHINGS.

Notwithstanding the manifold dramatic sins and improprieties of this great man and multifarious actor, he is by no means a disagreeable or unentertaining personage. Some of his efforts are highly amusing; and at all times he at least never fails in securing his own most decided approbation, as is quite evident from the everlasting smile of selfcomplacency which irradiates his very good−looking countenance; and, be it remarked, that in these captious, fault−finding, universal−diffusion−of−knowledge times, when every one who turns over an author or looks at an actor or picture, feels in duty bound to furnish forth his mite of carping criticism, in order to make manifest the preternatural acuteness it has pleased heaven to invest him with, a confirmed habit of self−approval is by no means an uncomfortable quality. It is really a pleasure to any man who delights in witnessing the happiness of his fellow−creatures, to see Mr. Richings make his entry on the stage in a character which requires that he should be arrayed in goodly apparel. How happy, how exuberantly happy he is! Joy sparkles in his eyes, and his physiognomy is radiant with smiles! Perhaps the individual in the play whom he undertakes to represent, is some poor unfortunate, afflicted with debt or other dire distress. But what of that? Is any person so unreasonable as to expect Mr. Richings will for that hang his nether lip, and look dolorously at the audience? No his face is an index of his mind gladness reigns *there*, and the sorrows of the personage whose name and situation he assumes, are far too remote and abstracted to counterbalance the inspiriting feelings produced by a well−fitting fashionable coat and an unimpeachable pair of inexpressibles. And who will say that this is copying nature abominably? Copying nature! why it is nature itself, as may be seen exemplified in a hundred instances, with a few slight modifications, any fine day on the shady side of Broadway. Yet, for all this, the stage−manager at the Park will sometimes set this gentleman this very Mr. Richings, to play tragedy. Misjudging Mr. Barry! Search for some lean bilious wretch, to speak blank verse and administer arsenic. Is this a man to "move the waters," or awake the tender feelings by dabbling in the pathetic, and rehearsing his griefs and sorrows? His griefs and sorrows! why the audience would look in his well−conditioned frontispiece, and see at once that it was a palpable untruth a barefaced attempt to impose upon their sympathies. Still, he is at times compelled to do this, which perturbs his spirit very much, and causes him to grow furious, and then he does so "roar, that it would do any man's heart good to hear him;" and it does do the hearts of many good and the ears of many good, who delight in, and are excited by, loud sounds; and they pronounce it "great," and clap their hands, as much as to say, "let him roar again, let him roar again.'

As a vocalist Mr. Richings is rather distinguished by force than sweetness; and as a comedian, many of his efforts, like Cumberland's comedies, are not to be laughed at. There is a fine balance of mental and physical qualifications in him: if at times his sentences are badly put together, and his periods inelegantly turned, his shoulders might furnish hints to a statuary in both those respects; and though his conceptions be ever so faulty, a more faultless leg cannot be conceived. Indeed, in personal appearance, he is model of a man. In the mental department he has sundry objectionable properties, the greatest of which is an over−abundance of facetiousness, which finds vent in the shape of manufactured pieces of pleasantry that are ever and anon thrown in the face of the audience; some of those extempore coruscations at times elicit a laugh from a few choice spirits, who are particularly quick at catching any thing that sounds like a joke, though the majority are generally at a loss to discover in what the jest consists; and this practice has the unfortunate tendency of occasionally leading to the belief that Mr. Richings, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, has, at times, "no more wit than a christian or an ordinary man." Like that immortal knight too, he looks as if he were "a great eater of beef," and perchance that "does harm to his wit."

Altogether, however, Mr. R. is a useful performer, and evidently strives to please. From a very miserable actor he has already become quite a respectable one, and in some parts has really evinced considerable comic talents. Besides, he has been a long time at the Park threatre, and all who have been there for any considerable period, even the worst (amongst whom we are far from classing Mr. R.) acquire from the good company that surrounds them and the audience before which they appear, a certain look and manner of conducting themselves, that give them the appearance of gentlemen, at least comparatively speaking. When Mr. Richings transported himself to the regions of the La Fayette, he actually moved like a demi−god among the scum and refuse that latterly congregated there. It is to be hoped he will not again migrate from his present quarters. We should be sorry to miss his good−humoured, good−looking face, and his unique manner of doing some things. Besides, he is an improving actor, and may he long continue so.

MRS. WHEATLEY.

The clever and facetious author of "Sayings and Doings," in one of his admirable tales, makes a country manager remark, that "in the theatrical profession heroines and sentimental young ladies are as plentiful as blackberries, but that a good old woman is invaluable; and all who are tolerably conversant with the affairs of the stage, very well know, that in one respect, at least, the order of nature is reversed, and that a fine old woman is more desirable than a young one. It is not difficult to account for this. We think the observation may be hazarded that females, generally speaking, prefer dimples to wrinkles; and so the young ladies very naturally refuse to anticipate the time when nature will compel them to appear as old ones, and the old ladies, whose ideas and reminiscences are juvenile, as pertinaciously object to personate any thing but young ones, thinking, doubtless, it would be folly to surrender into the hands of youth and inexperience, those parts which time and practice has so well enabled them to perform. Bent on charming to the last, we have seen, with fear and trembling, a very fat old woman of fifty as Juliet, lolling over the frail and creaking balcony, while a short, pursy, and somewhat asthmatic Romeo came waddling to his love, puffing out "How softly sweet sound lover's tongues by night!"

