

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction

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Page 1

MERCERS' HALL, AND CHEAPSIDE

[Illustration: Mercers' Hall, and Cheapside]

The engraving is an interesting illustration of the architecture of the metropolis in the seventeenth century, independent of its local association with names illustrious in historical record.

In former times, when persons of the same trade congregated together in some particular street, the mercers principally assembled in West Cheap, now called Cheapside, near where the above hall stands, and thence called by the name of "the Mercery." In Lydgate's *London Lyckpenny*, are the following lines alluding to this custom:

Then to Chepe I began me drawne,
When much people I saw for to stand;
One offered me velvet, silk and lawne
And another he taketh me by the hand.
Here is Paris thread, the finest in the land.

Pennant thus describes the principal historical data of the spot:

"On the north side of Cheapside, (between Ironmonger Lane and Old Jewry,) stood the Hospital of St. Thomas of Acon, founded by Thomas Fitz-Theobald de Helles, and his wife Agnes, sister to the turbulent Thomas Becket, who was born in the house of his father, Gilbert, situated on this spot. The mother of our meek saint was a fair Saracen, whom his father had married in the Holy Land. On the site of this house rose the hospital, built within twenty years after the murder of Thomas; yet such was the repute of his sanctity, that it was dedicated to him, in conjunction with the blessed Virgin, without waiting for his canonization. The hospital consisted of a master and several brethren, professing the rule of St. Austin. The church, cloisters, &c. were granted by Henry VIII. to the Mercers' Company, who had the gift of the mastership.[1]

[1] Tanner.

"In the old church were several monuments; among others, one to James Butler, Earl of Ormond, and Joan his wife, living in the beginning of the reign of Henry VI. The whole pile was destroyed in the great fire, but was very handsomely rebuilt by the Mercers' Company, who have their Hall here.

"In this chapel the celebrated, but unsteady, archbishop of Spalato, preached his first sermon in 1617, in Italian, before the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a splendid audience; and continued his discourses in the same place several times, after he had embraced our religion; but having the folly to return to his ancient faith, and trust himself

among his old friends at Rome, he was shut up in the Castle of St. Angelo, where he died in 1625.”

“The Mercers’ Company is the first of the twelve. The name by no means implied, originally, a dealer in silks: for *mercery* included all sorts of small wares, toys, and haberdashery; but, as several of this opulent company were merchants, and imported great quantities of rich silks from Italy, the name became applied to the Company, and all dealers in silk. Not fewer than sixty-two mayors were of this Company, between the years 1214 and 1762; among which were Sir John Coventry, Sir Richard Whittington, and Sir Richard and Sir John Gresham.”

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The front in Cheapside, which alone can be seen, is narrow, but floridly adorned with carvings and architectural ornaments. The door is enriched with the figures of two cupids, mantling the arms, festoons, &c. and above the balcony, it is adorned with two pilasters, entablature, and pediment of the Ionic order; the intercolumns are the figures of Faith and Hope, and that of Charity, in a niche under the cornice of the pediment, with other enrichments. The interior is very handsome. The hall and great parlour are wainscoted with oak, and adorned with Ionic pilasters. The ceiling is of fret-work, and the stately piazzas are constituted by large columns, and their entablature of the Doric order.

The arms of the Mercers, as they are sculptured over the gateway, present for their distinguishing feature a demi-virgin with dishevelled hair: it was in allusion to this circumstance, that in the days of pageantry, at the election of Lord Mayor, a richly ornamented chariot was produced, in which was seated a young and beautiful virgin, most sumptuously arrayed, her hair flowing in ringlets over her neck and shoulders, and a crown upon her head. When the day's diversions were over, she was liberally rewarded and dismissed, claiming as her own the rich attire she had worn.

From this place likewise was formerly a solemn procession by the Lord Mayor, who, in the afternoon of the day he was sworn at the Exchequer, met the Aldermen; whence they repaired together to St. Paul's, and there prayed for the soul of their benefactor, William, Bishop of London, in the time of William the Conqueror, at his tomb. They then went to the churchyard to a place where lay the parents of Thomas a Becket, and prayed for all souls departed. They then returned to the chapel, and both Mayor and Aldermen offered each a penny.

Attached to the original foundation or hospital was a grammar-school, which has been subsequently continued at the expense of the Mercers' Company, though not on the same spot. It was for some time kept in the Old Jewry, whence it has been removed to College Hill, Upper Thames Street. Among the masters may be mentioned William Baxter, nephew to the non-conformist, Richard Baxter, and author of two Dictionaries of British and Roman Antiquities.

Nearly opposite the entrance to Mercers' Hall, is a handsome stone-fronted house, built by Sir Christopher Wren. The houses adjoining the Hall were of similar ornamental character; although the unenclosed shop-fronts present a strange contrast with some of the improvements and superfluities of modern times. The Hall front has lately been renovated, and presents a rich display of architectural ornament.

* * * * *



THE LONE GRAVES.

(For the Mirror.)

Why should their sleep thus silent be, from streams and flow'rs away,
While wanders thro' the sunny air the cuckoo's mellow lay;
Those forms, whose eyes reflected heaven in their mild depth of blue,
Whose hair was like the wave that shines o'er sands of golden hue?



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Are these the altars of their rest, the pure and sacred shrines;
Where Memory, rapt o'er visions fled, her holy spell combines?
The sire, the child, oh, waft them back to their delightful dell,
When, like a voice from heavenly lands, awakes the curfew bell.

And have they no remembrance here, the cheeks that softly glow'd,
The amber hair, that, on the breeze, in gleaming tresses flow'd,
The hymn which hail'd the Sabbath morn,—the fix'd and fervid eye;
Must these sweet treasures of the heart in shade and silence lie?

Oh, no! thou place of sanctities! a ray has from thee gone,
Dearer than noontide's gorgeous light, or Sabbath's music tone;
A spirit! whose bright ark is far beyond the clouds and waves,
Albeit there is a sunless gloom on these, their lonely graves!

Reginald Augustine.

* * * * *

BAGLEY WOOD.

(For the Mirror.)

Bagley is situated about two miles and a half from Oxford, on the Abingdon-road, and affords an agreeable excursion to the Oxonians, who, leaving the city of learning, pass over the old bridge, where the observatory of the celebrated Friar Bacon was formerly standing. The wood is large, extending itself to the summit of a hill, which commands a charming panoramic view of Oxford, and of the adjacent country. The scene is richly diversified with hill and dale, while the spires, turrets, and towers of the university, rise high above the clustering trees, filling the beholder with the utmost awe and veneration. During the summer, this rustic spot presents many cool retreats, and love-embowering shades; and here many an amour is carried on, free from suspicion's eye, beneath the wide umbrageous canopy of nature.

Gipsies, or *fortune-tellers*, are constantly to be found in Bagley Wood; and many a gay Oxonian may be seen in the company of some wandering Egyptian beauty. So partial, indeed, are several of the young men of the university to the tawny tribe, that they are frequently observed in their *academics*, lounging round the picturesque tents, having *their* fortunes told; though, it must be remarked, their countenances usually evince a waggish incredulity on those occasions, and they appear much more amused with the novel scene around them than gratified with the favourable predictions of the wily Egyptians.

The merry gipsies of Bagley Wood might well sing with *Herrick*

“Here we securely live, and eat
The cream of meat;
And keep eternal fires
By which we sit, *and do divine.*”

G.W.N.

* * * * *

EATING “MUTTON COLD.”

(*For the Mirror.*)

A correspondent in a late number asks for a solution of the expression, “eating mutton cold.” If the following one is worth printing, it is much at your service and that of the readers of the *mirror*.

