

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

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RARE ARCTIC BIRDS.

[Illustration: *The white-horned owl*]

[Illustration: *The cock of the plains*]

[Illustration: *Legs and feet of the mountain Grouse.*]

Few of the results of recent expeditions of discovery have been so interesting to the public as their contributions to zoological history. Many important additions to geographical science have also been made by these journeys into countries hitherto unexplored, or but imperfectly known by Europeans; but the interest is not of that attractive character which is more or less attached to the natural history of these districts. The great delight that we take in the latter species of knowledge is referable to the curiosity we feel respecting the inhabitants of a country after we have once been assured of its existence. Our first inquiries naturally enough relate to the tenants of our own species; we then ask what description of quadrupeds are found over its plains, and how far they enlarge or circumscribe the enjoyments and liberty of sovereign man; the birds that warble in its groves, the insects that flutter in its breeze, the fish that tenant its seas, rivers, and lakes, and the plants that wave in wild luxuriance on its hills and dales; and by comparing all these varieties with the natural characteristics of our own country, and contrasting their differences with others, we are enabled, in some degree, to appreciate, by the linked gradations, the order and harmony that reign throughout nature—the minute beauty of parts which are so essential to the perfection of the grand whole.

The last overland expedition to the Polar sea, under the command of Captain Sir John Franklin, was peculiarly fortunate in the collection of objects of natural history, which indeed were too numerous for the limits of an appendix, such as had appeared with the narratives of previous expeditions. Hence the number of the specimens warranted their publication in a separate form, under the able superintendence of Dr. Richardson, surgeon and naturalist to the expedition, aided by Mr. Swainson. The great expense of the requisite embellishment of the ornithological portion, however, threatened a formidable obstacle to its completeness; but this was met by a liberal grant of one thousand pounds by the British Government, to be applied solely towards the expense of the engravings—the present being the first zoological work ever published with the sterling assistance of His Majesty's Treasury. The first part of this truly great national work appeared some time since, with 28 spirited figures of Mammalia, from drawings by Landseer; the entomological and botanical parts are preparing for publication; and that of *The Birds*, (to which we are indebted for the annexed Cuts,) has very recently appeared.[1]

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[1] *Fauna Boreali-Americana, or the Zoology of the Northern Parts of British America*. Part II., containing the Birds. By W. Swainson, Esq, F.R.S. and John Richardson, Esq., M.D. F.R.S., &c. 4to. 253 pages, with 50 coloured plates, and 40 illustrative wood cuts. London, Murray, 1832.

Dr. Richardson, with zealous attachment to his pursuits, passed seven summers and five winters surrounded by the objects he has described with such fidelity. He is, therefore, not a mere book naturalist, but he has studied the habits and zoological details of the living animals; Mr. Swainson having assisted the Doctor in the systematic arrangement and production of the plates. Their descriptions include all the birds hitherto found over an immense expanse of country of the 49th parallel of latitude, and east of the Rocky Mountains, which lie much nearer to the Pacific Coast than to the eastern shore of America: many of these birds being, for the first time, made known to ornithologists. We have selected two of the most singular in their conformation: one from the Owls, which are numerous and beautiful; and the other from the Grouse, of which ten fine species are described.[2]

[2] Flocks of Ptarmigans, when pursued by the jar-falcon, endeavour to save themselves by plunging instantly into the loose snow, and making their way beneath it to a considerable distance.

* * * * *

THE ARCTIC, OR WHITE-HORNED OWL,

Strix (Bubo) Arctica, Swainson.

This very beautiful owl appears to be rare, only one specimen having been seen by the members of the Expedition. It was observed flying at mid-day in the immediate vicinity of Carlton House, and was brought down with an arrow by an Indian boy. Dr. Richardson could obtain no information respecting its habits.

From Mr. Swainson's minute description we learn that the colour of the bill and claws is blueish black. The face is white, and a band of blackish-brown and white crosses the throat. The egrets or ear feathers are tipped with blackish-brown, the inner webs being white varied with wood-brown. The whole of the back is marked with undulated lines or fine bars of dark umber-brown, alternating with white: on the greater wing coverts the white is replaced by pale wood-brown. The primary and secondary feathers are wood-brown, margined inwards with white. They are crossed by umber-brown bars on both webs, the intervening spaces being finely speckled with the same. On the tertiary feathers, the wood-brown is mostly replaced by white. The tail-feathers are white, deeply tinged inwards by wood-brown, and crossed by bars of umber-brown; the tips are white. The chin is white. The throat is crossed by the band already mentioned,

behind which there is a large space of pure snow white, that is bounded on the breast by blotches of liver-brown situated on the tips of

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the feathers. The belly and long plumage of the flanks are white, crossed by narrow bars of dark brown. The under tail coverts, thighs, and feet are pure white. The linings of the wings are pure white with the exception of a brown spot on the tips of the great interior coverts. The bill is strong, curved from the base, moderately compressed towards the tip, with a very obtuse ridge. The facial disk is small, and incomplete above the orbit. The egrets are more than two inches long, each composed of six or seven feathers, and situate behind the upper end of the black band bounding the face. The folded wings fall about three inches and a half short of the tail, which is rounded, the outer feathers being an inch shorter than the central ones. The plumage of the sides of the belly is long, and hangs down over the thighs. The thigh feathers are very downy, but are not long. The tarsi are rather long, and the toes are moderately long; they are clothed to the roots of the nails by a close coat of hairy feathers. The claws are strong, sharp, and very much curved.

The length of the bird from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail is 21 inches 6 lines; and the length of the longest quill feather is 12 inches six lines.

* * * * *

THE COCK OF THE PLAINS,

Tetrao,^[3] (*Centrocerus*,) *Urophasianus*,

Swainson.

This bird, which was first mentioned by Lewis and Clark,^[4] has since become well known to the fur traders that frequent the banks of the Colombia. Several specimens have been sent to England by the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company. Mr. David Douglas has published the following account of the manners of the species, the only one hitherto given.

[3] Or Grouse.

[4] The adventurous travellers to the Source of the Missouri.

"The flight of these birds is slow, unsteady, and affords but little amusement to the sportsman. From the disproportionately small, convex, thin-quilled, wing,—so thin, that a vacant space, half as broad as a quill appears between each,—the flight may be said to be a sort of fluttering more than any thing else: the bird giving two or three claps of the wings in quick succession, at the same time hurriedly rising; then shooting or floating, swinging from side to side, gradually falling, and thus producing a clapping, whirring sound. When started, the voice is '*cuck, cuck, cuck*,' like the common



pheasant. They pair in March and April. The love-song is a confined, grating, but not offensively disagreeable, tone,—something that we can imitate, but have a difficulty in expressing—'Hurr-hurr—hurr-r-r-r hoo,' ending in a deep hollow tone, not unlike the sound produced by blowing into a large reed. Nest on the ground, under the shade of *Purshia* and *Artemisia*, or near streams, among *Phalaris arundinacea*, carefully constructed of dry grass,

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and slender twigs. Eggs from thirteen to seventeen, about the size of those of a common fowl, of a wood-brown colour, with irregular chocolate blotches on the thick end. The young leave the nest a few hours after they are hatched. In the summer and autumn months these birds are seen in small troops, and in winter and spring in flocks of several hundreds. Plentiful through the barren arid plains of the river Colombia; also in the interior of North California. They do not exist on the banks of the river Missouri; nor have they been seen in any place east of the Rocky Mountains.”