The truth is, that the personation of old women is a very thankless branch of theatrical business, and the same quantity of ability which, employed in it, meets with comparative neglect, would, in a more enticing line of character, draw down thunders of applause. This may in some degree acccount for the meagre and scanty mention which is made of Mrs. Wheatley by the press of this city. She is seldom noticed, and when she is, it is generally in one of those unmeaning commendations which are at intervals dealt out to every worthless appendage of a green−room, such as she "was quite at home," or "went through her part with spirit," or any other ready−coined phrase. For our own part, we have the highest opinion of Mrs Wheatley, and think there is little ventured in saying, that she is not only the best actress in her line on this continent, but the best beyond all comparison; and in all the theatres in which, in various parts, we have occasionally been present, out of London we have never seen her equal. Where is there another Mrs. Malaprop in this country? Or indeed, in all the range of ridiculous old ladies, who, like her, can give the height of absurdity without the taint of vulgarity? There is all the difference in

the world between making such a character as Mrs. Malaprop a coarse, ignorant old woman, and a foolish old lady. And herein lies the excellence of Mrs. Wheatley; however her "nice derangement of epithets" may betray her ignorance, her appearance and manners show she is not one of the *canaille,* but familiar at least with the forms and manners of a drawing−room. In the composition of her dress too, from "top to toe" there is not a vulgar curl or color. But it is not in this line alone that Mrs. W. can lay claims to distinction. Her talents are as versatile as they are excellent, and her chambermaids, if not marked by the same evident superiority, have a pertness and spirit about them that are always amusing. There is one character that she plays, (a very disagreeable one) which in her hands is one of the most perfect efforts we have witnessed on the boards of a theatre, viz. *Mrs. Subtle* in Paul Pry. Every expression of her countenance, and every modulation of her voice, are imbued with the spirit of art and demure hypocrisy.

There is another thing worthy of remark. Mrs. Wheatley, though the representative of age, is herself in the prime of life and full vigor of intellect. This is an advantage as great as it is rare; for the line of character in which she appears, is generally used as a dernier resort by actresses, who are themselves too old to appear in any thing else, and who bring to their task confirmed habits, and jaded and worn out powers of mind and body. According to the common course of nature, it will be long before the public will have to regret this as being the case with Mrs. Wheatley; and even when time shall have laid his unsparing hand upon her, her excellence in the execution of those parts, will have become so much a matter of habit, that only the physical force and energy will be wanting.

The faults of this lady are so few, that it is scarcely worth while pointing them out. The greatest is, that she is not always proof against the applause of the more noisy part of the audience; so that when she does any thing particularly well, and a clapping of hands ensues, she wishes to do more, and is in the habit of spreading out the folds of her ample and antique garments, and flouncing about the stage more than is exactly necessary. As long, however, as Mr. Simpson retains the services of Mrs. Wheatley in the Park company, that theatre will be possessed of an attraction which no other establishment can, at present, or is likely to equal.

BARRY AND WOODHULL.

These two performers are as opposite as the antipodes, and we place them together for the sake of contrast. Their style of acting is as dissimilar as may be. Woodhull is as unbending as iron Barry as yielding as wax. In the expression of passion, Woodhull, like a flint, must be struck sharply before he emits a spark of fire while Barry, like a rocket, is off in a blaze, at the slightest touch. The one is as hard as granite the other as flexible as silk; and if, by any process, the qualities of the two could be compounded together, a fine actor would be the result. In melo−dramas, where murders have to be committed, or any other unlawful transaction carried on, they mostly hunt in couples. Both are generally scoundrels, but scoundrels with a difference. Woodhull is the stanch, obdurate villain Barry the weak and wavering sinner. The one has "no compunctious visitings of nature" the other is "too full o' the milk of human kindness, to catch the nearest way." Barry murders like a novice, while Woodhull does his work with the easy self−possession of a professional gentleman. In the end, too, when poetical justice comes to be awarded, they consistently die in character the one marches to the gallows as "cool as a cucumber," while the other in some fit of repentance, cheats the law by bursting a blood−vessel, or going off in a fit of apoplexy. For the truth of all this we appeal to nine−tenths of the melo−dramas that have been or may be enacted at the Park theatre, in which these gentlemen have heretofore appeared or may hereafter appear.

Mr. Barry is an actor with many faults, but still one that may safely be called a good actor a title which, when fairly deserved, a man may be proud of, for it implies the possession of much and varied ability. He is a good actor, and there is nothing to prevent his being a better. Nature has given him a handsome face, a graceful person, and a full and mellow voice. Added to these advantages, his conception of his part is generally correct, and his execution spirited. The great fault of Mr. Barry is exaggeration exaggeration in every variety of shape; but principally exaggeration in action, and this pervades, more or less, every thing he does. When he should be out of temper, he is in a passion, and when he should be in a passion, he is in a frenzy; when he should tremble for a

moment, he shakes for a minute; and when flourishing a sword or any thing else, where once would do, he invariably does it twice; and so on, even to the veriest trifle, the same spirit exists. In some parts he is a complete fever and ague; and in characters where he has to look upon a spectre, an injured friend, or any thing of that sort, he daubs his face particularly under the eyes with some vile composition which gives him the appearance of an animated corpse: a new way, we presume of painting the passions. When Mr. Barry has a mind, he can do what not one in a hundred can, that is, read poetry properly. He pronounces distinctly, minds his stops, accentuates his words with judgment, and modulates the tones of his voice with good effect; but let any of the *dramatis personæ* put this same Mr. Barry in a passion, and off he goes, laying, without discretion, a most astounding emphasis on every second or third word, which makes the dialogue jolt along like a hard−trotting horse; a proceeding which gains him a good deal of applause and no credit.

We have now found all the fault we can consistently with truth, with Mr. Barry, and have dwelt so much the longer on what we consider his failings, because he has good qualities enough to make it well worth while to tell him of his bad ones; and moreover, because those bad ones are of such a nature as could be easily amended. With "all his imperfections on his head," he has few equals, and no superior here as a melo−dramatic actor; and there are parts of a higher grade where his besetting sins are kept under by the nature of the character; such as the Duke Aranza, in the Honey Moon, which, we think he plays better than any man in the country. There is also a species of genteel comedy in which he is very agreeable.

