

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

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Page 1

FISHMONGER'S HALL

[Illustration: *Fishmongers' hall.*]

[Illustration: *Arms of the company.*]

These Cuts may be welcome illustrations of the olden magnificence of the City of London. The first represents the river or back front of the Hall of the Fishmongers' Company: the second cut, the arms of the Company, is added by way of an illustrative pendent. These insignia are placed over the entrance to the Hall in Lower Thames-street; they are sculptured in bold relief, and are not meanly executed. The Hall, or the greater part of it, has been taken down to make room for the New London Bridge approaches; the frame-work of the door, and the arms still remain—*stat portus umbra*.

The Hall merits further notice; not so much for its architectural pretensions as for its being the commencement of a plan which it could be wished had been completed. The reader may probably remember that after the Great Fire of London, the King (Charles II.) desired *Wren*, in addition to his designs for St. Paul's, to make an accurate survey and drawing of the whole area and confines of the waste metropolis; and "day, succeeding day, amidst ashes and ruins, did this indefatigable man labour to fulfil his task." He prepared his plans for rebuilding the city, and laid them before the King. That part of Sir Christopher's plan which relates to the present subjects, was as follows: "By the water-side, from the bridge to the Temple, he had planned a long and broad wharf or quay, where he designed to have arranged all the halls that belong to the several companies of the city, with proper warehouses for merchants between, to vary the edifices, and make it at once one of the most beautiful ranges of structure in the world." [1] King Charles, however, as Mr. Cunningham observes, "was never obstinate in any thing for his country's good," and the idea was dropped: but Wren erected the above Hall as a specimen of his intention of ornamenting the banks of the Thames. The original hall was destroyed by the Great Fire.

The ancient importance of the Fishmongers' Company may be thus explained:—

During the days of papacy in England, fish was an article not of optional, but compulsive consumption, and this rendered the business of a fishmonger one of the principal trades of London. Fish Street Hill, and the immediate vicinity, was the great mart for this branch of traffic, from its close connexion with the river, and here lived many illustrious citizens, particularly Sir William Walworth, and Sir Stephen Fisher.

Strong prejudices were however entertained against the fishmongers, and to so great an extent was it carried, that in the fourteenth century, they prayed the king, by Nicholas Exton, one of their body, that he would take the company under his protection, "lest they might receive corporeal hurt." The parliament itself appears to have imbibed the

general distrust, for in 1382 they enacted, “that no fishmonger should be mayor of the city.” This was repealed, however, the following year.

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The fishmongers consisted of two companies, the salt fishmongers, incorporated in 1433, and the stock fishmongers in 1509. The two companies were united by Henry VIII. in 1536. Before the junction, they are said by Stow, who calls them “jolly citizens,” to have had six halls, two in Thames Street, two in Fish Street, and two in Old Fish Street, and six lord-mayors were elected from their body in twenty-four years. But being charged with forestalling, contrary to the laws and constitutions of the city, they were fined five hundred marks by Edward I. in 1290. In 1384, these, as well as others concerned in furnishing the city with provisions, were put under the immediate direction of the mayor and aldermen, by an act of parliament still in force.[2]

The Hall, on the west side of the ward of Bridge Within, was of brick and stone, and may be said to have had two fronts. The fore entrance was from Thames Street by a handsome passage, leading into a large square court, encompassed by the Great Hall, the Court Room, and other grand apartments, with galleries. The back, or river front, had a double flight of stone steps, by which was an ascent to the first apartments. The door was ornamented with Ionic columns supporting an open pediment, in which was a shield, with the arms of the company. The building was finished with handsomely rusticated stone, and had a noble effect.

The Hall was of capacious proportions, and extended nearly the whole length of the building. The ceiling, as well as that of the adjoining Court Room, exhibited some fine specimens of old plaster-work. We witnessed the dismantling of the premises previous to their being taken down. It was indeed a sorry breaking up. The long tables which had so often, to use a hackneyed phrase, “groaned” beneath the weight of civic fare—the cosy high-backed stuffed chairs which had held many a portly citizen—nay, the very soup-kettles and venison dishes—all were to be submitted to the noisy ordeal of the auction hammer.

We remember in the upper end of the hall, and just behind the chair, there stood in a niche, a full-sized statue, carved in wood by Edward Pierce, statuary, of Sir William Walworth, a member of this company, and lord-mayor during the rebellion of Wat Tyler. The knight grasped a real dagger, said to be the identical weapon with which he stabbed the rebel; though a publican of Islington pretended to be possessed of this dagger, and in 1731, lent it to be publicly exhibited in Smithfield, in a show called “Wat Tyler,” during Bartholomew Fair. Below the niche was this inscription:

“Brave Walworth, knight, lord-mayor, yt slew
Rebellious Tyler in his alarms;
The king, therefore, did give in lieu
The dagger to the cytye’s arms.
In the 4th year of Richard II. Anno Domini 1381.”