The general colour of the upper plumage is light hair-brown, mottled and variegated with dark umber-brown and yellowish-white. The under plumage is white and unspotted on the breast and part of the body; but dark umber-brown, approaching to black, on the lower half of the body, and part of the flanks; the latter towards the vent are marked as on the upper plumage. The under tail coverts are black, broadly tipped with white. The feathers of the thighs and tarsi are light hair-brown, mottled with darker lines. The throat and region of the head is varied with blackish on a white ground. The shafts of all the feathers on the breast are black, rigid, and look like hairs; but those of the scale-like feathers of the sides are white and thicker. The bill and toes are blackish. The bill is thick and strong: the ridge is advanced to a remarkable extent towards the front, and divides the thickset feathers which cover the nostrils by a convex ridge of three quarters of an inch long. This is a very peculiar and important character, since it plainly indicates the analogy of this form to *Ramphastos*, *Buceros*,^[5] and numerous other rasorial types. On each side the breast, the present specimen exhibits two prominent naked protuberances, as in the female bust, perfectly destitute of hair or feathers. On each side of these protuberances, and higher up on the neck, is a tuft of feathers, having their shafts considerably elongated and naked, gently curved, and tipped with a pencil of a few black radii; they are placed much behind the naked protuberances, and do not appear intended to cover them when not inflated. On the sides of the neck, and across the breast, below the protuberances, the feathers are particularly short, rigid, and acute, laying over each other with the same compactness and regularity as the scales of a fish, excepting that their extremities are not rounded, but acutely pointed. Lower down the breast these feathers, however, begin to assume more of the ordinary shape; but the shafts still remain very thick and rigid, while each is terminated by a slender, naked filament, hornlike, shining, and somewhat flattened towards the end, where there are a few obsolete radii. The wings in proportion to the size of the bird, are very short; the lesser quills ending in a point. The tail is rather lengthened and considerably rounded, each feather lanceolate, and gradually attenuated to a fine point. The tarsi are somewhat elevated, thickly clothed with feathers to the base of the toes, and over the membrane which connects them. The length of this bird Mr. Swainson thinks to have been 25 inches. The female bird, it should be added, has neither the scale-like feathers nor projecting shafts of the male.

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[5] See the Rhinoceros Bird, page 312. *The Mirror*, No. 547.

The CLAW is that of the PILEATED WOODPECKER, (*Picus Dryotomus*) *Pileatus*, SWAINSON, which has much less power than the claw of the typical Woodpecker; the anterior toe (i.e. middle toe,) being longer and stronger than the posterior—a structure the very reverse of that which characterizes the typical species.

LEGS AND FEET of the ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED GROUSE, (*Tetrao Franklinii*, DOUGLAS,) which are thickly covered with long and hair-like feathers. The bird inhabits the valleys of the Rocky Mountains from the sources of the Missouri to those of the Mackenzie, and Mr. Douglas informed Dr. Richardson that it is sparingly seen on the elevated platforms which skirt the snowy peaks of Mount Hood, Mount St. Helens, and Mount Baker. He adds, “It runs over the shattered rocks, and among the brushwood with amazing speed, and only uses its wings as a last effort to escape.”

The birds of North America include about 320 species. They are divided into migratory and resident; though comparatively few in the fur countries are strictly entitled to be called resident. The raven and Canadian and short-billed jays were the only species recognised as being equally numerous at their breeding-places in winter and summer. Many of the species which raise two or more broods within the United States rear only one in the fur countries, the shortness of the summer not admitting of their doing more. We have mentioned the number and beauty of the hawks and owls. The white-headed eagle inhabits the fur countries as well as the United States. The melody of the song-birds is described to be exquisite. The verdant lawns and cultivated glades of Europe fail in producing that exhilaration and joyous buoyancy of mind which travellers have experienced in treading the Arctic wilds of America, when their snowy covering had just been replaced by an infant but vigorous vegetation. The duck family are, however, the birds of the greatest importance, as they furnish, in certain seasons of the year, in many extensive districts, almost the only article of food that can be procured. The arrival of the water-fowl, it is said, marks the commencement of spring and diffuses as much joy among the wandering hunters of the Arctic regions, as the harvest or vintage in more genial climates. The period of their emigration southwards again, in large flocks, at the close of summer, is another season of plenty bountifully granted to the natives, and enabling them to encounter the rigour and privations of a northern winter.

Dr. Richardson acknowledges the liberal assistance afforded him by the Hudson's Bay Company, in the collection of specimens. Indeed, to this public-spirited body are we indebted for our earliest systematic knowledge of the Hudson's Bay birds. The reader may likewise witness a few living evidences of the Company's liberality, in the fine collection of eagles and owls presented by them to the Zoological Society, and exhibiting in the Gardens in the Regent's Park. Such devotion to the advancement of science cannot be too proudly perpetuated in the history of a society established for commercial objects.

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* * * * *

SONNET.

TO H——C. ON MY FRIEND H—— S—— BEING IN LOVE WITH HER.

(*For the Mirror.*)

Thou that art like the sun, that on its way,
Across the cloudless distance of the skies
Gives pleasure to us all—no rivalries
Lessen'ng the love we bear it—as a day
Of shower-glad April or the month of May,
Thou that art cheerful—see yon youth that lies
Weeping for want of sunshine from thine eyes,
And hope that thou canst only give him—say:
“Sweet youth, and art thou weeping for a heart
All passion, joy, and gladness—come unto me,
Oft by the evening sunset thou shalt woo me,
And as thou hast the gentleness and art
Or rather truth-kind nature thou mayst tear it
From all its other likings, win and wear it.”

J.H.H.

* * * * *

MRS. HEMANS.

(*To the Editor.*)

I have just been perusing in No. 16, of Chambers's *Edinburgh Journal*, a short and incorrect sketch of that highly-gifted and moral poetess, Mrs. Hemans, “who,” the writer says, “first came into public notice about twelve or fourteen years ago;” whereas, her literary career commenced as far back as the year 1809, in an elegantly printed quarto of poems, which were highly spoken of by the present T. Roscoe, Esq. and were dedicated by permission to his late Majesty, when Prince Regent. Permit me to say that this accomplished daughter of the Muse is a native of Denbighshire, North Wales, and was born at the family mansion named “Grwyth,” about one and a half mile distant from Abergele; and at the period of her first appearance as an authoress, she had not, I think, reached her thirteenth year. I had the pleasure of then being her neighbour, and our Appenine mansion, the Signal Station, at Cave Hill, has been more than once enlivened by Lady, then Miss Felicia Dorothea Browne's society, accompanied by her excellent mother. She has since married —— Hemans, Esq., then an Adjutant in the

army. A great number of her pieces have appeared in the *Monthly Magazine*, as well as the *New Monthly*, and although a pleasing pensiveness and sombre cast of mind seem to pervade her beautifully mental pictures, she was, I may say, noted in her youth for the buoyancy and sprightliness of her conversation and manner, which made her the delight and charm of every society with which she mixed. She likewise (I think in the same year) published an animated poem upon the valour of Spain and her patriotic ally, England. Instead of Mrs. H. residing, as the writer of the above memoir observes, chiefly in London, she has passed the principal years of her life since her removal from Grwyth, at a pleasant dwelling, termed "Rose Cottage," near the city of St. Asaph. The Editor of the *Edinburgh Journal* is again wrong in saying that her "Songs of the Affections," and the "Records of Woman," are understood to have had a very limited circulation, whereas, in the space of two years, they have reached a third and fourth edition.