We have but little space left for remarks on that much−enduring man, Mr. Woodhull. And what can be said of him, more than that he is one of the most useful and ill−used actors that ever trod the boards of a theatre! Who can particularize Mr. Woodhull's line of character? It is enough to make the head ache to think of what he has to go through in a single month. A few weeks ago we hinted at his blood−thirsty propensities on the stage, and he still goes on adding to his dramatic crimes; qut this is only a single branch of his extensive business. He plays old misers and young spendthrifts, greybeards and lovers, walking gentlemen and half−pay officers, soldiers, sailors, Irishmen, Scotchmen, Dutchmen, Jews, Gentiles, French tailors and Indian savages; and all this work is done without offence; and most of it with satisfaction to the audience. What incalculable quantities of trash have to pass through his unfortunate brain and be impressed upon his memory! What floods of nonsense have to issue from his mouth! Night after night, week after week, month after month, and year after year in play, in interlude, and in farce, there is Mr. Woodhull! and yet, notwithstanding the wear and tear that his intellect must have suffered from such courses, his brain appears untouched his sense continues perfect, and he yet goes through his multifarious business with more propriety and rationality than many a wouldbe star.

MRS. HILSON.

There is no actress who has run the risk of injuring a well−earned reputation more than this lady. She plays all and every thing; and though we should be the last to advocate the whims and airs of actors, in refusing parts which *they* consider beneath them, or unsuited to their abilities, yet there is no reason why any of them should absolutely sacrifice themselves in the cause of the theatre. We have seen Mrs. Hilson, in a short space of time, play Ophelia, Dolly Bull, and Lady Macbeth, together with various other incongruities; yet, in our estimation, Mrs. Hilson is by no means a lady of versatile abilities. She has not the faculty of mobility, and, except in a limited degree, is not at home either in comedy, tragedy, or farce; and yet there are a hundred parts in which she is far superior to any one else. When we remark that Mrs. Hilson is not at home either in comedy, tragedy, or farce, we mean in the broad and extreme parts of each. Nature has denied her the physical requisites for such efforts, and the exhibition of violent passions or emotions of any kind is not her forte; but in beings like Desdemona, she is unequalled in this country. We have never seen her Imogen in Cymbeline, but have heard it highly spoken of; and a woman that can do justice to such characters as Desdemona and Imogen, ought not to care about excelling in any thing else.

Her Ophelia is beautiful, and she performs even Lady Macbeth better than a host of others with more propriety than Mrs. Sloman, (who by the way, does it very badly,) though perhaps not so effectively; yet she can no more

make it what it ought to be, than her husband can do justice to the "worthy thane of Cawdor." She has not strength and energy for tragedy she can portray tenderness, but not agony grief, but not despair. In comedy she is happier, but still not quite at home, and appears to us constitutionally unfitted for it; her temperament is too melancholy to enter into the irrepressible buoyancy of comedy; and though, having an abundance of common sense, a thing a good deal in request upon the boards, she does all she undertakes very well, yet her gaiety, like Clara Fisher's efforts in the pathetic, is only put on; it does not come from or go directly to the heart both of them appear warring against their nature. Mrs. Hilson cannot assume the dashing airs and affectation of a lady of quality, or the pertness and volubility of a chambermaid, but in such parts as Mary in John Bull, as Lady Amaranth in Wild Oats, and hundreds of a similar cast in the Emily Worthingtons and Julia Faulkners of the drama, she is far, very far superior to any actress on this side of the Atlantic. Her heroines do not smack of the stage; the loud protestation and exaggerated action are not there: on the contrary, the quiet grace in every movement, and the sweet and simple earnestness with which the sentiments are delivered, render such personations perfect, and leave her without a rival in this class of character. We never saw what we could call a wrong conception on the part of Mrs. Hilson; and she has always given more pleasure and less dissatisfaction than any one who ever appeared in such a number of characters. There is one thing, for which indeed she ought not to be praised, because it is no more than the performance of a simple duty, but which at least deserves mention in consequence of the flagrant neglect of others, and that is, she always takes the trouble of committing her part to memory, and gives the words of the author instead of thrusting forward foolish impertinencies on the spur of the moment.

MISS KELLY.

This popular actress for popular she undoubtedly is, though why she became so, passes our comprehension has attained considerable celebrity in a class of characters hitherto very inefficiently represented on this side of the Atlantic, namely, the fashionable ladies of genteel comedy. That Miss Kelly's admirers may be in the right and we in the wrong, is very possible, but we do not think so; and there is more plain dealing than presumption in saying this, because every one, whatever deference or humility he may profess, will secretly prefer his individual opinion to that of the rest of the world. Miss Kelly may play a dashing, dissipated woman or a vixen to admiration, but she does not play a lady. Do females in high life perambulate their drawing−rooms in the fashion that Miss Kelly does the stage? or when they cannot have exactly their own way, do they traverse their apartments with the Bobadil strides with which she tramples over the shrinking boards? We always thought, that whatever might be said of the morals of fashionable females, their manners were more polished and fascinating than those of any other of heaven's creatures. Is it so with those of this lady? Her warmest admirers will probably hesitate to answer in the affirmative? That Miss Kelly frequently conceives correctly and executes forcibly, no one will deny; and there is a heedless gaiety and unceasing flow of animal spirits about her representations which carry her triumphantly over many faults and difficulties. But, in general, her portraitures are exaggerated and overdone; instead of a delicately finished picture, you see a broad caricature the colours are laid on with a trowel instead of a pencil and a perpetual striving after effect is the predominating trait in all.

Of Miss Kelly's Beatrice, though it be heresy to say so, we do not think highly. The spirit which pervades it belongs more to the character of the shrewish Catharine than the lively Beatrice; and the gross violation of the text and meaning of the author and that author Shakspeare at the conclusion of the scene where she desires Benedict to "kill Claudio" gives him her hand to kiss giggles, and bids him kiss it again runs to the side wing and gallops back, telling him to "kiss it again," and to be sure and "kill Claudio *dead*" all which proceedings and language Shakspeare never dreamt of, is an awful and sacrilegious piece of business; and the thunders of applause which it generally brings down, indicate that the house contains a great number of very discriminating people.