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I consider then that it has simply the same meaning as that of “coming a day after the fair.” To come at the end of a feast when the various viands (always including mutton as being easy of digestion for dyspeptic people) were still warm, though cut pretty near to the bone, would, by most persons, particularly aldermanic “bodies,” be considered sufficiently vexatious; how doubly annoying then must it be to come so late as to find the meats more than half cold, and, perhaps, but little of them left even in that anti-epicurean state! Whoever has been unfortunate enough to miss a fine fat haunch either of venison or mutton, which, smoking on the board, even Dr. Kitchiner would have pronounced fit for an emperor, cannot but enter deeply and feelingly into the disappointment of that guest who, arriving, through some misdate of the invitation card, on the day subsequent to the feast, finds but, *horribile dictu*, cold lean ham, cold pea-soup, cold potatoes, and finally, *cold mutton*. Goldsmith’s idea certainly was that Burke was never able to say, in the words of the Roman adage, *in tempore veni quod rerum omnium est primum*; but rather in plain English, “confound my ill luck, I never yet was invited to a feast but I either missed it in toto, or came so late as to be obliged to eat my mutton cold, a thing, which of all others, I most abhor.” HEN. B.

* * * * *

POOL’S HOLE, DERBYSHIRE.

(*For the Mirror.*)

This cave is said to have taken its title from a notorious robber of that name, who being declared an outlaw, found in this hole a refuge from justice, where he carried on his nocturnal depredations with impunity. Others insist that this dismal hole was the habitation of a hermit or anchorite, of the name of Pool. Of the two traditions, I prefer the former. It is situated at the bottom of *Coitmos*, a lofty mountain near Buxton. The entrance is by a small arch, so low that you are forced to creep on hands and knees to gain admission; but it gradually opens into a vault above a quarter of a mile in length, and as some assert, a quarter of a mile high. It is certainly very lofty, and resembles the roof of a Gothic edifice. In a cavern to the right called Pool’s Chamber, there is a fine echo, and the dashing of a current of water, which flows along the middle of the great vault, very much heightens the wonder.

On the floor are great ridges of stone—water is perpetually distilling from the roof and sides of this vault, and the drops before they fall produce a very pleasing effect, by reflecting numberless rays from the candles carried by the guides. They also form their quality from crystallizations of various flakes like figures of fret work, and in some places, having long accumulated upon one another, into large masses, bearing a rude resemblance to various animals.

In the same cavity is a column as clear as alabaster, called *Mary Queen of Scots'* column, because it is said she reached so far; beyond which is a steep ascent for nearly a quarter of a mile, which terminates in a hollow in the roof, called the Needle's-eye, in which, when the guide places his candle, it looks like a star in the firmament. You only wonder when you get out how you attained such an achievement. W.H.H.

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CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

(To the Editor of the Mirror.)

Happening to look at No. 229, of your valuable Miscellany, in which you have given rather a lengthy account of Canterbury Cathedral, I was surprised to find no notice taken of the beautiful STONE SCREEN in the interior of the cathedral, which is considered by many, one of the finest specimens of florid Gothic in the kingdom. The following is a brief description of this ancient specimen of architecture:

This fine piece of Gothic carved work was built by Prior Hen. de Estria, in 1304. It is rich in flutings, pyramids, and canopied niches, in which stand six statues crowned, five of which hold globes in their hands, and the sixth a church. Various have been the conjectures as to the individuals intended by these statues. That holding the church is supposed to represent King Ethelbert, being a very ancient man with a long beard. The next figure appears more feminine, and may probably intend his queen, Bertha.

Before the havoc made in Charles's reign, there were thirteen figures representing Christ and his Apostles in the niches which are round the arch-doorway, and also twelve mitred Saints aloft along the stone work, where is now placed an organ.

At the National Repository, Charing Cross, there is exhibited a very correct model of this screen, in which the likenesses of the ancient kings are admirably imitated. P.T.

* * * * *

ANCIENT STONE.

(For the Mirror.)

There formerly stood about three miles from Carmarthen, at a place called New Church, a stone about eight feet long and two broad. The only distinguishable words upon it were "*Severus filius Severi.*" The remainder of the inscription, by dilapidation and time, was defaced. It is supposed that there had been a battle fought here, and that Severus fell. About a quarter of a mile from this was another with the name of some other individual. The above stone was removed by the owner of the land on which it stood, and is now used instead of a gate-post by him. I should imagine it was the son of Severus the Roman, who founded the great wall and ditch called after him, Severus' Wall and Ditch, and as there was a Roman road from St. David's, in Wales, to Southampton, it is not improbable that the Romans should come from thence to Carmarthen. W.H.

* * * * *

THE COSMOPOLITE.

* * * * *

DIET OF VARIOUS NATIONS.

(For the Mirror.)

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To the artist, the amateur, the traveller, and man of taste in general, the following gleanings respecting the diet of various nations, are, in the spirit of English hospitality, cordially inscribed. The breakfast of the *Icelanders* consists of *skyr*, a kind of sour, coagulated milk, sometimes mixed with fresh milk or cream, and flavoured with the juice of certain berries; their usual dinner is dried fish, *skyr*, and rancid butter; and *skyr*, cheese, or porridge, made of Iceland moss, forms their supper; bread is rarely tasted by many of the *Icelanders*, but appears as a dainty at their rural feasts with mutton, and milk-porridge. They commonly drink a kind of whey mixed with water. As the cattle of this people are frequently, during winter, reduced to the miserable necessity of subsisting on dried fish, we can scarcely conceive their fresh meat to be so great a luxury as it is there esteemed. The poor of *Sweden* live on hard bread, salted or dried fish, water-gruel, and beer. The *Norwegian* nobility and merchants fare sumptuously, but the lower classes chiefly subsist on the following articles:—oatmeal-bread, made in thin cakes (strongly resembling the havver-bread of Scotland) and baked only twice a year. The oatmeal for this bread is, in times of scarcity, which in Norway frequently occur, mixed with the bark of elm or fir tree, ground, after boiling and drying, into a sort of flour; sometimes in the vicinity of fisheries, the roes of cod kneaded with the meal of oats or barley, are made into a kind of hasty-pudding, and soup, which is enriched with a pickled herring or mackerel. The flesh of the shark, and thin slices of meat salted and dried in the wind, are much esteemed. Fresh fish are plentiful on the coasts, but for lack of conveyances, unknown in the interior; the deficiency however, is there amply supplied by an abundance of game. The flesh of cattle pickled, smoked, or dry-salted, is laid by for winter store; and after making cheese, the sour whey is converted into a liquor called *syre*, which, mixed with water, constitutes the ordinary beverage of the *Norwegians*; but for festive occasions they brew strong beer, and with it intoxicate themselves, as also with brandy, when procurable. The maritime *Laplanders* feed on fish of every description, even to that of sea-dog, fish-livers, and train-oil, and of these obtaining but a scanty provision; they are even aspiring to the rank of the interior inhabitants, whose nutriment is of a more delicate description, being the flesh of all kinds of wild animals, herbaceous and carnivorous, and birds of prey; but bear's flesh is their greatest dainty. Rein-deer flesh is commonly boiled in a large iron kettle, and when done, torn to pieces by the fingers of the *major domo*, and by him portioned out to his family and friends; the broth remaining in the kettle is boiled into soup with rye or oat-meal, and sometimes seasoned with salt. Rein-deer blood is also a viand with these people,