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The Author of A Tradesman's Lays.

* * * * *

MASSENA'S TOMB.

PERE LA CHAISE, PARIS.

(For the Mirror.)

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth, ere gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave!"
GRAY.

Rest Soldier! not the trumpet's peal,
Can break the hallow'd silence here;
For ling'ring footsteps only steal,
To weep the mourner's bitter tear.

Sad trophied "city of the dead!"
Far around are night dewes weeping;
And cypresses their branches spread,
Where the fair and brave are sleeping.

Affection brings her wreath of willow,
And fondly decks the funeral stone,
The cold, damp earth she makes her pillow,
And only hears the night-wind's moan.

And hoary age, hath laid him down,
With the weary weight of years upon him!
And youth, in his spring morning flown,
Ere life's cold hues had shadow'd on him.

Beauty, hath joined the assembly here,
With marble brow, and close-shut eye,
And pallid lip,—while o'er her bier,
The dirge was chanted mournfully.

And roses bloom on many a grave,
With lilies fair, and violets blue,



And willows their green branches wave,
Shedding pale evening's tears of dew.

Round many a tomb *that* flow'ret springs,
"Forget me not"—the tale it tells,
Vainly the fond appeal it brings
To Death's domain, where silence dwells!

Long years, "with all their deeds," may roll,
Ere the cold clay, its cell forsaking,
Shall join the disembodied soul,
When the last morning's dawn is breaking!

Kirton Lindsey. ANNE R.

* * * * *

THE WRITINGS OF BURKE.

(For the Mirror.)

Of all the great men of his age, there were few who attained to the celebrity of Edmund Burke; there were many, however, who deserved it more and whom a more adverse fortune compelled to languish in comparative obscurity. That Burke was a man of wonderful talent it would be in vain to deny, and indeed such denial would be only a proof of our own ignorance and bad taste; but his strength was that of imagination merely,—his genius was not sufficiently counterbalanced by judgment, and he has been at all times ranked as an elegant rather than a nervous writer. In his oratory, as well as his literary composition, he was too much addicted to a florid phraseology, and his hearers, during his lifetime, as well as his readers now, were often driven to consider his meaning, and not unfrequently to make

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one out for themselves. This style of declamation has been not unaptly called “splendid nonsense,” and it was after a display of this sort from Burke, that one of his audience made this pithy exclamation: “It is all very well, but I should like to hear it over again, that I might consider the *sense*.” Burke also dealt in paradoxes occasionally; in short, he will seldom satisfy a careful reader, and his most ardent admirers have been known to confess themselves rather pleased than edified by his works. By way of specimen, as to the remarks we have ventured to make, we shall endeavour to take to pieces the following sophism, for a sophism we cannot help considering it:—

“Duties are not voluntary; duty and will are even contradictory terms.”—“Men have an extreme disrelish to be told of their duty; this is, of course, because every duty is a limitation of power.”

These two sentences are taken from different parts of the writings of Burke, but they are the same in tendency, though not in expression; they imply simply, that duty is a restraint, and that our duties and our inclinations call us different roads. Let us first consider what the term “duty” signifies. From Johnson we get this explanation of it: “What we are bound to do by the impulse of nature, the dictates of law, or the voice of reason.” Now, to take these three cases as they stand, nature has surely ordained everything for our advantage, and therefore in obeying her, we have rather an accession than a diminution of power; with respect to ourselves, the calls of nature are even agreeable to us; and as far as our duties concern others, men seem in general to perform their natural duties willingly, such as a duty to a child, a parent, &c. Then with regard to the duties imposed on us by law, many of these appear indeed at first to be great and unnecessary restraints, but if we examine the matter, we shall find that very few laws have been framed that have not rather good than evil for their object. Society doubtless imposes many restrictions on its members, but it also confers far greater comparative advantages in lieu of them, so that if we were fairly to weigh the benefits received, against the losses sustained, we should find law to be a blessing, without which we could not exist in any real comfort; and we should see clearly then it gives power and elevates, rather than shackles or debases us. As to these legal duties being voluntary with all men, every day proves that they are not; but with all reasonable persons they must be, for we ought surely to perform that willingly, which is not only intended, but actually is, for our good. It is the perverse nature of man, that looks on the dark side of things, and forgetting the ultimate advantage to be derived, considers only the partial and trivial annoyances that necessarily attend its completion. The duties dictated by reason are the only duties that remain: it is difficult to separate these entirely from natural duties;

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perhaps I may be allowed to call "Prayer" or "Thanksgiving to God" a reasonable duty, (for it is not a natural one, or the brutes would practise it in common with ourselves.) Now this is a duty, that if it is performed at all, is performed voluntarily, for it is clearly in a man's own choice to do it or not, there being no compulsory power to enforce prayer; as to this duty being a limitation of power, its observance does indeed imply a state of dependence, and is an indirect admission that we are creatures at the disposal of another; but that is not exactly the point; it is no limitation of power in this sense; it takes away no power we were before possessed of.

F.

* * * * *

THE SELECTOR; AND LITERARY NOTICES OF *NEW WORKS*.

* * * * *

BRITISH WARRIORS.

The second volume of the Rev. Mr. Gleig's *Lives of the most eminent British, Military Commanders*, (and the 28th No. of the *Cabinet Cyclopaedia*,) contains Peterborough and Wolfe, and concludes Marlborough. The latter is very copious, and perhaps more detailed than we expected to find it. We subjoin an extract describing the last days of

Marlborough.

"The stream of public events has hurried us on so rapidly, that we have found little leisure to record those domestic trials, to which, in common with the rest of his species, the great Marlborough was subject. One of these, the death of the young and promising Marquess of Blandford, was a blow which the duke felt severely when it overtook him, and which to the last he ceased not to deplore. Another bereavement he suffered on the 22nd of March, 1714, by the premature decease of his daughter, Lady Bridgewater, in the twenty-sixth year of her age. Lady Bridgewater was an amiable and an accomplished woman, imbued with a profound sense of religion, and beloved both by her parents and her husband. But she possessed not the same influence over the former, which her sister Anne, Countess of Sunderland, exercised, on no occasion for evil, on every occasion for a good purpose. Of the society of this excellent woman, who had devoted herself since his return to dull the edge of political asperity, and to control the capricious temper of her mother, Marlborough was likewise deprived. After bearing with Christian fortitude a painful and lingering illness, she was attacked, in the beginning



of April, 1716, with a pleurisy, against which her enfeebled constitution proved unable to oppose itself, and on the 15th she died, at the early age of twenty-eight. Like Rachel weeping for her children, Marlborough refused to be comforted. He withdrew to the retirement of Holywell, that he might indulge his sorrow unseen; and there became first afflicted by that melancholy distemper, under which first his mind and eventually his body sunk.