But whatever diversity of opinion may exist concerning this lady's acting, we should think there could be none about what, out of courtesy we suppose, must be called her singing. She doubtless receives great applause at the conclusion, and with some reason, for we dare say all are thankful that it is well over; but unfortunately some of

the citizens, transported beyond the bounds of sober discretion at their emancipation, are so uproariously grateful, that it is mistaken for an *encore*; the lady re−enters curtsies gracefully, and poor Mr. De Luce, as in duty bound, gives the ominous tap which preludes another infliction upon the horrorstricken, bewildered, rash, but well−meaning audience. Then may be heard a rush an opening of box doors and gentlemen are seen precipitating themselves with heedless violence into the lobbies to speak with a friend, buy oranges, absorb spirituous liquids, or any thing else, for the space of ten minutes. There is a pithy proverb which intimates that "a burnt child dreads the fire," and the audience will in time doubtless become more wary. Miss Kelly is very fond of the Mermaid Song; if she would take the trouble of listening once to Mrs. Austin's delightful manner of giving it, it might have the beneficial effect of stopping any further operations on that piece of music.

We have spoken plainly of this lady for two reasons: first, because she is as popular as ever, and therefore need not shrink from having her merits canvassed; had she been declining in the public estimation, we should have been the last to say any thing about her, but she still claims to rank as a *star*, and one of the first magnitude too, and therefore of course lays herself the more open to remark; she enjoys all the privileges and immunities of that station, probably receiving a more liberal remuneration for half a dozen evenings than is awarded to actresses of what we consider decidedly superior abilities, such as Mrs. Hilson and Mrs. Wheatley, for months of unremitting exertion, and with these substantial advantages she ought at least to take the slight disadvantages of such a station. In the second place, Miss Kelly, from appearances, is a woman of spirit, and one not likely to be popped off by a paragraph like John Keats the poet, who, in coroner's language, "came by his death in consequence of a criticism."

MRS. SHARPE.

This lady, though a favorite with the public, scarcely holds that place in their estimation which might be expected from her varied and manifold qualifications. The parts, to be sure, in which she generally appears, do not admit of any brilliant display of talent, and therefore Mrs. Sharpe's sensible and spirited manner of performing them only elicits a moderate share of approbation, though the aggregate pleasure derived from her performances is probably greater than from those of many who claim a loftier station in the profession. She is the Mrs. Woodhull of the Park theatre that is, she holds the same rank in the feminine department, which that worthy gentleman does in the masculine, and is, like him, endowed in a high degree, with the yankee faculty of turning her hand to any thing. She is a very fair singer, an excellent "walking lady," and a capital comedian. Besides, she has somewhat of a "genius for the tragic," or rather, a tolerable knack at declamation, and scolds in blank verse "with good emphasis and discretion." The necessities of the theatre, we presume, caused her to appear once or twice as Elvira during the past season; and although it is a character altogether out of her line, she performed it better than any woman we have seen attempt it on these boards. She looked well as the haughty Spanish beauty "disdain and scorn rode sparkling in her eyes" and in the fourth act she rated Pizarro in good round terms. This, however, is not the department in which Mrs. S. must hope to attain excellence. In comedy she is always happy, and divides the chambermaid business with the inimitable Mrs. Wheatley, without losing much by the comparison. She also takes charge of the characters of nearly all the young and middle−aged ladies. Now, there are plenty of actresses who undertake to do the same thing, but unfortunately they cannot change their manners with their dress, and continue just as vulgar in silk as they were in calico; being evidently nothing better than dressedup chambermaids. This is not the case with Mrs. Sharpe, she can scold, lie, and flirt like a waitingwoman, and look, speak, and act like a lady she can be boisterous in the kitchen, and stately in the hall and can jilt a footman or reject a knight with equal skill and dexterity. By the way, she has an uncommonly picturesque manner of repulsing improper overtures; when playing an innocent maid, wife, or widow, and any of the stage libertines go down on their knees and unfold their wicked intentions, she has a style of curling her lip, flashing her eye, folding her arms, and drawing up her person with an air of insulted virtue, which must produce a prodigious moral effect upon the kneeling sinner and the attentive audience. In parts, likewise, where an union of good acting and tolerable singing is required, such as Georgette Clairville or Donna Anna, in Don Giovanni, it would be difficult to find her equal.

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY−THREE.

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"Summer has flown on swallow's wings,
       And earth has buried all her flowers;
No more the lark the linnet sings
       But silence sits in faded bowers."
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Spring has ripened into summer, summer has mellowed into autumn, autumn has withered into winter, and now that old vagabond, eighteen hundred and thirty−two (who took away Sir Walter Scott, and spared the emperor Nicholas) has but a few more hours to linger before father Time ejects him out of existence, and hands him over to oblivion for peaceable interment. Well, let him go. The hearty, vigorous eighteen hundred and thirty−three will soon be of age, and come into possession of his estate, this snug, cozy little earth, on which we get our dínners, and perform other pleasurable functions, but at which some people of bad tastes and superfine imaginations pretend to turn up their ungrateful noses, without knowing exactly why. To tell the truth, it is time the property changed hands. There can be no doubt that of late months it has somewhat deteriorated; for, though the old gentleman, who is shortly about to mingle with the shadows of the past, introduced some salutary *reforms* into certain small portions of his estate, causing divers peculating and unrighteous stewards to resign their trusts; yet a malignant imp, named Cholera, gave him such a fright in the early part of his career, that he never did good afterwards; his nerves tumbled to pieces, he became light−headed, and committed the oddest vagaries imaginable, so that all things went to wreck and ruin; his land remained untilled, his ships lay rotting in his harbors, and none of his tenants prospered excepting doctors, sextons, gravediggers, apothecaries, and undertakers. It is to be hoped that the young heir will bestir himself vigorously, and put things to rights; that he will drown the cholera in the Pacific, "deeper than did ever plummet sound;" chain up the ferocious and insatiable northern bear in his own appropriate regions of darkness and desolation; allow those pugnacious animals, the Dutch and Belgians, to knock their heads together until they find out what they are quarrelling about; or else hand their rulers Homer's "battle of the frogs and mice," for their especial edification; and take strong measures generally, to prevent his larger tenants from eternally falling out amongst themselves, and pulling to pieces and destroying each other.