A common, but erroneous belief is perpetuated in this inscription, for the dagger was in the city arms long before the time of Sir William Walworth, and was intended to represent the sword of St. Paul, the patron saint of the corporation.

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The funeral pall of Sir W. Walworth curiously embroidered with gold, is preserved amongst the relics, as well as a plan of the splendid show at his installation, 1380.

The Fishmongers' Company is fourth upon the list of the city corporations, under the name and style of "the Wardens and Commonalty of the mystery of Fishmongers of the city of London." It is a livery company, and very rich, governed by a prime and five other wardens, and a court of assistants.

The company supports a free Grammar School at Holt Market, in Norfolk, founded by Sir John Gresham; Jesus Hospital, at Bray, in Berkshire, founded by William Goddard, Esq. for forty poor persons; St. Peter's Hospital, near Newington, Surrey, founded by the company; twelve alms-houses at Harrietsham, in Kent, founded by Mr. Mark Quested; a fellowship in Sidney-Sussex College, Cambridge founded by Mr. Leonard Smith; a scholarship in the same college, founded by William Bennet, Esq. Mr. Smith, executor.

The *Arms* of the Company are in a shield supported by a merman and mermaid, the latter with a mirror in her hand. The Keys refer to St. Peter, the Patron Saint of the Company.

[1] Quoted by Cunningham in his "Life of Wren," from a contemporary authority.

[2] Wards of London.

* * * * *

HOLY SEPULCHRE, HECKINGTON CHURCH.

(To the Editor.)

From the description of the Holy Sepulchre in Heckington Church, given in your last volume, stating that it stood there in the summer of 1789, such of your readers as have no means of knowing to the contrary, may infer that it is not now in existence.[1] I am led to trouble you with a few lines on the subject, as this specimen still in the best preservation, deserves us full an account as your limits will admit. The sepulchre nearly, and the stalls also mentioned by you, which have been cleaned completely, remain now in the same state as the artist originally left them. An architect, Mr. T. Rickman, who visited the neighbourhood a short time ago, gives the following account, which was printed in a work[2] on the topography of the neighbourhood, soon after his visit: he says, "The sepulchre, of which there are not many specimens now remaining, consists of a series of richly ornamented niches, the largest of which represents the tomb, having angels standing beside it; the side niches have the Maries and other appropriate figures, and in the lower niches are the Roman soldiers reposing; these

niches have rich canopies, and are separated by buttresses and rich finials, having all the spaces covered by very rich foliage." He further observes, that "the stalls exhibit a specimen of pure decorated work, as rich as the finest sculpture of foliage and small figures can render it, and hardly surpassed by any in the kingdom, and the sepulchre is of the same excellent character. The various small ornaments about these stalls and niches form one of the best possible studies for enrichments of this date: and it is almost peculiar to this church, that there is nothing about it, except what is quite modern, that is not of the same style of architecture."

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As the above gentleman's description of the present state of the church at Heckington will give a clearer idea of many others in the county of Lincoln, we perhaps cannot do better than close this account with it. "This beautiful church, of pure decorated character, is one of the most perfect models in the kingdom, having, with one exception, (that of the groined or interior ceiling which is wanting, and appears never to have been prepared for,) every feature of a fine church, of one uniform style, without any admixture of *later* or *earlier* work. Its mutilations are comparatively small, consisting only in the destruction of the tracey of the north transept window, and some featherings in other windows, and the building and wall to enclose a vestry. The plan of the church is a west tower and spire, nave and aisles, spacious transepts, and a large chancel, with a vestry attached to the north side. The nave has a well proportioned clesestory. There is a south porch, a rich font, the tomb of an ecclesiastic, and the assemblage of niches before described. In the chancel and some of the church walls are very good brackets. The vestry has a crypt below it. Fully to describe this church would require a much larger space than can be allotted to it, but it may be well to remark, that every part of the design and execution is of the very best character, equal to any in the kingdom."

That this church was built on or near to the site of the one given by Gilbert de Guant, the style of architecture being of much later date, fully demonstrates; and it is more than probable that on its rebuilding, the patent of Edward III. was obtained. Certain it is that no specimen of an earlier style now remains; but tradition says that the foundation of the church was laid in the year 1101, and the building completed in A.D. 1104, at a cost only of L433. 9_s_. 7_d_. This statement, if worthy of credit, must be referred to an earlier and less costly edifice than the present.