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and being boiled, either by itself or mixed with wild berries, in the stomach of the animal from whence it was taken, forms a kind of black-pudding. The beverage of the Laplanders is milk and water, broths, and fish-soups; brandy, of which they are extremely fond, is a great rarity, and a glass of it will warm their hearts towards the weary sojourner, who, but for the precious gift, might ask hospitality at their huts in vain. The diet of the *Samoides*, resembles that of the Laplanders, save that they devour raw the flesh of fish and reindeer. For this people, all animals taken in the chase, and even those found dead, afford food, with the exception of dogs, cats, ermines, and squirrels. They have no regular time for meals, but the members of a family help themselves when they please from the boiler which always hangs over the fire. It is scarcely possible to name the variety of diet to be found among the Russian tribes; but even in cities, and at the tables of the opulent and civilized, late accounts mention the appearance of several strange and disgusting dishes, compounded of pastry, grain, pulse, vinegar, honey, fish, flesh, fruits, &c., not at all creditable to Russian gastronomic science. The diet of the *Polish* peasantry is meagre in the extreme; they seldom taste animal food, and both sexes swallow a prodigious quantity of *schnaps*, an ardent spirit resembling whiskey. The *Dutch* of all ranks are fond of butter, and seldom is a journey taken without a butter-box in the pocket. The boors feed on roots, pulse, herbs, sour milk, and water-souchie, a kind of fish-broth. In *England*, the edible produce of the world appears at the tables of the nobility, gentry, and opulent commercial classes; and upon comparison with that of other nations, it will be seen that the diet of English artisans, peasantry, and even paupers, is far superior in variety and nourishment; bread, (white and brown) vegetables, meat, broth, soup, fish, fruit, roots, herbs, cheese, milk, butter, and, not rarely, sugar and tea, with fermented liquors and ardent spirits, are all, or most of them, procured as articles of daily subsistence by the English inferior classes. In Scotland, the higher ranks live abstemiously, save on festive occasions; but animal food and wheaten bread is seldom tasted by the lower orders, who chiefly subsist on rye, barley, and oatmeal, prepared in bread, thin cakes, and porridge; this last termed *stirabout*, is simply oatmeal mixed with water and boiled (being stirred about with a wooden skether or spoon when on the fire) to the consistency of flour-paste, not very stiff; this, eaten with milk, forms the chief diet of the Scottish artisans and peasantry, and, indeed, many of superior stations prefer it for breakfast to bread of the finest flour which can be procured. Both high and low are partial to the following national dishes. The *haggis*, a kind of pudding, made of the offals or interior of a sheep, and boiled

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in the integument of its stomach; this dish, both in odour and flavour, is usually excessively offensive to the stranger; the singed sheep's head, water-souchie, Scotch soup, (an *olla podrida* of meats and vegetables,) chicken-broth and sowens. *Laver*, a sauce made from a peculiar kind of sea-weed, and *caviar*, introduced from Russia, appear at the tables of the opulent, and by many are much esteemed. The diet of the higher ranks of *Irish* varies but little from that of the same classes in England and Scotland. Amongst national dishes appear the *staggering bob*, a calf only two days old, delicately dressed; hodge-podge, a soup answering to that of Scotland; colcannon, a mixture of potatoes and greens, seasoned with onions, salt, and pepper, finely braided together after boiling; and a sea-weed sauce, either laver or some other, the name of which we do not happen to remember. Potatoes, fish, (fresh and salted) eggs, milk, and butter-milk, form the principal support of the inferior class, of Irish; and whiskey the national ardent spirit of Ireland and Scotland, is but too often, as is gin in England, the sole support of a host of besotted beings, who drop into untimely graves, from the *habit of intoxication*.

(*To be continued.*)

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THE SELECTOR; AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

* * * * *

NUPTIALS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

At Susa, Alexander collected all the nobles of the empire, and celebrated the most magnificent nuptials recorded in history. He married Barcine, or Stateira, the daughter of the late king, and thus, in the eyes of his Persian subjects, confirmed his title to the throne. His father, Philip, was a polygamist in practice, although it would be very difficult to prove that the Macedonians in general were allowed a plurality of wives; but Alexander was now the King of Kings, and is more likely to have been guided by Persian than Greek opinions upon the subject. Eighty of his principal officers followed his example, and were united to the daughters of the chief nobility of Persia.

The marriages, in compliment to the brides, were celebrated after the Persian fashion, and during the vernal equinox. For at no other period, by the ancient laws of Persia, could nuptials be legally celebrated. Such an institution is redolent of the poetry and freshness of the new world, and of an attention to the voice of nature, and the analogies of physical life. The young couple would marry in time to sow their field, to reap the

harvest, and gather their stores, before the season of cold and scarcity overtook them. It is difficult to say how far this custom prevailed among primitive nations, but it can scarcely be doubted that we still retain lingering traces of it in the harmless amusements of St. Valentine's day.

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On the wedding-day Alexander feasted the eighty bridegrooms in a magnificent hall prepared for the purpose. Eighty separate couches were placed for the guests, and on each a magnificent wedding-robe for every individual. At the conclusion of the banquet, and while the wine and the dessert were on the table, the eighty brides were introduced; Alexander first rose, received the princess, took her by the hand, kissed her, and placed her on the couch close to himself. This example was followed by all, till every lady was seated by her betrothed. This formed the whole of the Persian ceremony—the salute being regarded as the seal of appropriation. The Macedonian form was still more simple and symbolical. The bridegroom, dividing a small loaf with his sword, presented one-half to the bride; wine was then poured as a libation on both portions, and the contracting parties tasted of the bread. Cake and wine, as nuptial refreshments, may thus claim a venerable antiquity. In due time the bridegrooms conducted their respective brides to chambers prepared for them within the precincts of the royal palace.

The festivities continued for five days, and all the amusements of the age were put into requisition for the entertainment of the company. Athenaeus has quoted from Charas, a list of the chief performers, which I transcribe more for the sake of the performances and of the states where these lighter arts were brought to the greatest perfection, than of the names, which are now unmeaning sounds. Scymnus from Tarentum, Philistides from Syracuse, and Heracleitus from Mytilene, were the great jugglers, or as the Greek word intimates, the wonder-workers of the day. After them, Alexis, the Tarentine, displayed his excellence as a rhapsodist, or repeater, to appropriate music, of the soul-stirring poetry of Homer. Cratinus the Methymnoean, Aristonymus the Athenian, Athenodorus the Teian, played on the harp—without being accompanied by the voice. On the contrary, Heracleitus the Tarentine, and Aristocrates the Theban, accompanied their harps with lyric songs. The performers on wind instruments were divided on a similar, although it could not be on the same principle. Dionysius from Heracleia, and Hyperbolus from Cyzicum, sang to the flute, or some such instrument; while Timotheus, Phrynichus, Scaphisius, Diophantus, and Evius, the Chalcidian, first performed the Pythian overture, and then, accompanied by chorusses, displayed the full power of wind instruments in masterly hands. There was also a peculiar class called eulogists of Bacchus; these acquitted themselves so well on this occasion, applying to Alexander those praises which in their extemporaneous effusions had hitherto been confined to the god, that they acquired the name of Eulogists of Alexander. Nor did their reward fail them. The stage, of course, was not without its representatives:—Thessalus, Athenodorus, Aristocritus, in tragedy—Lycon, Phormion, and Ariston, in comedy—exerted their utmost skill, and contended for the prize of superior excellence. Phasimelus, the dancer was also present.

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It is yet undecided whether the Persians admitted their matrons to their public banquets and private parties;—but if we can believe the positive testimony of Herodotus, such was the case: and the summons of Vashti to the annual festival, and the admission of Haman to the queen's table, are facts which support the affirmation of that historian. The doubts upon the subject appear to have arisen from confounding the manners of Assyrians, Medes, and Parthians, with those of the more Scythian tribes of Persis. We read in Xenophon that the Persian women were so well made and beautiful, that their attractions might easily have seduced the affections of the Ten Thousand, and have caused them, like the lotus-eating companions of Ulysses, to forget their native land. Some little hints as to the mode in which their beauty was enhanced and their persons decorated, may be expected in the Life of Alexander, who, victorious over their fathers and brothers, yet submitted to their charms.