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“To what proximate cause this attack is to be attributed,—whether to excess of sorrow, or, which is more probable, to an accumulation of predisposing occurrences,—we possess no means of ascertaining; but on the 28th of May he was smitten with paralysis, and became deprived on the instant both of sense and of speech. The best medical aid being at hand, he was speedily relieved from the fit, and under the skilful management of Sir Samuel Garth, gradually regained his strength; but from the usual effects of such a stroke he never wholly recovered, neither his articulation nor his memory being restored to their original tone. He was able to proceed, it is true, so early as the 7th of July, to Bath, where he drank the waters with benefit, and he returned in a certain degree into society, resuming with apparent ease the ordinary course of his employment. That his faculties were not absolutely impaired, moreover, is demonstrated by the fact, that it was subsequently to this his first seizure that he played his part on the trial of Lord Oxford; while his successful speculation in South Sea stock, by which, contrary to the custom of the adventure, he realized 100,000_l_. proves that the talent of making money, at least, had not deserted him. But it seems an idle as well as an uncalled for perversion of truth to contend, that from the date of his first attack he ever was the man he had been previously. If ‘the tears of dotage’ did not flow from his eyes, it is certain that much of the vigour of mind which once belonged to him was lost, and even his speech continued embarrassed in the pronunciation of certain words, as his features were slightly distorted. Nor did the events which accumulated upon him, both at home and abroad, by abstracting him from painful subjects, tend to facilitate his recovery. The duchess, not less the slave of caprice now than formerly, managed to involve herself in a serious misunderstanding with the king, and withdrew, in consequence, her attendance on a court where her presence ceased to be agreeable. This was preceded by quarrels with almost all the oldest and steadiest friends of her husband, such as Cadogan, Stanhope, Sunderland, and secretary Scraggs, which were not composed till after the growing infirmities of the duke had taught them to think of what he once had been, and what he was likely soon to become. Nor was the death of Sunderland, which took place in April, 1722, without its effect in harassing the Duke of Marlborough. That nobleman not only died in his father-in-law’s debt, to the amount of 10,000_l_.; but the sealing up of his papers by government occasioned a tedious suit, Marlborough being naturally anxious to secure them to himself; a measure which the government, on public grounds, resisted.

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“Besides being involved in these vexatious disputes, Marlborough was again harassed by the workmen employed at Blenheim, who in 1718 renewed their actions against him for arrears of wages due since 1715. He resisted the demand; but a decree issued against him, from which he appealed, though without effect, to the house of lords. No doubt there was excessive meanness here on the part of government, of which Marlborough had just cause to complain. Yet was it beneath the dignity of the greatest man of his age to dispute with his ungrateful country about 9,000L. Better would it have been had he paid the debt at once; for the sum was not such as to put him to the smallest inconvenience, and posterity would have more than recompensed the loss by the judgment which it would have passed on the entire transaction. In spite, however, of these multiplied sources of disturbance, it does not appear that the latter years of this great man's life were spent unhappily. Frequent returns of illness he doubtless had, each of which left him more and more enfeebled in mind and body; but his intervals of ease seem to have been passed in the society of those who were well disposed to cheat him, as far as they could, into a forgetfulness of his fallen condition. He played much at chess, whist, piquet, and ombre; he took exercise for awhile on horseback, latterly, on account of weakness, in his carriage; he even walked, when at Blenheim, unattended about his own grounds, and took great delight in the performance of private theatricals. We have the best authority for asserting, likewise, that he was never, till within a short time of his death, either indisposed or incapable of conversing freely with his friends. Whether in London, at Blenheim, Holywell, or Windsor Lodge (and he latterly moved from place to place with a sort of restless frequency), his door was always open to the visits of his numerous and sincere admirers; all of whom he received without ceremony, and treated with peculiar kindness.

“In this manner Marlborough continued to drag on an existence, which, when contrasted with the tenour of years gone by, scarcely deserves to be accounted other than vegetation. In 1720, he added several codicils to his will, and ‘put his house in order;’ and in November, 1721, he made his appearance in the house of lords, where, however, he took no prominent part in the business under discussion. He had spent the winter too in London, according to his usual habits, and was recently returned to Windsor Lodge, when his paralytic complaint again attacked him, with a degree of violence which resisted all efforts at removal. On this occasion, it does not appear that the faculties of his mind failed him. He lay, indeed, for the better part of a week, incapable of the slightest bodily exertion, being lifted from his couch to his bed, and from his bed to his couch, according as he indicated a wish to that effect; but he retained his senses so perfectly as to listen with manifest gratification to the prayers of his chaplain, and to join in them, as he himself stated, on the evening preceding his death. The latter event befell at four o'clock in the morning of the 16th of June, 1722, ‘when his strength,’ says Dr. Coxe, ‘suddenly failed him, and he rendered up his spirit to his Maker, in the 72nd year of his age.’

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"The Duke of Marlborough left behind him three daughters, all of them married into the best families of the kingdom. Henrietta, the eldest, the wife of Francis Earl of Godolphin, became on her father's decease Duchess of Marlborough; but died in 1733, without male issue. Anne married Charles, Earl of Sunderland, from whom are descended the present Duke of Marlborough and the Earl of Spencer; and Mary gave her hand to the Duke of Montagu. The property which he had accumulated in the course of his long and busy life proved to be very great. In addition to the estates purchased for him by the country, he disposed by will of lands and money, of which the interest fell not short of 100,000L a year; indeed, the annual revenue bequeathed to his successors in Woodstock alone is given on the best authority at 70,000L. The mansion house at Blenheim was at the period of his death still in progress of erection, and he set apart a sum of money for the purpose of completing it, of which he committed the management exclusively to the duchess, who survived her husband many years. It seems alone necessary to add to this, that the estates of Woodstock are held on feudal tenure, the occupant presenting to the king once a year a standard similar to those which the founder of his house captured; and that these are regularly deposited in a private chapel at Windsor, where they may still be seen by the curious.

"The funeral of this illustrious warrior and statesman was of course as magnificent as his reputation and the honour of the country seemed to require. His body, after undergoing the process of embalming, and lying in state at Marlborough House, was conveyed in a sort of triumphal car to Westminster Abbey, long lines of carriages following, and all the parade of troops, heralds, and mourners preceding and surrounding the senseless clay. A gorgeous canopy overshadowed it, adorned with plumes, military trophies, and heraldic achievements. Dukes and earls were the chief mourners; the pall being borne by persons of not less eminent rank; and the cavalcade was received by the light of blazing torches at the door of the abbey by all the dignitaries and ministers of the church in full canonicals. Yet was the solemn ceremony performed for no other purpose than to render due honours to the remains of England's most illustrious commander. The body was not permitted for any length of time to rest where, amid such splendour, it had been entombed; but, being removed to the chapel at Blenheim, it was finally deposited in a mausoleum, erected by Rysbrack, under the superintendence of the duchess."

Altogether this volume maintains the creditable character of the series to which it belongs.

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SPANISH CHARACTERISTICS—BY WASHINGTON IRVING.[6]

[6] From the *Alhambra*.—See also, *Supplement* published with the present Number.

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Enjoyment in Travelling.—We travelled in true contrabandista style, taking every thing rough and smooth as we found it, and mingling with all classes and conditions in a kind of vagabond companionship.

A Miracle.—Near Archidona is a mysterious path by which the Virgin Mary is said to have led Queen Isabella to attack an old Moorish castle on the summit of the mountain: you see this path like a riband up the mountain side; but the miracle is, that though it can be seen at a distance, when you come near it disappears!