J.H.S.

[1] We omitted to state that our interesting particulars of the Heckington Sepulchre were from *Vetusta Monumenta*, a splendid folio work published by the Antiquarian Society.

[2] Sketches of New and Old Sleaford, County of Lincoln, and of several places in the Neighbourhood, p. 224. 8vo Baldwin and Co.

* * * * *

TRAVELING NOTES IN SOUTH WALES.

(To the Editor.)

Guernsey, Dec. 17, 1831.

Your ingenious and talented correspondent, *Vyvyan*, in writing on the shrimp, (the *Mirror*, p. 361, vol. xviii.) remarks that "The sea roamer may often have observed

numbers of little air-holes in the sand, which expand as the sun advances. If he stirs it with his foot, he will cause a brood of young shrimps, who will instantly hop and jump about the beach in the most lively manner," &c.:

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these “jumpers” as they are facetiously called, are not shrimps, but sea-fleas, and they possess the elasticity for which their namesakes are so remarkable. They are as different as possible from young shrimps; and if “old shrimps” *could* “tell tales,” I doubt not but that on inquiring of them, they would tell their “companions at breakfast table” the same thing. Your correspondent further adds, that “strange stories are told of the *old* shrimp,” and I think, on investigation, he will find that he has told a very “strange story” of *young* shrimps. In a future communication I will give you a correct account or history of the shrimp, (if it be acceptable,) from the time when it is first spawned until it arrives at perfection.

H.W.

(To the Editor.)

Vyvyan has not in his *Notes* named any county but South Wales, generally, where he says, “Any person who can enclose a portion of land around his cottage or otherwise, in one night, becomes owner thereof in fee.” These persons in Wales are called Encroachers, and are liable to have ejectments served upon them by the Lord of the Manor, (which is often the case) to recover possession. The majority of the Encroachers pay a nominal yearly rent to the Lord of the Manor for allowing them to occupy the land. If they possess these encroachments for sixty years without any interruption, or paying rent, then they become possessed of the same. It is usual to present the Encroachments at a Court Leet held for the manor, and upon perambulating the manor, which is generally done every three or four years, these encroachments are thrown out again to the waste or common.

J.P.

*** We readily insert these corrections of Vyvyan’s “Notes,” especially as we believe our readers to take considerable interest in their accuracy.

* * * * *

THE SKETCH-BOOK.

MY FIRE.

(For the Mirror.)

On new year’s morning, soon after daybreak, I entered my study, which is a little room some eight feet square, and from a wayward fancy of my own, closely resembles the cell of an alchemist. Its walls are hung with black drapery, on which appear the mystical

signs of the planetary bodies, Hebrew, Persian, and various cabalistic characters, the dark enigmas of the work of transmutation, and the invocations or prayers for success employed by the alchemist. Here and there pieces of their quaint and uncouth shaped apparatus, the aludel, the alembic, and the alkaner, the pelican, the crucible, and the water-bath, occupy their respective stations. The clumsy, heavy, oaken table in the centre is covered with copies of scarce and valuable alchymical tracts, in company with the *caput mortum* and the hour-glass. A few antiques, consisting of half-a-dozen cloth-yard arrows, the stout yew bow of the green clad yeoman, the ponderous mace and helmet of the valiant knight, and other relics of the days of chivalry, complete the decorations of this my sanctum.

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In consequence of its dark and gloomy aspect, and the feeling of awe with which the family and servants regard its mystical contents, I have its undisturbed enjoyment; nobody feels a wish to enter it even in the day time, and I verily believe they would not do so at the witching hour of night, lest the mystical signs should take summary vengeance on their unhallowed intrusion.

The neighbours imagine me to be an adept in the “black art,” an astrologer, or a fortune-teller, but I have no pretensions whatever to any such titles; this report has got abroad in consequence of a maid-servant having once had the temerity to peep through the key-hole, and observed on the wall opposite her “line of sight,” some triangular characters. She had been in the habit of poring over a dream book, and the art of casting nativities; the Prophetic Almanac was her oracle, and its terrific title-page she informed her fellow servant “had just those queer triangle things as was hung on the walls of young master’s study.” She was “sure that he could tell her fortune.” This important intelligence, delivered with due confidence to her fellow servant, of course spread like wildfire among the other occupants of the “lower regions,” and from them amongst the handmaidens of sundry other dwellings. Thus has my astrological character been established.