The Persian ladies wore the tiara or turban richly adorned with jewels. They wore their hair long, and both plaited and curled it; nor, if the natural failed, did they scruple to use false locks. They pencilled the eyebrows, and tinged the eyelid, with a dye that was supposed to add a peculiar brilliancy to the eyes. They were fond of perfumes, and their delightful ottar was the principal favourite. Their tunic and drawers were of fine linen, the robe or gown of silk—the train of this was long, and on state occasions required a supporter. Round the waist they wore a broad zone or cincture, flounced on both edges, and embroidered and jewelled in the centre. They also wore stockings and gloves, but history has not recorded their materials. They used no sandals; a light and ornamented shoe was worn in the house; and for walking they had a kind of coarse half boot. They used shawls and wrappers for the person, and veils for the head; the veil was large and square, and when thrown over the head descended low on all sides. They were fond of glowing colours, especially of purple, scarlet, and light-blue dresses. Their favourite ornaments were pearls; they wreathed these in their hair, wore them as necklaces, ear-drops, armlets, bracelets, anklets, and worked them into conspicuous parts of their dresses. Of the precious stones they preferred emeralds, rubies, and turquoises, which were set in gold and worn like the pearls.

Alexander did not limit his liberality to the wedding festivities, but presented every bride with a handsome marriage portion. He also ordered the names of all the soldiers who had married Asiatic wives to be registered; their number exceeded 10,000; and each received a handsome present, under the name of marriage gift.—*Williams's Life of Alexander, Family Library, No. 3.*

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POEMS, BY W.T. MONCRIEFF.

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This is a pretty little volume of graceful poems, printed “at the author’s private press, for private distribution only.” They are, however, entitled by their merits, to more extensive, or public circulation; for many of them evince the good taste and pure feelings of the writer. Some of the pieces relate to domestic circumstances, others are calculated to cheat “sorrow of a smile,” whilst all are, to use a set phrase, highly honourable to the head and heart of the author. In proof of this, we could detach several pages; but we have only space for a few:

SONG.

As flowers, that seem the light to shun
At evening’s dusk and morning’s haze,
Expand beneath the noon-tide sun,
And bloom to beauty in his rays,
So maidens, in a lover’s eyes,
A thousand times more lovely grow,
Yield added sweetness to his sighs,
And with unwonted graces glow.

As gems from light their brilliance gain,
And brightest shine when shone upon,
Nor half their orient rays retain,
When light wanes dim and day is gone:
So Beauty beams, for one dear one!
Acquires fresh splendour in his sight,
Her life—her light—her day—her sun—
Her harbinger of all that’s bright![2]

[2] “There is nothing new under the sun;” Solomon was right. I had written these lines from experiencing the truth of them, and really imagined I had been the first to express, what so many must have felt; but on looking over Rogers’s delicious little volume of Poems, some time after this was penned, I find he has, with his usual felicity, noted the same effect. I give his Text and Commentary; they occur in his beautiful poem, “Human Life,” speaking of a girl in love, he says:

“—soon her looks the rapturous truth avow,
Lovely before, oh, say how lovely now!”

On which he afterwards remarks:

“Is it not true that the young not only appear to be, but really are, most beautiful in the presence of those they love? It calls forth all their beauty.”



Such a coincidence might almost induce me to exclaim with the plagiarising pedant of antiquity, "*Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt!*"

ANECDOTE VERSIFIED.

Lord Albemarle to Mademoiselle Gaucher, on seeing her look very earnestly at the Evening Star.

Oh! do not gaze upon that star,
That distant star, so earnestly,
If thou would'st not my pleasure mar—
For ah! I cannot give it thee.[3]

And, such is my unbounded love,
Thou should'st not gaze upon a thing
I would not make thee mistress of,
And prove in love, at least, a *King!*

[3] Lord Albemarle, when advanced in years, was the lover and protector of Mademoiselle Gaucher. Her name of infancy, and that by which she was more endeared to her admirer, was Lolotte. One evening, as they were walking together, perceiving her eyes fixed on a star, he said to her, "Do not look at it so earnestly, my dear, I cannot give it you!"—Never, says Marmontel, did love express itself more delicately.

STANZAS TO THE SHADE OF —



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In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men,—an image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice. JOB iv. 13.

Reproach me not, beloved shade!
Nor think thy memory less I prize;
The smiles that o'er my features play'd,
But hid my pangs from vulgar eyes.
I acted like the worldling boy,
With heart to every feeling vain:
I smil'd with all, yet felt no joy;
I wept with all, yet felt no pain,

No—though, to veil thoughts of gloom,
I seem'd to twine Joy's rosy wreath,
'Twas but as flowerets o'er a tomb.
Which only hide the woe beneath.
I lose no portion of my woes,
Although my tears in secret flow;
More green and fresh the verdure grows,
Where the cold streams run hid below.

A MODEST ODE TO FORTUNE.

"Et genus et formam regina pecunia donat." HOR.

O Goddess Fortune, hear my prayer,
And make a bard for once thy care!
I do not ask, in houses splendid,
To be by liveried slaves attended;
I ask not for estates, nor land,
Nor host of vassals at command;
I ask not for a handsome wife—
Though I dislike a single life;
I ask not friends, nor fame, nor power,
Nor courtly rank, nor leisure's hour;
I ask not books, nor wine, nor plate.
Nor yet acquaintance with the great;
Nor dance, nor sons, nor mirth, nor jest,
Nor treasures of the East or West;
I ask not beauty, wit, nor ease,
Nor qualities more blest than these—
Learning nor genius, skill nor art,
Nor valour for the hero's part;



These, though I much desire to have,
I do not, dearest goddess, crave.—
I modestly for MONEY call—
For *money* will procure them *all*!

ANACREONTIC.

Come fill the bowl!—one summer's day,
Some hearts, that had been wreck'd and sever'd,
Again to tempt the liquid way,
And join their former mates endeavour'd;
But then arose this serious question.
Which best to kindred hearts would guide?
Water, was Prudence' pure suggestion,
But that they thought too cool a tide!

Peace bade them try the milky way,
But they were fearful 'twould becalm them;
Cried Love, on dews of morning stray,—
They deem'd 'twould from their purpose charm them.
Cried Friendship, try the ruby tide,—
They did—each obstacle departs;
'Tis still with wine 'reft hearts will glide
Most surely unto kindred hearts.

THE PILGRIM PRINCE.—BALLAD.

At blush of morn, the silver horn
Was loudly blown at the castle gate;
And, from the wall, the Seneschal
Saw there a weary pilgrim wait.
“What news—what news, thou stranger bold?
Thy looks are rough, thy raiment old!
And little does Lady Isabel care
To know how want and poverty fare.”
“Ah let me straight that lady see,
For far I come from the North Country!”

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"And who art thou, bold wight, I trow,
That would to Lady Isabel speak!"
"One who, long since shone as a prince,
And kiss'd her damask cheek:
But oh, my trusty sword has fail'd,
The cruel Paynim has prevail'd,
My lands are lost, my friends are few,
Trifles all, if my lady's true!"
"Poor prince! ah when did woman's truth,
Outlive the loss of lands and youth!"

* * * * *

THE SKETCH-BOOK.

THE SPLENDID ANNUAL.

By the Author of "Sayings and Doings."

Literature, even in this literary age, is not the ordinary pursuit of the citizens of London, although every merchant is necessarily a man of letters, and underwriters are as common as cucumbers. Notwithstanding, however, my being a citizen, I am tempted to disclose the miseries and misfortunes of my life in these pages, because having heard the "ANNIVERSARY" called a splendid annual, I hope for sympathy from its readers, seeing that I have been a "*splendid annual*" myself.