Imaginary Treasures.—The thirsty man dreams of fountains and running streams; the hungry man of ideal banquets; and the poor man of heaps of hidden gold: nothing certainly is more magnificent than the imagination of a beggar.

Spaniards.—There is a natural talent or mother wit, as it is called, about the Spaniards, which renders them intellectual and agreeable companions, whatever may be their condition in life, and however imperfect may have been their education: add to this they are never vulgar, nature has endowed them with an inherent dignity of spirit.

Garden of Lindaraxa.—"How beauteous is the garden!" says an Arabic inscription, "where the flowers of the earth vie with the stars of heaven, what can compare with the vase of yon alabaster fountain, filled with crystal water? Nothing but the moon in her fulness, shining in the midst of an uncloudless sky!"

Transitions of Decay.—I have often observed that the more proudly a mansion has been tenanted in the day of its prosperity, the humbler are its inhabitants in the day of its decline, and that the palace of the king, commonly ends in being the nestling place of the beggar.

A Factotum.—A portly old fellow with a bottle nose, who goes about in a rusty garb with a cocked hat of oil-skin and a red cockade. He is one of the legitimate sons of the Alhambra, and has lived here all his life, filling various offices; such as deputy alguazil, sexton of the parochial church, and marker of a fives-court established at the foot of one of the towers. He is as poor as a rat, but as proud as he is ragged, boasting of his descent from the illustrious house of Aguilar, from which sprang Gonsalvo of Cordova, the grand captain. Nay, he actually bears the name of Alonzo de Aguilar, so renowned in the history of the conquest. It is a whimsical caprice of fortune to present, in the grotesque person of this tatterdemalion, a namesake and descendant of the proud Alonzo de Aguilar, the mirror of Andalusian chivalry, leading an almost mendicant existence about this once haughty fortress, which his ancestor aided to reduce: yet such might have been the lot of the descendants of Agamemnon and Achilles, had they lingered about the ruins of Troy.

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MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

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ORIGIN OF EPSOM RACES.

(Concluded from page 331.)

“At this period[7] there were many capital thorough bred horses in England, the most celebrated of which were the famed Arabians Darley and Godolphin, from which the best horses have been traced for nearly a century. They produced stock of vast size, bone and substance; and were, at the same time, endowed with such extraordinary, and before unheard of, powers of speed, as to render it probable that some of them have reached nature’s goal, or ultimate point of perfection.

[7] About the fifteenth year of the reign of George II.

“From the former of these horses descended Flying Childers. He is said to have never run a race, except at Newmarket, where he beat, with ease, the best horses of his time.

“In October, 1722, he beat Lord Drogheda’s Chaunter, each carrying ten stone, over a six mile course, for 1,000 guineas. At six years of age, he ran a race, carrying 9 stone 2lbs. against Almanzor and Brown Betty, over the round course at Newmarket, three miles six furlongs, and ninety-three yards, in six minutes and forty seconds! to perform which, he must have moved eighty-two feet and a half in a second of time, or at the rate of nearly one mile in a minute.

“This is the greatest speed yet known of a horse, many have approached, but not equalled it.

“To continue the list of celebrated race horses would extend this article (already it is feared too long) beyond our limits. We will therefore close it with the following account of Eclipse, a horse whom fame ranks second in the list, and whose history is more closely connected with Epsom than those already described.

“Eclipse was first the property of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, and was foaled during the great eclipse in 1764, from which he received his name. He was a chestnut horse, and at the death of his royal master was purchased by Mr. Wildman, who subsequently sold a moiety, and then the whole of his interest in him, to Colonel O’Kelly, who resided at Clay-hill, Epsom.

“Mr. Wildman is said to have been in some degree aware of the worth of this colt, when a yearling, and to have taken the following measures in order to make sure of him. When he arrived at the place of sale, Mr. Wildman produced his watch, and insisted that the auction had commenced before the hour announced in the advertisements, and that the lots sold should be put up again. In order, however, to prevent a dispute, it was

agreed by the auctioneer and company that Mr. Wildman should have his choice of any particular lot; by which he secured Eclipse at the moderate price of 70 or 75 guineas.

“Mr. Lawrence remarks, that previously to Eclipse’s running for the King’s plate at Winchester, in 1769, Mr. Wildman sold the moiety of him to Colonel O’Kelly for 650 guineas, and that O’Kelly subsequently bought the other moiety for 1,100 guineas.

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“Eclipse was withheld from the course till he was five years of age, and was first tried at Epsom. He had considerable length of waist, and stood over a large space of ground, in which particular he was an opposite form to the flying Childers, a short-backed, compact horse, whose reach lay in his lower limbs; but, from the shape of his body, we are inclined to believe that Eclipse would have beaten Childers in a race over a mile course with equal weights.

“He once ran four miles in eight minutes, carrying twelve stone, and with this weight Eclipse won eleven King’s plates. He was never beaten, never had a whip flourished over him, or felt the tickling of a spur; nor was he ever for a moment distressed by the speed or rate of a competitor; out-footing, out-striding, and out-lasting, (says Mr. Lawrence) every horse which started against him.

“Colonel O’Kelly prized this horse so highly, and treated him with so much kindness, that upon his removal from Clay-hill to Cannons, he had a carriage built for conveying Eclipse to his new abode, his feet being, at the close of his life, too tender for walking. The carriage was something like a covered wagon, but not so wide, and was drawn by two horses. Eclipse stood in the carriage with his head out of a window, made for that purpose, and in this situation many of the inhabitants saw him pass through the town, from one of whom we received our information. This celebrated racer died in February 1789, aged twenty-five years.

“When the races on Epsom Downs were first held periodically, we have not been able to trace with accuracy; but we find that from the year 1730, they have been annually held in the months of May or June, and about six weeks previously to which, the hunter’s stakes are occasionally run for on the Epsom race course, at one of which, in 1730, the famous horse, Madcap, won the prize, and proved the best plate horse in England.

“The races were for a long period held twice in every year, Spring and Autumn; it was then customary to commence the races at eleven o’clock in the forenoon, and after the first or second heat, the company usually returned into the town to dinner. In the afternoon they again assembled on the downs, and the races for the day were then finished.

“This arrangement has been long discontinued, and the races are now annually held on the downs, adjoining the town, on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday immediately preceding Whitsuntide, except when Easter Monday happens in March; in which case the races are held a fortnight later than usual, in pursuance of certain regulations agreed upon for holding the principal races in the kingdom.

“This has been the practice here since the celebrated Derby and Oaks Stakes were first established at Epsom, the former in 1780, and the latter in 1779.[8]

[8] A second meeting is held in the autumn.



“Several members of the royal family, and most of the nobility attend these races; and, if the weather be fine, there are seldom less than 60,000 persons assembled here on the Thursday, when the Derby stakes are contested. Of these the vicious and unprincipled form a tolerable proportion; nor is it indeed surprising, where 60,000 persons are assembled to witness a horse race, that these should obtrude themselves, either with the view of propagating vice, or robbing the bystanders.”

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We ought to add that the volume is by an inhabitant of Epsom, and the profits of its sale have been given to the Subscription School in the town. It is so inaccurately printed, as to make us hope that more attention will be paid to the typography of the next edition; for assuredly so interesting a volume, published with so laudable an object as that of aiding the cause of charity, should extend to more than one edition.