The weather is appropriate. Old eighteen hundred and thirty−two, thou hast lived amid a peck of troubles, and art about to expire in storm and tempest. The stern north wind child of the pole has rushed from his "regions of thick−ribbed ice," and is roaring and yelling around my domicile, like some infuriated demon: as the "spirit of the storm" occasionally loosens a tile from the roof, or a slate from the chimney, and precipitates it with inconsiderate violence into the street, the important truth is forcibly impressed upon my mind for future guidance, that, "on such a night as this," the middle of the pavement is indubitably to be preferred to the otherwise more eligible footwalk, by such as are in favor of prolonged vitality. Ever and anon, too, the blusterer sinks from his high tone into a low, lengthened wail, and then sweeping suddenly round some abrupt angle, rises in a succession of whirling eddies, emitting a scream as of one in pain, which is not only highly poetical, but strikingly dramatic only it makes the chimney smoke, and causes the unfortunate writer to sit ruminating in an atmosphere of uncomfortable density.

It is newyear eve! a season that I, for one, always felt an especial delight in. There is about it a mixture of mirth and sadness, of joyous anticipation and melancholy regret, that suits one of my temperament. It is a fitting time, too, for cogitation, and the birth of important and solemn thoughts. A great change is taking place. One year more from our slender stock is on the point of rolling away, to "join the past eternity." Time is about to close another volume of his works, in which our good and bad deeds are registered, and to lay it quietly by amid the records of what has been, until it is wanted for final inspection. It is "iron−clasped and iron−bound," and can no more be opened by us. What is written there can never be erased the slurs and blotches must all go and that word *never* ought to make us pause before we stain with foul thoughts, or unmeet actions, the fair clear page of the daybook, which to−morrow will be laid before us.

Newyear eve! It is a season for calm, melancholy retrospection for nearly all retrospection is melancholy the mind naturally reverts to the past, and images of things that have almost faded away and become forgotten

dreams, amid the bustle and hurry of business, and the small cares and meannesses of life crowd vividly back upon the memory.

"The eyes that shone, Now dimm'd and gone," beam on us again through the long vista of departed years, though even with a kinder and mellower lustre than of old; and the good hearts and true, that the cold green grass grows silently over, are again beside us. They, *the dead*, welcomed in many a newyear with us once, were glad and joyous, and passed the bottle and the jest, and they are gone! The songs they used to sing, and the tones and inflections of their voice, all their little whims and peculiarities, become again clear and distinct. Yet they to whom those things appertained, fine, hearty pieces of flesh and blood, with whom we were hand and glove, and from whom we could not live apart, are really gone dead and gone! and, alas! for human nature that it should be so, unless at seasons like the present, when a gush of better feeling calls them back, almost forgotten!

Among the genial and good old customs prevalent about this time, one, of friends gathering together on a newyear eve, to take their farewell of the departing and welcome the coming year, it is to be hoped will not speedily pass out of fashion. There is more refinement about the conviviality on such an occasion than is common at other seasons; and recollections of the changes and mutations that have taken place since last they met to chant old ditties to "the year that is gone and awa'," have the effect of softening down the otherwise too boisterous hilarity prevalent at festive meetings. And what an expansion of the heart, what an influx of kindly feelings takes place; what old and delightful reminiscences are awakened! With what joyous warmth one good fellow pledges another, and with what a depth of feeling is the common toast, "to absent friends," given, as each man yearningly thinks, as he slowly raises the glass to his lips, of the dear and distant. Such a scene may not, indeed, be exactly to the taste of the stern and unflinching moralist, the retailer of terse aphorisms and sage prudential saws and maxims, "One to whose smooth−rubbed soul can cling, Nor form nor feeling, great or small; A reasoning, self−sufficient thing, An intellectual all−in−all." But for all that, it is a scene at which wisdom need not frown, and where virtue and cheerfulness might with great propriety take a glass together.

The newyear day itself. Who will say that happiness is not good for man; and who will say that there is not a greater quantity to be had at a cheaper rate on this day than on almost any other? The atmosphere seems impregnated with the delicious essence. Men smile instinctively as they pass along the streets; and if the ice thereon happens to play them a slippery trick, and they tumble, they complacently gather themselves together again, and go on their way rejoicing; it is newyear−day, and they are not to be put out of humor. Fires blaze brighter in the parlor so do ladies' eyes; and kitchens emit odors to which those of "Araby the blest," are faint and powerless; inasmuch as they are not only delicious in themselves, but furnish hints of a higher state of felicity, which "the coming on of time," (dinner−time,) will probably perfect. I know not any place where this day is more liberally, pleasantly, and judiciously "kept up," than in New−York. I admire, in an especial degree, the custom of the fair damosels of Manahatta arraying themselves in their most inviting habiliments, and staying at home to dispense unto their several male acquaintances, as they call, generous, exhilarating cordials, or coffee and other sobrieties, as may suit their respective inclinations. It is, however, a trying day for the gentlemen, who have to effuse all the good things they can invent, borrow, or steal, in order to keep up their character for sprightliness, so that there is often a much greater expenditure of wit, than many of the parties can prudently afford.