My name is Scropps—I *am* an Alderman—I *was* Sheriff—I *have been* Lord Mayor—and the three great eras of my existence were the year of my shrievalty, the year of my mayoralty, and the year after it. Until I had passed through this ordeal I had no conception of the extremes of happiness and wretchedness to which a human being may be carried, nor ever believed that society presented to its members an eminence so exalted as that which I once touched, or imagined a fall so great as that which I experienced. I came originally from that place to which persons of bad character are said to be sent—I mean Coventry, where my father for many years contributed his share to the success of parliamentary candidates, the happiness of new married couples, and even the gratification of ambitious courtiers, by taking part in the manufacture of ribands for election cockades, wedding favours, and cordons of chivalry; but trade failed, and, like his betters, he became bankrupt, but, unlike his betters, without any consequent advantage to himself; and I, at the age of fifteen, was thrown upon the world with nothing but a strong constitution, a moderate education, and fifteen shillings and eleven pence three farthings in my pocket.



With these qualifications I started from my native town on a pedestrian excursion to London; and although I fell into none of those romantic adventures of which I had read at school, I met with more kindness than the world generally gets credit for, and on the fourth day after my departure, having slept soundly, if not magnificently, every night, and eaten with an appetite which my mode of travelling was admirably calculated to stimulate, reached the great metropolis, having preserved of my patrimony, no less a sum than nine shillings and seven pence.

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The bells of one of the churches in the city were ringing merrily as I descended the heights of Islington; and were it not that my patronymic Scropps never could, under the most improved system of campanology, be jingled into any thing harmonious, I have no doubt I, like my great predecessor Whittington, might have heard in that peal a prediction of my future exaltation; certain it is I did not; and, wearied with my journey, I took up my lodging for the night at a very humble house near Smithfield, to which I had been kindly recommended by the driver of a return postchaise, of whose liberal offer of the moiety of his bar to town I had availed myself at Barnet.

As it is not my intention to deduce a moral from my progress in the world at this period of my life, I need not here dilate upon the good policy of honesty, or the advantages of temperance and perseverance, by which I worked my way upwards, until after meriting the confidence of an excellent master, I found myself enjoying it fully. To his business I succeeded at his death, having several years before, with his sanction, married a young and deserving woman, about my own age, of whose prudence and skill in household matters I had long had a daily experience.

To be brief, Providence blessed my efforts and increased my means; I became a wholesale dealer in every thing, from barrels of gunpowder down to pickled herrings; in the civic acceptance of the word I was a merchant, amongst the vulgar I am called a dry-salter. I accumulated wealth; with my fortune my family also grew, and one male Scropps, and four female ditto, grace my board at least once in every week.

Passing over the minor gradations of my life, the removal from one residence to another, the enlargement of this warehouse, the rebuilding of that, the anxiety of a canvass for common council man, activity in the company of which I am liveryman, inquests, and vestries, and ward meetings, and all the other pleasing toils to which an active citizen is subject, let us come at once to the first marked epoch of my life—the year of my Shrievalty. The announcement of my nomination and election filled Mrs. S. with delight; and when I took my children to Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, to look at the gay chariot brushing up for me, I confess I felt proud and happy to be able to show my progeny the arms of London, those of the Spectacle Makers' Company, and those of the Scroppses (recently found at a trivial expense) all figuring upon the same panels. They looked magnificent upon the pea-green ground, and the wheels, "white picked out crimson," looked so chaste, and the hammercloth, and the fringe, and the festoons, and the Scroppps' crests all looked so rich, and the silk linings and white tassels, and the squabs and the yellow cushions and the crimson carpet looked so comfortable, that, as I stood contemplating the equipage, I said to myself, "What have I done to deserve *this*?—O that my poor father

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were alive to see his boy Jack going down to Westminster, to chop sticks and count hobnails, in a carriage like this!" My children were like mad things: and in the afternoon, when I put on my first new brown court suit (lined, like my chariot, with white silk) and fitted up with cut steel buttons, just to try the effect, it all appeared like a dream; the sword, which I tried on every night for half an hour after I went up to bed, to practise walking with it, was very inconvenient at first; but use is second nature; and so by rehearsing and rehearsing, I made myself perfect before that auspicious day when Sheriffs flourish and geese prevail—namely, the twenty-ninth of September.

The twelve months which followed were very delightful; for independently of the *positive* honour and *eclat* they produced, I had the Mayoralty in *prospectu* (having attained my aldermanic gown by an immense majority the preceding year), and as I used during the sessions to sit in my box at the Old Bailey, with my bag at my back and my bouquet on my book, my thoughts were wholly devoted to one object of contemplation; culprits stood trembling to hear the verdict of a jury, and I regarded them not; convicts knelt to receive the fatal fiat of the Recorder, and I heeded not their sufferings, as I watched the Lord Mayor seated in the centre of the bench, with the sword of justice stuck up in a goblet over his head—there, thought I, if I live two years, shall I sit—however, even as it was, it was very agreeable. When executions, the chief drawbacks to my delight, happened, I found, after a little seasoning, I took the thing coolly, and enjoyed my toast and tea after the patients were turned off, just as if nothing had happened; for, in *my* time, we hanged at eight and breakfasted at a quarter after, so that without much hurry we were able to finish our muffins just in time for the cutting down at nine. I had to go to the House of Commons with a petition, and to Court with an address—trying situations for one of the Scropps—however, the want of state in parliament, and the very little attention paid to us by the members, put me quite at my ease at Westminster; while the gracious urbanity of our accomplished monarch on his throne made me equally comfortable at St. James's. Still I was but a secondary person, or rather only one of two secondary persons—the chief of bailiffs and principal Jack Ketch; there was a step to gain—and, as I often mentioned in confidence to Mrs. Scropps, I was sure my heart would never be still until I had reached the pinnacle.

Behold at length the time arrived!—Guildhall crowded to excess—the hustings thronged—the aldermen retire—they return—their choice is announced to the people—it has fallen upon John Ebenezer Scropps, Esq., Alderman and spectacle maker—a sudden shout is heard—"Scropps for ever!" resounds—the whole assembly seems to vanish from my sight—I come forward—am invested with the chain—I bow—make a speech—tumble over the train of the Recorder, and tread upon the tenderest toe of Mr. Deputy Pod—leave the hall in ecstasy, and drive home to Mrs. Scropps in a state of mind bordering upon insanity.

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The days wore on, each one seemed as long as a week, until at length the eighth of November arrived, and then did it seem certain that I should be Lord Mayor—I was sworn in—the civic insignia were delivered to me—I returned them to the proper officers—my chaplain was near me—the esquires of my household were behind me—the thing was done—never shall I forget the tingling sensation I felt in my ear when I was first called “My Lord”—I even doubted if it were addressed to me, and hesitated to answer—but it was so—the reign of splendour had begun, and, after going through the accustomed ceremonies, I got home and retired to bed early, in order to be fresh for the fatigues of the ensuing day.

Sleep I did not—how was it to be expected?—Some part of the night I was in consultation with Mrs. Scropps upon the different arrangements; settling about the girls, their places at the banquet, and their partners at the ball; the wind down the chimney sounded like the shouts of the people; the cocks crowing in the mews at the back of the house I took for trumpets sounding my approach; and the ordinary incidental noises in the family I fancied the pop-guns at Stangate, announcing my disembarkation at Westminster—thus I tossed and tumbled until the long wished-for day dawned, and I jumped up anxiously to realize the visions of the night. I was not long at my toilet—I was soon shaved and dressed—but just as I was settling myself comfortably into my beautiful brown broadcloth inexpressibles, crack went something, and I discovered that a seam had ripped half a foot long. Had it been consistent with the dignity of a Lord Mayor to swear, I should, I believe, at that moment, have anathematized the offending tailor;—as it was, what was to be done?—I heard trumpets in earnest, carriages drawing up and setting down; sheriffs, and chaplains, mace bearers, train bearers, sword bearers, water bailiffs, remembrancers, Mr. Common Hunt, the town clerk, and the deputy town clerk, all bustling about—the bells ringing—and I late, with a hole in my inexpressibles! There was but one remedy—my wife’s maid, kind, intelligent creature, civil and obliging, and ready to turn her hand to any thing, came to my aid, and in less than fifteen minutes her activity, exerted in the midst of the confusion, repaired the injury, and turned me out fit to be seen by the whole corporation of London.