By the way, there is a nice little anecdote connected with the sign of the *Queen's Head* at Epsom,[9] which the editor of this volume would do well to insert in his next impression. The above sign, (the *original*; for we fear the board has been repainted,) was executed by Harlow, the artist of the celebrated picture of the *Trial of Queen Katherine*, or the *Kemble Family*. The painter, it will be remembered, was a pupil of the late Sir Thomas Lawrence. He was a young man of consummate vanity, and having unwarrantably claimed the merit of painting the Newfoundland dog introduced in Lawrence's portrait of Mrs. Angerstein, the two artists quarrelled, and Harlow took his resentment as follows:

"He repaired to the Queen's Head at Epsom; where his style of living having incurred a bill which he could not discharge, he proposed, like Morland under similar circumstances, to paint a sign-board in liquidation of his score. This was accepted—he painted both sides: the one presented a front view of her Majesty, in a sort of clever dashing caricature of Sir Thomas's style; the other represented the back view of the Queen's person, as if looking into the sign-board; and underneath was painted, 'T.L., Greek Street, Soho.' When Sir Thomas met him, he addressed him with, 'I have seen your additional act of perfidy at Epsom; and if you were not a scoundrel, I would kick you from one end of the street to the other.'—'There is some privilege in being a scoundrel, for the street is very long,' replied Harlow, unabashed, but moving out of reach of the threatened vengeance. Such is the current story; but there must be some error either in the facts or their date. Harlow was but a youth eighteen years old when he left Lawrence, and too young therefore for a man's resentment; neither had his conduct, a mere tricky slip, been such as to call forth fierce language in a person habitually so cautious and guarded as Lawrence. On the other hand, had Harlow arrived at manhood when it happened, he would not have allowed the words 'scoundrel' and 'perfidy' to pass with impunity. However all this may have been; the pupil quarrelled with Lawrence, and resolving to be master of his own movements in future, commenced working for himself." [10]

[9] The Queen's Head is situated at the extremity of the town of Epsom, so that a few race-visitors from London may extend their journey to that point.

[10] *Lives of British Painters*. By Allan Cunningham, vol. v.



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SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.

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POTTERY.[11]

(Concluded from page 326.)

Wedgewood's Staffordshire Ware.

[11] By Mr. A. Aikui, in Trans. Soc. Arts.

Lastly is the manufacture of those species of glazed pottery known by the general name of Staffordshire ware. The date of this ware is about sixty years ago, and it unquestionably originated with the late Mr. Wedgewood. It not only originated with him, but was carried by his knowledge, his skill, and his perseverance, to a degree of excellence which, in several points, has never been surpassed, and in some has never been equalled.

He perceived that the defects of the delft ware, at that time the only species of pottery employed for common domestic purposes, were the softness and looseness of texture of its body, which obliged the potter to make it thick and clumsy and heavy, in order to ensure to it a moderate durability; and that its porousness, as well as its dirty grey colour, required a thick coating of white enamel, which added still farther to its bulk and weight, and which, consisting for the most part of lead and arsenic, was hardly safe for culinary use.

He began, therefore, by inventing a body for earthenware, which at the same time should be white, and capable of enduring a very high degree of heat without fusion, well knowing that the hardness of the ware depended on the high firing to which it has been subjected. For this purpose, rejecting the common clays of his neighbourhood, he sent as far as Dorsetshire and Devonshire for the whiter and purer pipe-clays of those counties. For the siliceous ingredient of his composition he made choice of chalk-flints, calcined and ground to powder.

It might be supposed that white sand would have answered his purpose equally well, and have been cheaper; but, being determined to give the body of his ware as great a degree of compactness as possible, it was necessary that the materials should be reduced to the state almost of an impalpable powder; and calcined flints are much more easily brought to this state by grinding than sand would be. The perfect and equable mixture of these two ingredients being a point of great importance, he did not choose to trust to the ordinary mode of treading them together when moist, but having ground

them between stones separately with water to the consistence of cream, he mixed them together in this state by measure, and then, evaporating the superfluous water by boiling in large cisterns, he obtained a composition of the most perfect uniformity in every part. By the combination of these ingredients, in different proportions, and exposed to different degrees of heat, he obtained all the variety of texture required, from the bibulous ware employed for glazed articles, such

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as common plates and dishes, to the compact ware not requiring glazing, of which he made mortars and other similar articles. The almost infusible nature of the body allowed him also to employ a thinner and less fusible glaze, that is, one in which no more lead entered than in common flint glass, and therefore incapable of being affected by any articles of food contained or prepared in such vessels. With these materials, either in their natural white or variously coloured—black by manganese, blue by cobalt, brown and buff by iron—he produced imitations of the Etruscan vases, and of various other works of ancient art, such as the world had never before seen—such as no subsequent artist has ever attempted to rival. His copies of the Portland vase are miracles of skill; and the other specimens of similar works may give some idea of the many beautiful works that were produced in his manufactory. In table ware, for many years he led the way almost without a rival; but the immense demand occasioned by the successive improvements of this article, which first put down the use of delft, and then of pewter, gave ample room and encouragement to men of capital and skill to enter the field of profit and competition. Much good has hence resulted; many subordinate improvements have been effected and are almost daily making; and a new variety of ware, called ironstone, has been invented, and so rapidly and judiciously improved, that, in appearance and in many of its intrinsic properties, it bears a close resemblance to the older and coarser porcelains of China itself.

I shall conclude by a summary account of the manufacture of the best table ware; for a considerable part of which I am indebted to notes taken by Captain Bagnold, when visiting a pottery, inferior, perhaps, to none in the country.

The materials of the Staffordshire ware are calcined flints and clay. The flints are burnt in kilns, and then, while hot, quenched in water, by which they are cracked through their whole substance. After being quenched they are ground in mills with water. The mill is a hollow cylinder of wood bound with hoops, and having a bottom of blocks of chert, a hard, tough, siliceous stone: the mill-shaft is perpendicular, and has two horizontal arms passing through it cross-wise. Between these arms are laid loose blocks of chert, which are moved round on the bed-stone as the arms revolve, and thus grind the flint with water to the consistence of cream.

The clay, from Dorsetshire and Devonshire, is mixed with water, and in this state is passed through fine sieves to separate the grosser particles. The flint and clay are now mixed by measure, and the mud or cream is passed through a sieve in order to render the mixture more complete.

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In this state it is called slip, and is now evaporated to a proper consistence in long brick troughs. It is then tempered in the pug-mill, which is an iron cylinder placed perpendicularly, in which an arbor or shaft revolves, having several knives projecting from it, the edges of which are somewhat depressed. By the revolution of these the clay is cut or kneaded, and finally is forced by their action through a hole in the bottom of the cylinder, and is now ready for use. Cups, pots, basins, and other round articles, are turned rough on the horizontal potter's wheel; and, when half dried, are again turned in a lathe. They are then fully dried in a stove, and the remaining roughnesses are afterwards removed by friction with coarse paper. Articles that are not round, and the round ones that have embossed designs on their surface, are made of thin sheets of clay rolled out like dough, and then pressed into moulds of plaster of Paris; the moulds being previously dried, absorb the superficial moisture of the clay, and thus allow it to part from them without injury. The two or three separate pieces composing the article are then united by means of fluid slip. Spouts and handles of jugs and tea-pots are made and united with the body of the vessel in the same way. Small handles, beadings, mouldings, &c. are formed by means of an iron cylinder, having its bottom perforated so as to mould the clay, as it passes through, into the required figure. A piston is inserted into the top of the cylinder, and caused to descend slowly by means of a screw, in consequence of which the clay is continually passing out through the perforation, and is cut off in lengths.