And yet, despite all this, I am afraid that newyear−day, and other old−fashioned celebrations of the sort, are rather getting into disrepute. They are regarded by many as fragments of ancient barbarism musty relics remnants of the absurdities of the dark ages, which ought and must, (to quote the slang of the day,) give way before the rapidly increasing spread of intelligence and civilization. And really, the world is getting so very wise, and polished, and polite, that in a little time there will be no such thing as fun or feeling left in it. It may be proper enough that such things should be expunged from our well−behaved and scientific planet, but I doubt it mightily; and I would just hint, that there is a species of civilization prevalent which affects manners rather than morals forms rather than feelings, which might, by some, be termed superficial; a civilization totally independent of true refinement, but which so smooths and polishes its disciples, that they counterfeit taste, knowledge, and feeling, and pass muster in society very tolerably, excepting when some little trait some trivial action some heedless phrase or expression,

lays bare the barrenness of their thoughts, and the primeval meanness of their souls. Such folks are incapable of any thing but decorum and commonplace. Newyear−day is nothing to them they have no sociability; and have besides, a glimmering idea, that it displays a kind of magnanimous and out−of−the−way elevation of mind, to sneer at and decry whatever gives pleasure to the many.

But, worse than this, besides being rated as a piece of foolish antiquity, it is made a serious charge against poor newyear day, that, as celebrated at present, it is a vehicle for drunkenness and dissipation, and ought, therefore, to be abolished. I object to such a conclusion, drawn from such premises. Is it any good and sufficient reason, that the sound and well−ordered portion of the community should be deprived of the cheerful pleasures and innocent gaieties, which the recurrence of this and similar days invariably produces, because certain inconsiderate portions of the population, think proper to swallow an indiscreet quantity of anti−rational compounds? Am I to experience a painful degree of aridity, because others choose to swamp themselves with manifold abominations? But it does not signify talking; man and beast, and all other animals, will follow their natural bent. Asses would still eat thistles, even though grapes grew on every bush swine would leave the verdant turf, bespangled with the pale primrose and the spring violet, to roll and wallow in congenial mire; and the brutal in mind and coarse in taste have ever made, and will continue to make any departure from the ordinary routine of life a pretext for indulging in their rank and filthy propensities. But what is that to plain, well−meaning people like myself, who do not pretend to know any thing about that most abstract of all the virtues universal philanthropy? nothing.

And are those who advocate the abolition of newyear−day on the ground of immorality, prepared, at the same time, to insist upon the utility of all festivities and celebrations whatever, sharing a similar fate? If they are not, for consistency's sake they ought to be, for all have one tendency the encouragement of a greater degree of relaxation and latitude than is ordinarily permitted. Alas! the world is already too mechanical; but were such people to succeed, it would, indeed, be one huge workshop, in which we would toil and moil unceasingly, until death hinted to us that we had been long enough employed. We are already a plodding, mercenary generation; but then we would be regular mill−horses, treading, evermore, the same unvarying round, and all for grist, grist, still grist, until we were in reality as blind and stupid as that most monotonous of quadrupeds. There might be more decorum under such a system perchance less vice, but assuredly less virtue; and what there was, would be of the most insipid kind. For my own part, I regret the gradual disuse of many of the old festivities and holidays of our ancestors, which were ever and anon recurring to diversify the dullness of existence, by an occasional glimpse of the picturesque. They added to the enjoyment of all classes, particularly of that which stands most in need of added enjoyments. They invigorated the heart, refreshed the feelings, and formed a little episode in the poor man's year, that was looked forward to with gladness, and remembered with satisfaction; besides forwarding the great purpose of creation, by bringing the juvenile of both sexes together in a pleasurable mood, thereby laying a train for an innumerable quantity of matrimonial experiments. But one by one they have withered away before the steady advance of business, and a higher state of civilization real and counterfeit. Easter and Whitsuntide are now little more than names; and that most delightful of ruralities, dancing round the maypole, and choosing the "queen of May" from the prettiest lass of the village, has become nearly obsolete. Let us, therefore, hold fast by the bright days left us, which periodically encourage innocent gaiety and lightness of heart. Let us still preserve a few green, shady lanes, branching off from the great macadamized turnpike of human life, down which we may stroll for a brief season, and refresh ourselves, by exchanging dust for verdure, flintstones for flowers, and the eternal jangling and bartering of business, for the melody of birds and the murmuring of brooks; even though we lose what the worldly and would−be−wise tell us can never be regained time and money.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

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"Time rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore
       Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legend's store
       Of their strange ventures, happ'd by land or sea,
How they are blotted from the things that be!
       How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
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Wait on the verge of dread eternity,
       Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight!"
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Time does indeed "roll his ceaseless course," and Sir Walter Scott is at length "blotted from the things that be!" The great leveller, death, has achieved one of his mightiest triumphs. Yet even now, when turning over the fresh and glowing pages of him who is no more, it is difficult to bring the truth home to the mind that the "author of Waverley" is really mouldering away amid the withered leaves of winter in Dryburgh kirk−yard! and that the dullest brain in Europe is now more prolific than that which called Meg Merrilies and Marmion, Rob Roy and Roderick Dhu, and hundreds, thousands of the finest creations since Shakspeare, into life and action. Truly, never was the equalization of the grave made more manifest. Long as this mournful event had been anticipated, it still startled men to hear that all was over. They paused, and looked aghast, and then strode silently away to marvel how such a thing *could* be; and since the death of Byron, no single event has created such an overpowering such an enduring sensation among those who think and feel. Both these great characters died as became them, calmly and bravely; and the circumstances connected with their respective deaths, are not a little characteristic of the men. Byron perished as he had lived, lonely and deserted, on a foreign shore, in a fruitless attempt to right the wrongs of that land whose glories and sufferings he has embalmed in his undying numbers; while the death of Scott was probably accelerated by his unquenchable desire to gaze once more upon "the scenes he loved and sung," and to make his final resting−place in "his own, his native land!" This feeling seems to have amounted to a passion. The garden of the world displayed her charms for him; but he gazed with a dull and filmy eye on the luxuriant beauties of nature, and the magnificent triumphs of art, ennobled, too, by association with all that was grand and mighty in a bypast age. How would all this have stirred his spirit at another period! But the time was past. The hand of the destroyer was upon him; the blood was fast curdling around his noble heart, and the soft and balmy odors of a southern clime came all too late to infuse health and vigor into his decaying frame. He turned sickeningly away, yearning once again "To feel the breeze down Ettricke break, Though it might chill his withered cheek:" and on his return, the nearer he approached his country, the stronger this desire became, until, on his arrival in London, he would scarcely brook the necessary the indispensable delays which his situation required. His only thought and cry was to reach Scotland; thus giving his dying testimony to the truth of that fine apostrophe written in his prime, showing the deep and rooted feelings of the man, as well as the inspiration of the poet: "O Caledonia! stern and wild! Meet nurse for a poetic child! Land of brown heath and shaggy wood, Land of the mountain and the flood, Land of my sires! what mortal hand Can e'er untie the filial band That knits me to thy rugged strand!"