When I was dressed, I tapped at Mrs. Scropps’s door, went in, and asked her if she thought I should do; the dear soul, after settling my point lace frill (which she had been good enough to pick off her own petticoat on purpose) and putting my bag straight, gave me the sweetest salute imaginable.

“I wish your lordship health and happiness,” said she.

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"Sally," said I, "your ladyship is an angel;" and so, having kissed each of my daughters, who were in progress of dressing, I descended the stairs, to begin the auspicious day in which I reached the apex of my greatness.—Never shall I forget the bows—the civilities—the congratulations—sheriffs bending before me—the Recorder smiling—the Common Sergeant at my feet—the pageant was intoxicating; and when, after having breakfasted, I stepped into that glazed and gilded house upon wheels, called the state coach, and saw my sword bearer pop himself into one of the boots, with the sword of state in his hand, I was lost in ecstasy, I threw myself back upon the seat of the vehicle with all imaginable dignity, but not without damage, for in the midst of my ease and elegance I snapped off the cut steel hilt of my sword, by accidentally bumping the whole weight of my body right, or rather wrong, directly upon the top of it.

But what was a sword hilt or a bruise to *me*? I was *the* Lord Mayor—the greatest man of the greatest city of the greatest nation in the world. The people realized my anticipations, and "Bravo, Scropps!" and "Scropps for ever!" again resounded, as we proceeded slowly and majestically towards the river, through a fog, which prevented our being advantageously seen, and which got down the throat of the sword bearer, who coughed incessantly during our progress, much to my annoyance, not to speak of the ungraceful movements which his convulsive barkings gave to the red velvet scabbard of the official glove as it stuck out of the window of the coach.

We embarked in *my* barge; a new scene of splendour awaited me, guns, shouts, music, flags, banners, in short, every thing that fancy could paint or a water bailiff provide; there, in the gilded bark, was prepared a cold collation—I ate, but tasted nothing—fowls, *pates*, tongue, game, beef, ham, all had the same flavour; champagne, hock, and Madeira were all alike to *me*—Lord Mayor was all I saw, all I heard, all I swallowed; every thing was pervaded by the one captivating word, and the repeated appeal to "my lordship" was sweeter than nectar.

At Westminster, having been presented and received, I desired—I—John Ebenezer Scropps, of Coventry—I desired the Recorder to invite the judges to dine with me—I—who remember when two of the oldest and most innocent of the twelve, came the circuit, trembling at the sight of them, and believing them some extraordinary creatures upon whom all the hair and fur I saw, grew naturally—I, not only to ask these formidable beings to dine with me, but, as if I thought it beneath my dignity to do so in my proper person, deputing a judge of my own to do it for me; I never shall forget their bows in return—Chinese mandarins on a chimney-piece are fools to them.

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Then came the return—we landed once more in the scene of my dignity—at the corner of Fleet Street we found the Lady Mayoress waiting for the procession—there she was—Sally Scropps (her maiden name was Snob)—there was my own Sally, with a plume of feathers that half filled the coach, and Jenny and Maria and young Sally, all with their backs to *my* horses, which were pawing the mud and snorting and smoking like steam engines, with nostrils like safety valves, and four of *my* footmen hanging behind the coach, like bees in a swarm. There had not been so much riband in my family since my poor father's failure at Coventry—and yet how often, over and over again, although he had been dead more than twenty years, did I, during that morning, in the midst of my splendour, think of *him*, and wish that he could see me in my greatness—yes, even in the midst of my triumph I seemed to defer to my good, kind parent—in heaven, as I hope and trust—as if I were anxious for *his* judgment and *his* opinion as to how I should perform the arduous and manifold duties of the day.

Up Ludgate Hill we moved—the fog grew thicker and thicker—but then the beautiful women at the windows—those up high could only see my knees and the paste buckles in my shoes; every now and then, I bowed condescendingly to people I had never seen before, in order to show my courtesy and my chain and collar, which I had discovered during the morning shone the better for being shaken.

At length we reached Guildhall—as I crossed the beautiful building, lighted splendidly, and filled with well dressed company, and heard the deafening shouts which rent the fane as I entered it, I really was overcome—I retired to a private room—refreshed my dress, rubbed up my chain, which the damp had tarnished, and prepared to receive my guests. They came, and—shall I ever forget it?—dinner was announced; the bands played “O the roast beef of Old England.” Onwards we went, a Prince of the blood, of the blood royal of my country, led out *my* Sally—my own Sally—the Lady Mayoress! the Lord High Chancellor handed out young Sally—I saw it done—I thought I should have choked; the Prime Minister took Maria; the Lord Privy Seal gave his arm to Jenny; and my wife's mother, Mrs. Snob, was honoured by the protection of the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench.—Oh, if my poor father could have but seen *that*!

It would be tiresome to dwell upon the pleasures of the happy year, thus auspiciously begun, in detail; each month brought its delights, each week its festival; public meetings under the sanction of the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor; concerts and balls under the patronage of the Lady Mayoress; Easter and its dinner, Blue-coat boys and buns; processions here, excursions there.—Summer came, and then we had swan-hopping *up* the river, and white-baiting *down* the river; Yantlet Creek below, the navigation barge above; music, flags, streamers, guns, and company; turtle every day in the week; peas at a pound a pint, and grapes at a guinea a pound; dabbling in rosewater served in gold, not to speak of the loving cup, with Mr. Common Hunt, in full dress, at my elbow; my dinners were talked of, Ude grew jealous, and I was idolized.

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The days, which before seemed like weeks, were now turned to minutes: scarcely had I swallowed my breakfast before I was in my justice-room; and before I had mittimused half a dozen paupers for beggary, I was called away to luncheon; this barely over, in comes a deputation or a dispatch, and so on till dinner, which was barely ended before supper was announced. We all became enchanted with the Mansion House; my girls grew graceful by the confidence their high station gave them; Maria refused a good offer because her lover chanced to have an ill sounding name; we had all got settled in our rooms, the establishment had begun to know and appreciate us; we had just become in fact easy in our dignity and happy in our position, when lo and behold! the ninth of November came again—the anniversary of my exaltation, the consummation of my downfall.

Again did we go in state to Guildhall, again were we toasted and addressed, again were we handed in, and led out, again flirted with cabinet ministers and danced with ambassadors, and at two o'clock in the morning drove home from the scene of gaiety to our old residence in Budge Row.—Never in this world did pickled herrings and turpentine smell so powerfully as on that night when we entered the house; and although my wife and the young ones stuck to the drinkables at Guildhall, their natural feelings would have way, and a sort of shuddering disgust seemed to fill their minds on their return home—the passage looked so narrow—the drawing-rooms looked so small—the staircase seemed so dark—our apartments appeared so low—however, being tired, we all slept well, at least I did, for I was in no humour to talk to Sally, and the only topic I could think upon before I dropped into my slumber, was a calculation of the amount of expense which I had incurred during the just expired year of my greatness.

In the morning we assembled at breakfast—a note lay on the table, addressed—“Mrs. Scropps, Budge Row.” The girls, one after the other, took it up, read the superscription, and laid it down again. A visiter was announced—a neighbour and kind friend, a man of wealth and importance—what were his first words?—they were the first I had heard from a stranger since my job,—“How are you, Scropps, done up, eh?”

Scropps! no obsequiousness, no deference, no respect;—no “my lord, I hope your lordship passed an agreeable night—and how is her ladyship and your lordship’s amiable daughters?”—not a bit of it—“How’s Mrs. S. and the *gals*?” This was quite natural, all as it *had* been, all perhaps as it should be—but how unlike what it *was*, only one day before! The very servants, who, when amidst the strapping, stall-fed, gold-laced lacqueys of the Mansion House, (transferred with the chairs and tables from one Lord Mayor to another) dared not speak nor look, nor say their lives were their own, strutted about the house, and banged the doors, and talked of their “*Missis*,” as if she had been an apple woman.