Plates are beaten or rolled out of a lump of clay, and are then laid on a mould turned to the shape of the upper surface of the plate. A rotatory motion is given to the mould, and an earthenware tool representing a section of the plate is pressed upon it; thus the plate is made smooth, has a uniform thickness given to it, and it takes a perfect cast of the mould. Cups, saucers, and basins, when rough-turned, are dried on the block to prevent them from warping.

The ware being thoroughly dried, is packed into saggars and burnt in the furnace to biscuit. Patterns for flat, or nearly flat surfaces, are put on by printing the pattern from a copper-plate with an ink composed of oxide of cobalt, oxide of iron, or other colouring matter, mixed with oil. The impression is taken on soft paper, and is applied to the surface of the biscuit, and slightly rubbed to make the print adhere: the biscuit is then soaked in water till the paper may be stripped off, leaving the print or pattern behind[12]. The ware is then dipped in the glaze, which is a mixture of flint slip and white lead, and the bibulous quality of the biscuit causes a sufficient quantity to adhere: the piece is then dried and again passed into the furnace, which brings out the colours of the pattern, and at the same time vitrifies the glaze.

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[12] This very ingenious method of transferring printed patterns to biscuit ware was invented at the Porcelain works at Worcester.

The finest patterns are applied after the glazing has been completed, by taking the impressions from the copperplate on a flexible strap covered with a strong gelatinous mixture of glue and treacle. This strap is then pressed on the ware, and gives the impression in glue, the colouring powder is then dusted over it, and a sufficient portion adheres to the damp parts to give the pattern, after having been again in the furnace. The more elaborate patterns on earthenware, and all those on porcelain, are finished by penciling in.

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS

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THE WAVERLEY NOVELS.

Heroines.

The female characters in the Waverley Novels are touched with much grace and spirit, though they are not, upon the whole, brought so vividly to our minds as the men,—probably because they are more ideal. Such they must necessarily be. The course of woman's existence glides comparatively unobserved in the under-current of domestic life; and the records of past days furnish little note of their condition. Few materials are available from which the historical novelist can deduce an accurate notion of the relative situation of women in early times. We know very little either of the general extent of their cultivation and acquirements, or of the treatment which they received from men. On the latter point, we must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the poetical effusions of gallantry, and the false varnish of chivalrous devotion. It is to be feared that the practice of the days of chivalry was much at variance with its professions; and that women were degraded, as we always find them wherever civilization has made little progress. It was by command of Edward I. of England, the Mirror of Chivalry, one of the bravest knights in the host of the Crusaders, that two of the noblest ladies in Scotland were hung up in iron cages, exposed like wild beasts to the view of the populace. Facts like this mark the standard of public feeling, and may teach us that there was little real consideration for women in those times;—and where that is not found, there can be little refinement. Scantiness of information, and the necessity of assimilating to modern tastes a picture which, if it could have been obtained, would probably have been disagreeable, has obliged the Author of Waverley to draw much from the resources of his poetical mind in the depicting of female character. And wisely has he so done; for

we regard many of the females in his tales only as beautiful and poetical creations; and we are gratified without being deceived. We find no fault with him for having made his Minna and Brenda beings such as the daughters of a Shetland Udaller, nearly a century

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and a half ago, were not likely to have been;—we blame him not because in his Rebecca, that most charming production of an imagination rich with images of nobleness and beauty, he has exhibited qualities incompatible with the real situation of the daughter of that most oppressed and abject being, a Jew of the twelfth century. It is plain that if Minna or Rebecca had been drawn with a strict regard to probability, and made just such as they were most likely to have been, one of the great objects of fiction would have been reversed: the reader would have been repelled instead of being attracted. This poetical tone pervades, more or less, the delineations of all his heroines; and the charm which it imparts, perhaps more than counterbalances the detrimental tendency of sameness. At the same time, we may add, that it is least exhibited when circumstances seem least to require it. His heroines are, on the whole, better treated, as such, than his heroes, who are, for the most part, thrown into the ring to be bandied about, the sport of circumstances;—owing almost all their interest to the events which thicken around them. Many of them exhibit no definite character, or, when they rise above nonentities, are not so much individuals as abstractions. A strong fraternal likeness to the vacillating Waverley does not raise them in our esteem. They seem too nearly imitations of the most faulty portion of that otherwise admirable tale.

Scenic Description.

Good as are the descriptions of quiescent objects, it is in his treatment of events,—of the visible operations of man, or of the elements,—that the author displays most power. What have we finer of its kind, than the storm in the Antiquary? The sullen sunset—the advancing tide—the rocks half hidden by the rising foam—the marks of promised safety fading from sight, and with them the hope they nourished—the ledge which the sufferers gained with difficulty—on the one side, a raging sea, and on the other, a barrier that forbade retreat! Guy Mannering contains another masterpiece—the night attack of Portanferry, witnessed by Bertram. We feel as though we were that person—we see and hear all of which his eyes and ears had cognizance; and the impression is the more strong, because the writer has told only *that*, and left the rest to our imagination. This illustrates one feature of the author's skill. He knows the effect producible by leaving circumstances in the incompleteness and obscurity in which they often present themselves to the senses of a single person; he tells just what that person could have perceived, and leaves the sketch to be finished by his reader. Thus, when Porteous is hurried away to execution, we attend his ruthless conductors, but we wait not to witness the last details, but flee with Butler from the scene of death, and looking back from afar, see through the lurid glare of torches a human figure dangling in the air—and the whole scene is more present to our minds, than if every successive incident had been regularly unfolded. Thus, when Ravenswood and his horse vanish from the sight of Colonel Ashton, we feel how the impressiveness and beauty of the description are heightened by placing us where the latter stood,—showing us no more than he could have witnessed, and bidding our imaginations to fill up the awful doubtful chasm.

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That the Author of *Waverley* is a master of the pathetic, is evinced by several well-known passages. Such are the funeral of the fisherman's son in the *Antiquary*—the imprisonment and trial of Effie Deans, and the demeanour of the sister and the broken-hearted father—the short narrative of the smuggler in *Redgauntlet*—many parts of *Kenilworth*—and of that finest of tragic tales, the *Bride of Lammermoor*.

Plots.

The plots in the *Waverley Novels* generally display much ingenuity, and are interestingly involved; but there is not one in the conduct of which it would not be easy to point out a blemish. None have that completeness which constitutes one of the chief merits of Fielding's *Tom Jones*. There is always either an improbability, or a forced expedient, or an incongruous incident, or an unpleasant break, or too much intricacy, or a hurried conclusion. They are usually languid in the commencement, and abrupt in the close; too slowly opened, and too hastily summed up. *Guy Mannering* is one of those in which these two faults are least apparent. The plot of *Peveril of the Peak* might perhaps, on the whole, have been considered the best, if it had not been spoiled by the finale.

Scott and Shakspeare.