Mankind owes Scott a debt of gratitude which it can never liquidate. The untiring admiration of succeeding generations may cancel the interest, but he must ever remain creditor for the principal until the language in which he has written shall have become a forgotten tongue. I would fain pay a portion of my tribute of thankfulness for the many, many hours of pure pleasure his works have afforded me, in a few scattered remarks, though it almost looks like presumption to do so. Criticism, is out of the question. Criticism, as far as Scott is concerned, should now, methinks, go to sleep, at least for a while. Eulogies rhapsodies, (absurd or otherwise,) may be tolerated; but formal, frigid criticism, especially from those "whose names are written on the roll of common men," now that the manes of the great magician are scarcely cold, would be little better than sacrilege.

I shall never forget the first time I read Marmion. I was just then emerging from Jack−the−giant−killerism, and similar juvenile portions of the *belles−letters* a mere lad, with an "ogre−like appetite" for books of all descriptions, which I despatched with most uncritical precipitancy. Marmion came in my way one summer evening. I read it half through, thought and dreamed of it the rest of the night, and finished it before leaving my bed the next morning. This was certainly devouring a six−canto poem with a most unsophisticated appetite, and without the slighest attempt to make an epicurean selection of tit−bits; good and bad, faults and beauties, were then swallowed indiscriminately in the vulgar excitement caused by an interesting narrative, which some mature people have had the hardihood to assert, is, after all, the main excellence of Scott's poetical compositions. I can only judge for myself. I have read Marmion many and many a time since then, (certainly not for the story,) and

the flavor has not yet departed from its pages. Though the opinion has of late years been rather unfashionable, I cannot help regarding it as a noble, spirited, and perfectly original poem a sort of irregular border epic, abounding in beauties of the highest order. It is its misfortune rather than its fault, (like the rest of Scott's productions,) to have a story of such intense interest as to absorb, in an undue degree, the attention of the reader, diverting his mind from the more unobtrusive beauties of the work. He is so hurried away by the constant shifting of the scenes and the rapid introduction of character, that he has but scant time to note the simple wild−flowers scattered in his path. The whole poem is a succession of bold, vivid sketches, rather than of elaborately finished pictures; all thrown off with an air of careless freedom that somewhat tempts the reader to rein in his admiration of what is obviously effected with so little trouble. Yet it would be difficult to point out, even in the most deep−wrought efforts of our best poets, any thing superior or equal to the trial and condemnation of Constance de Beverley, the quarrel between Marmion and Douglas, the battle of Flodden, and the death of Marmion; though, in fact, it is nonsensical to make such a challenge, inasmuch as no similar passages are to be found in any other author, ancient or modern. They are unique, and must be judged by themselves alone.

It is characteristic of genius to strike out some distinctly new path of its own, and for talent to follow after as it best may. There was no model for Paradise Lost, or Childe Harold, or Christabel, or the Lyrical Ballads, or the Lady of the Lake, or the Waverley novels. All are *sui generis;* and the next great poem or work, now engendering in the womb of time, when it bursts upon the world, will probably be found as widely different from all these as they are from each other. Neither have the spiritual emanations of those who indeed possessed the "faculty divine," ever been successfully imitated. Some, indeed, tempted by the dashing, off−hand, animated descriptions of Scott, and by the facilities for composition which his style afforded, have adventured into the lists, and sung of tilts and tournaments and gatherings and forays and onslaughts but it would not do. Like all imitators, they had caught the points, the peculiarities, the striking phrases, or particular modes of expression in short, the mechanical tricks of the thing; but the superior and characteristic touches, which impart life and reality to the whole, were not to be learnt. The soul was wanting; and the contests of their plumed knights and mailed warriors were like those of so many automatons worked by very palpable and ill−conditioned machinery. In fact, but for good Sir Walter, the present race of English and Scotch would have known but little of their doughty forefathers, or of the times when it was no derogation for a baron to pilfer bullocks, or gentlemen of unblemished integrity to go a sheep−stealing. He has illuminated history, and made that knowledge as "broad and general as the casing air," which was formerly "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined" in the dusky closet of the antiquary. And what a charm has he spread over these larcenious periods! With what unscrupulous earnestness and self−approving consciences do his heroes appropriate their neighbors' goods and chattels to their own individual uses and comforts! There is no whining, or sentiment, or petty attempts at self−justification; they are the men of the times, as they then thought and spoke and acted; and as different as may be from all other delicate freebooters from Conrad the Corsair down to Paul Clifford, who, as has been wittily observed, "have every virtue under heaven excepting common honesty;" and we pardon their moral obliquities the more readily, seeing that they do not insult us by any pretensions to ultra−refinement at the time they are picking their neighbors' pockets. But if they lack the high polish and glitter of sentiment which adorn the superfine rascals of the Bulwer school, they have all some redeeming qualities to recommend them, which possess, at the same time, the slight merit of not being totally at variance with their actions and character glimpses of rude but honorable feeling which make us love the rogues. Witness, for example, the graphic sketch of that most accomplished appropriator, "Sir Walter of Deloraine, good at need," and his lament over his fallen enemy.

How felicitously are we occasionally let into the springs of action of the men, and the manners of the age, by a single phrase Sir William never shed blood "except, *as was meet*, for deadly feud." These few words present us at once with a clearer and more distinct picture of the matter−of−course ferocity of the times than could have been drawn in pages by an inferior hand.