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So much for domestic miseries;—I went out—I was shoved about in Cheapside in the most remorseless manner; my right eye had a narrow escape of being poked out by the tray of a brawny butcher's boy, who, when I civilly remonstrated, turned round, and said, "Vy, I say, who are *you*, I vonder, as is so partiklar about your *hysight*." I felt an involuntary shudder—to-day, thought I, I *am* John Ebenezer Scropps—two days ago I was Lord Mayor; and so the rencontre ended, evidently to the advantage of the bristly brute. It was however too much for me—the effect of contrast was too powerful, the change was too sudden—and I determined to go to Brighton for a few weeks to refresh myself, and be weaned from my dignity.

We went—we drove to the Royal Hotel; in the hall stood one of his Majesty's ministers, one of my former guests, speaking to his lady and daughter: my girls passed close to him—he had handed one of them to dinner the year before, but he appeared entirely to have forgotten her. By and by, when we were going out in a fly to take the air, one of the waiters desired the fly man to pull off, because Sir Something Somebody's carriage could not come up—it was clear that the name of Scropps had lost its influence.

We secluded ourselves in a private house, where we did nothing but sigh and look at the sea. We had been totally spoiled for our proper sphere, and could not get into a better; the indifference of our inferiors mortified us, and the familiarity of our equals disgusted us—our potentiality was gone, and we were so much degraded that a puppy of a fellow had the impertinence to ask Jenny if she was going to one of the Old Ship balls. "Of course," said the coxcomb, "I don't mean the 'Almacks,' for they are uncommonly select."

In short, do what we would, go where we might, we were outraged and annoyed, or at least thought ourselves so; and beyond all bitterness was the reflection, that the days of our dignity and delight never might return. There were at Brighton no less than three men who called me Jack, and *that*, out of flies or in libraries, and one of these, chose occasionally, by way of making himself particularly agreeable, to address me by the familiar appellation of Jacky. At length, and that only three weeks after my fall, an overgrown tallow-chandler met us on the Steyne, and stopped our party to observe, "as how he thought he owed me for two barrels of coal tar, for doing over his pigsties." This settled it—we departed from Brighton, and made a tour of the coast; but we never rallied; and business, which must be minded, drove us before Christmas to Budge Row, where we are again settled down.

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Maria has grown thin—Sarah has turned methodist—and Jenny, who danced with his Excellency the Portuguese Ambassador, who was called angelic by the Right Honourable the Lord Privy Seal, and who moreover refused a man of fortune because he had an ugly name, is going to be married to Lieutenant Stodge, on the half pay of the Royal Marines—and what then?—I am sure if it were not for the females of my family I should be perfectly at my ease in my proper sphere, out of which the course of our civic constitution raised me. It was unpleasant at first:—but I have toiled long and laboured hard; I have done my duty, and Providence has blessed my works. If we were discomposed at the sudden change in our station, I it is who was to blame for having aspired to honours which I knew were not to last. However the ambition was not dishonourable, nor did I disgrace the station while I held it; and when I see, as in the present year, *that* station filled by a man of education and talent, of high character and ample fortune, I discover no cause to repent of having been one of his predecessors. Indeed I ought to apologize for making public the weakness by which we were all affected; especially as I have myself already learned to laugh at what we all severely felt at first—the miseries of a SPLENDID ANNUAL.—*Sharpe's London Magazine*.

* * * * *

SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS

* * * * *

A CHAPTER ON HEATHEN MYTHOLOGY

“Ut sunt divorum, Mars, Bacchus, Apollo.”
Latin Grammar.

Did you ever look
In Mr. Tooke,
For Homer's gods and goddesses?
The males in the air,
So big and so bare,
And the girls without their bodices. There was Jupiter Zeus,
Who play'd the deuce,
A rampant blade and a tough one;
But Denis bold,
Stole his coat of gold,
And rigg'd him out in a stuff one,

Juno, when old,
Was a bit of a scold,
And rul'd Jove *jure divino*;



When he went gallivaunting,
His steps she kept haunting,[4]
And she play'd, too, the devil with Ino.

Minerva bright
Was a blue-stocking wight,
Who lodg'd among the Attics;
And, like Lady V.
From the men did flee,
To study the mathematics.

Great Mars, we're told,
Was a grenadier bold,
Who Vulcan sorely cuckold;
When to Rome he went,
He his children sent
To a she-wolf to be suckled.

Midas.

Sol, the rat-catcher,[5]
Was a great body-snatcher,
And with his bow and arrows
He *Burked*, through the trees,
Master Niobes,
As though they had been cock sparrows.

Diana, his sister,
When nobody kiss'd her,
Was a saint, (at least a semi one,)
Yet the vixen Scandal
Made a terrible handle
Of her friendship for Eudymion.



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Full many a feat
Did Hercules neat,
The least our credit draws on;
Jesting Momus, so sly,
Said, "'Tis all my eye,"
And he call'd him Baron Munchausen.

Fair Bacchus's face
Many signs did grace,
(They were not painted by Zeuxis:)
Of his brewing trade
He a mystery made,[6]
Like our Calverts and our Meuxes.

There was Mistress Venus,
(I say it between us,)
For virtue cared not a farden:
There never was seen
Such a drabbish quean
In the parish of Covent Garden.

Hermes cunning
Poor Argus funning,
He made him drink like a buffer;
To his great surprise
Sew'd up all his eyes,
And stole away his heifer.

A bar-maid's place
Was Hebe's grace,
Till Jupiter did trick her;
He turn'd her away,
And made Ganimede stay
To pour him out his liquor.

Ceres in life
Was a farmer's wife,
But she doubtless kept a jolly house;
For Rumour speaks,
She was had by the Beaks
To swear her son Triptolemus.[7]

Miss Proserpine
She thought herself fine,



But when all her plans miscarried,
She the Devil did wed,
And took him to bed,
Sooner than not be married.

But the worst of the gods,
Beyond all odds,
It cannot be denied, oh!
Is that first of matchmakers,
That prince of housebreakers,
The urchin, Dan Cupido.

New Monthly Magazine.

[4] "I'll search out the haunts
Of your fav'rite gallants,
And into cows metamorphose 'em."

[5] Apollo Smintheus. He destroyed a great many rats in Phrygia,
and was probably the first "rat-catcher to the King."—*Vet.
Schol.*

[6] "Mystica vannus Isacchi." This was either a porter-brewer's
dray, or more probably the *Van* of his druggist.—*Scriblerus.*

[7] There is some difference of opinion concerning this fact: the lady, like so many
others in her interesting situation, passed through the adventure under an *alias*. But
that Ceres and Terra were the same, no reasonable person will doubt: and there can be
no *serious* objection to the little *trip* being thus ascribed to the goddess in question.—
Scriblerus.

* * * * *

"THE SEASON" IN TOWN.

Theodore.—I don't know how you could prevent people from living half the year in town.

Tickler.—I have no objection to their living half the year in town, as you call it, if they can
live in such a hell upon earth, of dust, noise, and misery. Only think of the Dolphin
water in the solar microscope!

Theodore.—I know nothing of the water of London personally.

Odoherly.—Nor I; but I take it, we both have a notion of its brandy and water.

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Tickler.—'Tis, in fact, their duty to be a good deal in London. But I'll tell you what I do object to, and what I rather think are evils of modern date, or at any rate, of very rapid recent growth. First, I object to their living those months of the year in which it is *contra bonos mores* to be in London, not in their paternal mansions, but at those little bastardly abortions, which they call watering-places—their Leamingtons, their Cheltenham, their Brighthelmstones.

Theodore.—Brighton, my dear rustic Brighton!

Odoherty.—Synopsis.

Shepherd.—What's your wull, Sir Morgan? It does no staun' wi' me.