It may be said of the novels of Sir Walter Scott, as of the plays of Shakspeare, that though they never exhibit an attempt to enforce any distinct moral, they are, on the whole, favourable to morality. They tend (to use a common expression) to keep the heart in its right place. They inspire generous emotions, and a warm-hearted and benevolent feeling towards our fellow-creatures; and for the most part afford a just and unperverted view of human character and conduct. In them a very sparing use is made of satire—that weapon of questionable utility—which perhaps has never yet done much good in any hands, not even in those of Pope or Young. Satire is thought useful, too much because it gratifies the uncharitableness of our nature. But to hold up wisdom and virtue to our admiration, is better than to apply the lash, however dexterously, to vice and folly. There are, perhaps, no fictions exciting the imagination so strongly as the *Waverley Novels*, which have a less tendency to corrupt the heart; and it is, chiefly, because they do not exhibit flattering and delusive pictures of crime. In this again they resemble the plays of Shakspeare. Forcibly as that great dramatist has depicted vice, and ably as he has sometimes shown its coexistence with physical energy and intellectual superiority,—much as he may teach us to admire the villain for some of his attributes, he never confounds the limits of right and wrong. He produces no obliquity in our moral sense, nor seduces us to lend our sympathy against the dictates of our better reason. Neither in his graver, nor in his gayer scenes, is there aught which can corrupt. He invests profligacy with no attractive colours, nor lends a false and imposing

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greatness to atrocious villany. We admire the courage of Macbeth, the ability of Richard, the craft and dexterity of Iago, and the stubborn energy of Shylock,—but we never applaud, nor wish to emulate. We see them too truly as they are. The Author of Waverley, though he approaches nearer to the fault in question than Shakspeare, can never be fairly said to have committed it. Cleveland, Robertson, Rashleigh, Christian, might, by a few touches added, and a few expunged, become very captivating villains, and produce a brisk fermentation of mischief in many young and weak heads. But of such false touches and suppressions of truth, the author has not been guilty. He has not disguised their vices and their weaknesses,—he has not endowed them with incompatible virtues; but, just favouring them charitably, so as to take off the edge of our dislike, has exhibited them nearly as they must necessarily have been. The same discretion is observable in his impersonation of those equivocal characters in humble life which he has invested with an interest hitherto unknown. Meg Merrilies, Madge Wildfire, Ratcliffe, and the Smuggler in Redgauntlet, are characters in whom are found redeeming traits of the best feeling, and which, therefore, interest us deeply. Yet all of them are more or less at war with order and the institutions of society, and must fall under its heavy ban. And, interested as we are, we are never led to deem the censures of society unjust, or to take part with them in their war against it.

Style.

Beauty of style is not one of Sir Walter Scott's chief merits. His choice of expressions is, however, better than his disposition of them. His sentences are too full of expletives,—too long, and loosely arranged; exuberant, like his fancy, and untrimmed, as if never subjected to a process of compression,—a *limae labor*, perhaps incompatible with the wonderful expedition with which work after work has issued from the press. This facility of production is too remarkable to be overlooked. It is almost unexampled. Voltaire and Lord Byron have written some of their best works in an inconceivably short time. Dryden produced five act plays at the rate of three a-year. Shakspeare is supposed in one year to have written five, among which is that whereon he must have expended most thought—Hamlet. This, considering the value of the productions, would perhaps be the greatest feat on record, if we could be sure that the plays had been wholly invented and written within the twelve-month—but this cannot be ascertained. Nevertheless, for long continued fertility of pen, perhaps Sir Walter Scott may be safely said to have never been exceeded.

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Two remarks have been repeated, till many receive them as undeniable axioms; and we notice them only for that reason. One is, that the Author of Waverley's earliest productions are decidedly his best—the other, that he is never so great as when he treads on Scottish ground. In neither assertion is there much truth. Are *Ivanhoe*, *Peveril of the Peak*, *Quentin Durward*, *Nigel*, and *Kenilworth*, inferior to *St. Ronan's Well*, the *Monastery*, and the *Abbot*? May not the first mentioned five be ranked among the best of his novels? and must they unquestionably yield to *Rob Roy* or the *Antiquary*? or does one of our latest favourites, the *Maid of Perth*, betray much deficiency of that vigour which characterized the first-born Waverley! Few will answer in the affirmative. —*Edinburgh Review*.

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THE GATHERER.

Eccentric Preaching[13].—Mr. Tavernour, of Water Eaton, in Oxfordshire, high sheriff of the county, came, it is said, in pure charity, not out of ostentation, and gave the scholars at Oxford a sermon, in St. Mary's Church, with his gold chain about his neck, and his sword by his side, and accosted them thus: "Arriving at the Mount of St. Mary's, in the Stony stage, where I now stand, I have brought you some fine biscuits, baked in the oven of charity, and carefully conserved for the chickens of the church, the sparrows of the spirit, and the sweet swallows of salvation."

[13] In the fifteenth century.

SWAINE.

An Unlucky Plank.—Sometime since a very large tree was cut down near Goulson, in the parish of Hartland, into which it was reported and believed by the peasantry of the neighbourhood, that "Major Docton" was conjured. The tree was purchased by a builder in Bideford, and cut into planks, one of which was washed away by the tide, and drifted to Appledore, where it was picked up by some boatmen, and sold to the proprietor of the new market, then erecting. The right owner, however, having heard where the plank was, sent to demand it, but in vain. The bearer of the message strongly urged the giving of it up, declaring that as the old major had been conjured into it, it would certainly throw the market down. The words were prophetic, for, while they were yet disputing on the subject, that part of the market-house containing the plank, fell with a sudden crash to the ground. The giving way of the wall is easily accounted for, by less abtruse rules than those of magic; but it so astonished the builder, that he was as anxious to restore the conjured plank, as he was just before to retain it.

W.G.C.

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Manufacture of Leather in Canada.—It is stated in a recent number of the *Montreal Current*, that this important branch of manufacture has wonderfully increased of late. A few years back, the colony was almost entirely dependent on New York, for supplies of leather. It is now certain that it can be manufactured in Canada, and brought to market at as low a price as it can be imported. Canada possesses immense quantities of hemlock in her woods, and the tanning business having been introduced so generally, these hemlock forests will probably prove to be mines of gold. Some opinion of the extent to which tanning is carried on in Montreal and its vicinity, may be found in the following statement of twelve tanneries connected with one house in that city:—Cost of tannery, 15,600_l_.; number of hides manufactured yearly, 40,500; average weight 30 lbs.; weight of sole-leather produced, 1,215,000 lbs.; average cost of manufacturing, 4_d_. per lb.; average value per lb., 1_s_. 3_d_.; total value, 103,437_l_ 10_s_. Besides the twelve tanneries above mentioned, there are many others in the city and other places, at which the cost of manufacturing is about the same as those enumerated. It is added, “This gives a sum of about 70,000_l_. distributed among the working classes of the district of Montreal, which a few years ago was expended in the United States.”

W.G.C.

Family Slaughter.—In Westmoreland it is usual at Christmas for the farmers to kill each a sheep for their own use, on which occasion, when the butcher inquires if they want any meat against Christmas, the usual reply is, “Nay, I think not, I think o’ killing mysell.” A butcher called on a farmer of his acquaintance in the usual manner, saying, “Will ye want a bit o’ meat, or ye’ll kill yersell, this Christmas?” “I kna not,” replied the farmer, “whether I’s kill mysell, or tak’ a side o’ me feyther.”

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