Scott has become as deservedly celebrated for his battle pieces as Wouvermans. They possess all the freedom, force, and energy of that great master; while the irregular structure of his metre, owning or submitting to no check but the ear, is singularly well adapted to portray the varied fortunes of a changeful fight. Some may have equalled

him in depicting "battle's magnificently stern array:" some may have surpassed him in painting the wreck and desolation war leaves in its track; but for the fight itself for placing vividly before you all the alternations between defeat and victory in a hard fought field for hurrying the reader breathlessly along with the current of events, so that he fancies himself a spectator of, almost an actor in the scene, and feels a personal interest in the fate of the several combatants for seizing instinctively on the strongest and most picturesque points of the combat for placing fair in view the wheeling, advancing, and retreating of the several squadrons and bodies of troops the dread closing and deadly strife of the mortal foes the charge, the rally, the rout, the flight, and the pursuit in all of these Scott has never been approached. Verily his muse had no sinecure when his spirit was once fairly up in arms, and he sung of Flodden Field or Bannockburn. It is curious and interesting to observe the marked difference between the master minds of Scott and Byron, when employed upon a similar subject the advance of soldiers to the field of battle "Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye, Fitz−Eustace shouted loud and high Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum! And see, ascending squadrons come Between Tweed's river and the hill, Foot, horse, and eannon: hap what hap, My basnet to a 'prentice cap, Lord Surry's o'er the Till! Yet more! yet more! how fair arrayed They file from out the hawthorn shade, And sweep so gallant hy! With all their banners bravely spread, And all their armor flashing high, Saint George might waken from the dead, To see fair England's banners fly.'"

What a fine contrast to this most animating description are the following surprisingly beautiful lines of Byron. They come full and round upon the ear, like the distant and solemn tones of the organ after the shrill and spirit−stirring clangor of the trumpet

"And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves, Dewy with nature's tear−drops, as they pass, Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves, Over the unreturning brave alas! Ere evening to be trodden like the grass Which now beneath them, but above shall grow In its neat verdure, when this fiery mass Of living valor, rolling on the foe, And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low."

But Scott's claims to admiration rest not, even in a principal degree, on fiery description or impetuous narrative. His sketches of scenery have a truth and vividness, and, above all, a healthy cheerfulness about them, that is especially delightful, and which ought to annihilate (by contrast) at once and for ever, the morbid, bilious, and dyspeptic school of poetry, of which Byron is most falsely assumed to be the head and founder; as if the grand and melancholy solemnity of his strains had any thing in common with the puling complaints and sickly fancies of those who obscure the sun, and divest nature of her glory, because they happen to be troubled with debt or indigestion; or because their lady−love may have judiciously responded in the negative to their connubial overtures. Here is one of a hundred similar pictures

"The summer dawn's reflected hue To purple changed Loch Katrine blue; Mildly and soft the western breeze Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees; And the pleased lake, like maiden eoy, Trembled, but dimpled not for joy; The mountain shadows on her breast Were neither broken nor at rest; In bright uncertainty they lie Like future joys to Fancy's eye, The water−lily to the light Her chalice reared of silver bright; The doe awoke, and to the lawn, Begemmed with dew−drops led her fawn; The gray mist left the mountain side, The torrent showed its glistening pride; Invisible in flecked sky, The lark sent down her revelry; The blackbird and the speckled thrush Good−morrow gave from brake and bush; In answer cooed the cushat dove, Her notes of peace and rest and love."

There are few things more agreeable than to peruse passages similar to this in Scott, after reading some of Moore's rich and luxurious descriptions of Persian scenery. Both are true poets both delightful in their way but the effect caused by their different manner of handling nature, is something like walking from a highly perfumed chamber into the pure air of heaven, impregnated with the fainter but more healthful odor of the thousand common wild−flowers that are for ever mingling their essences with its freshening currents.

In creative power, too in the formation and delineation of character, (judging him by his poems alone,) Scott is perfectly wonderful; and in this essential attribute of genius, double−distances all his contemporaries. The excellence of his poetical compositions in this particular, was acknowledged at the time of their appearance; but he has since rendered the world rather oblivious on this point by his splendid series of creations and resuscitations in the Waverley novels. The Waverley novels! What a host of pleasurable recollections throng upon the mind at the mere mention of their name! It would be folly here to attempt to enter upon their merits. The analysis of a single romance would, of itself, suffice for the covering of many pages; but when the mind glances in rapid succession from Waverley to Guy Mannering from Guy Mannering to the Antiquary thence to Rob Roy, Old Mortality, Ivanhoe, Kenilworth, and the long succeeding trail of glories, it is perfectly astounded at the immensity of intellect therein displayed. Fielding, Smollett, Richardson, Laurence Sterne, Godwin, hide their diminished heads; and as for the present race of novelists what the middling or indifferent amongst them may fancy is not easily to be imagined, (for there is no limit to ignorant vanity,) but surely the best would feel sorrowful and ashamed to see their claims, for a moment, irreverently placed in comparison with those of Walter Scott. Long after their effusions have been literary curiosities, the Waverley novels will be regarded as the grand portrait gallery into which the successive generations who tread upon our graves will look for the kings, queens, courtiers, knights, chieftains, and freebooters proper to the times of old! and when the exact sciences have perfected a more systematic, methodical, and, it may be, more decent and respectable state of existence, they will remain almost the only records of a bloder, stormier, and more picturesque state of society that has gradually faded away into the dim and misty past. It is not anticipating too high a destiny for them to say that they will bring a tear to the eye, and the smile to the cheek, and infuse the germs of knowledge and feeling into the minds of millions and millions yet unborn. How many sick−beds will they cheer! and what stores of innocent pleasure and quiet enjoyment will be gleaned from their pages throughout the far−stretching future! This is to have lived. This *is* fame, to which that of the mightiest conqueror that ever reigned and destroyed is but a drop of water to the illimitable ocean; and this fame is Walter Scott's. "Harp of the north! farewell!"

THE END.