Theodore.—A horrid spot, certainly—but possessing large conveniences, sir, for particular purposes. For example, sir, the balcony on the drawing-room floor commonly runs on the same level all round the square—which in the Brighthelmstonic dialect, sir, means a three-sided figure. The advantage is obvious,

Shepherd.—Och, sirs! och, sirs! what wull this world come to!

Theodore.—The truth is, sir, that people *comme il faut* cannot well submit to the total change of society and manners implied in a removal from Whitehall or Mayfair to some absurd old antediluvian chateau, sir, boxed up among beeches and rooks. Sir, only think of the small Squires with the red faces, sir, and the grand white waistcoats down to their hips—and the dames, sir, with their wigs, and their simpers, and their visible pockets—and the damsels, blushing things in white muslin, with sky-blue sashes and ribbons, and mufflers and things—and the sons, sir, the promising young gentlemen, sir—and the doctor, and the lawyer—and the parson. So you disapprove of Brighton, Mr. Tickler?

Tickler.—Brighthelmstone, when I knew it, was a pleasant fishing village—what like it is now, I know not; but what I detest in the great folks of your time, is, that insane selfishness which makes them prefer any place, however abominable, where they can herd together in their little exquisite coteries, to the noblest mansions surrounded with the noblest domains, where they cannot exist without being more or less exposed to the company of people not exactly belonging to their own particular sect. How can society hang together long in a country where the Corinthian capital takes so much pains to unriff itself from the pillar? Now-a-day, sir, your great lord, commonly speaking, spends but a month or six weeks in his ancestral abode; and even when he is there, he surrounds himself studiously with a cursed town-crew, a pack of St. James's Street fops, and Mayfair chatterers and intriguers, who give themselves airs enough to turn the stomachs of the plain squirearchy and their womankind, and render a visit to the castle a perfect nuisance.

Theodore (aside to Mullion.)—A prejudiced old prig!

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Tickler.—They seem to spare no pains to show that they consider the country as valuable merely for rent and game—the duties of the magistracy are a bore—county meetings are a bore—a farce, I believe, was the word—the assizes are a cursed bore—fox-hunting itself is a bore, unless in Leicestershire, where the noble sportsmen, from all the winds of heaven cluster together, and think with ineffable contempt of the old-fashioned chase, in which the great man mingled with gentle and simple, and all comers—sporting is a bore, unless in a regular *battue*, when a dozen lordlings murder pheasants by the thousand, without hearing the cock of one impatrician fowling-piece—except indeed some dandy poet, or philosopher, or punster, has been admitted to make sport to the Philistines. In short, every thing is a bore that brings the dons into personal collision of any kind with people that don't belong to the world.

Odoherly.—The world is getting pretty distinct from the nation, I admit, and I doubt if much love is lost between them.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

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THE HOPKINSONIAN JOKE.

My friend Hertford, walking one day near his own shop in Piccadilly, happened to meet one Mr. Hopkinson, an eminent brewer, I believe—and the conversation naturally enough turned upon some late dinner at the Albion, Aldersgate Street—nobody appreciates a real city dinner better than Monsieur le Marquess—and so on, till the old brewer mentioned, *par hazard*, that he had just received a noble specimen of wild pig from a friend in Frankfort, adding, that he had a very particular party, God knows how many aldermen, to dinner—half the East India direction, I believe—and that he was something puzzled touching the cookery. “Pooh!” says Hertford, “send in your porker to my man, and he’ll do it for you *a merveille*.” The brewer was a grateful man—the pork came and went back again. Well, a week after my lord met his friend, and, by the way, “Hopkinson,” says he, “how did the boar concern go off?”—“O, beautifully,” says the brewer; “I can never sufficiently thank your lordship; nothing could do better. We should never have got on at all without your lordship’s kind assistance.”—“The thing gave satisfaction then, Hopkinson?”—“O, great satisfaction, my lord marquess.—To be sure we did think it rather queer at first—in fact, not being up to them there things, we considered it as deucedly stringy—to say the truth, we should never have thought of eating it cold.”—“Cold!” says Hertford; “did you eat the ham cold?”—“O dear, yes, my lord, to be sure we did—we eat it just as your lordship’s gentleman sent it.”—“Why, my dear Mr. Alderman,” says Hertford, “my cook only prepared it for the spit.” Well, I shall never forget how the poor dear Duke of York laughed!—*Ibid*.

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.
SHAKSPEARE.

* * * * *

SEALING WAX AND WAFERS.

Francis Rousseau, a native of Auxerres, who travelled a long time in Persia, Pegu, and other parts of the East Indies, and who, in 1692, resided at St. Domingo, was the inventor of sealing-wax. A lady, of the name of Longueville, made this wax known at court, and caused Louis XIII. to use it; after which it was purchased and used throughout Paris. By this article Rousseau, before the expiration of a year, gained 50,000 livres. The oldest seal with a red wafer ever yet found, is on a letter written by Dr. Krapf, at Spires, in the year 1624, to the government at Bareuth.

* * * * *

I was in company some time since with George Colman, “the younger,” as the old fellow still styles himself. It was shortly after the death of Mrs. ——, the wife of a popular actor, and at that time an unpopular manager. Some one at table observed that, “Mr. —— had suffered a loss in the death of his wife, which he would not soon be able to make up.”—“I don’t know how that may be,” replied George, drily, “but to tell you the truth, I don’t think he has *quarrelled* with his loss yet.”—*Monthly Mag.*

* * * * *

SHERIDAN.

Bob Mitchell, one of Sheridan’s intimate friends, and once in great prosperity, became—like a great many other people, Sheridan’s creditor—in fact Sheridan owed Bob nearly three thousand pounds—this circumstance amongst others contributed so very much to reduce Bob’s finances, that he was driven to great straits, and in the course of his uncomfortable wanderings he called upon Sheridan; the conversation turned upon his financial difficulties, but not upon the principal cause of them, which was Sheridan’s debt; but which of course, as an able tactician, he contrived to keep out of the discussion; at last, Bob, in a sort of agony, exclaimed—“I have not a guinea left, and by heaven I don’t know where to get one.” Sheridan jumped up, and thrusting a piece of gold into his hand, exclaimed with tears in his eyes—“It never shall be said that Bob Mitchell wanted a guinea while his friend Sheridan had one to give him.”—*Sharpe’s Magazine.*

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LINES

On the window of Thorny Down Inn, about seven miles from Blandford, on the Salisbury road.

Death, reader, pallid death!! with woe or bliss
Will shortly be thy lot. Think then, my friend,
Ere yet it be too late—what are thy hopes
And what thy anxious fears—when the thin veil
That keeps thy soul from seeing Israel's GOD
Shall drop. (Signed) [Greek: parepidemos].

RURIS.

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When Lord Ellenborough was Lord Chief Justice, a labouring bricklayer was called as a witness; when he came up to be sworn his lordship said to him—

“Really, witness, when you have to appear before this court, it is your bounden duty to be more clean and decent in your appearance.”

“Upon my life,” said the witness, “if your lordship comes to that, I’m thinking I’m every bit as well dressed as your lordship.”

“How do you mean, sir,” said his lordship, angrily.

“Why, faith,” said the labourer, “*you* come here in *your* working clothes and *I’m* come in *mine*.”—*Sharpe’s Mag.*

* * * * *

FRIENDSHIP.

Dr. Johnson most beautifully remarks, that “When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish for his return, not so much that we may receive as that we may bestow happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.”

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HOT TUESDAY.

Derham, in his *Physico-Theology*, says, “July 8th, 1707, (called for some time after the *hot Tuesday*,) was so excessively hot and suffocating, by reason there was no wind stirring, that divers persons died, or were in great danger of death, in their harvest work. Particularly one who had formerly been my servant, a healthy, lusty young man, was killed by the heat; and several horses on the road dropped down and died the same day.”

P.T.W.

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