As all domestics are excluded my sanctum, of course I am obliged to “do for myself,” and this I prefer to being “done for,” or having my room “set to rights,” according to their notions of neatness; my feelings on this point are exactly those of Scott’s *Antiquary*; I therefore “do for myself,” and consequently, it follows I must light my own fire. Than on the morning I have mentioned, the “grand agent” of the chemist was never more required. The air bit shrewdly, and it was “bitter cold” upon entering the sanctum, although I had not quitted it many hours, having watched the “old year out and the new year in,” and then taken a short nap; yet Jack Frost had been active during my absence, and cooled down the air of the sanctum some degrees below the freezing point, at the same time coating the window panes with his beautiful crystalline figures. The dark walls did look most awful, seen through the dun yellow light of the fog, which met my view upon drawing aside the cabalistically hung curtains. I cast a look at the Rumford grate; its black cold bars “grinned most horrible and ghastly.” A sympathy was instantly established between them and my nasal organ, for I found a drop of pure crystal pendant from its extremity. Here, thought I, is an admirable question for “*The Plain Why and Because*.” Why does a drop of water hang from the nose on a frosty morning? Because the natural heat of the body sends up vapour into the head, and that being exposed most to cold, the vapour condenses, and a drop of water runs from the nostril, as it would do from the head of a still. Upon looking at anything very cold, sympathy excites the

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same action. This “Why and Because” was succeeded by another—Why does my fire-grate grin so coldly? Because you will not be “done for,” else Eliza could have raised a flame there for you an hour ago. The truth of this reply was so forcible that I resolved to “do for myself” without delay, and evolve the “grand agent.” I went to the door, expecting to see my usual supply of fuel; none was to be found. What means this? said I, and was about to make my wants known, but changed my intent as quickly, and being a little excited by such neglect, determined not to be dependent upon the domestics, but make a fire of my own. Now then for the materials. Paper, as all persons know, who have “lit their own fires,” is the foundation; it was also mine: sundry letters in reply to sundry unsuccessful applications written on “thick double laid post,” as the advertisements say, I seized upon, and thrust their crumpled forms between the sooty bars of the grate with some wood, the model of a mechanical invention of my own, which had been rejected by a Society, and why, I knew not; I severed limb from limb, and disposed their fragments across and athwart on the letters previously mutilated. How to obtain my coal posed me for a moment; but I recollected that in a geological cabinet under my window, I was the possessor of a mass of pure Staffordshire, weighing some twenty pounds. The doors of the cabinet flew open, and out it came; I had a strong affection for this lump of coal, having extracted it myself from the mines, and carried it many a weary mile on my return home. I felt loth to commit it to the flames; but this was necessity, “stern necessity:” one or two blows of the mineralogical hammer destroyed my scruples, and produced the proper cleavages in the mass of coal. I laid the precious stratum, *super stratum* upon the two former, and other deposits of *papyrus* and *lignum*; such was my “coal formation.” The magic touch of a Promethean elicited my “grand agent” to the thick laid post; it consumed rather sluggishly, but the dry pine wood of the broken model caught the flame and entered into fair combustion, cracking and sparkling, and now and then sending out a hiss of pyroligenous vapour; hissing yourself thought I. The fiery example was soon followed by the coal at first slowly sending up wreaths of dirty, green, yellow smoke, but as the fire waxed warmer these disappeared, and vivid hissing jets of ignited gas shot forth in abundance. The hissing annoyed me; why, I could not divine; but as the heat increased I cooled from the state of excitement produced by the testy destruction of my papers, model, and specimen. I sat down at the fire; had I not better, said I, have made my wants known to the servant, than have acted as I have done? No, I hate asking for what, as a duty should have been ready to my hands. I endeavoured to persuade myself that I did not regret the deed I had done, but could not succeed; something whispered me

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that I should suffer for it. I felt myself an “uncomfortable gentleman.” I began to trace my fire from its origin up to its present state of perfection; the letters were of no consequence—none—the model I made myself and can make another—certainly—the coal I paid dearly for by fatigue, but I can get another lump, and send it home by coach, yes; then why am I so uncomfortable. I looked at the glowing fire which was getting insufferably hot, and gave it a passionate poke, exclaiming, I wish I could stop your draught. Draught! draft, I repeated, what has become of my draft that I received yesterday for my last paper? I began to recollect myself where I had laid it, and quickly came to the awful conclusion that I had placed it carefully between the folds of one of the sacrificed letters.

Misery and destruction, said I, that draft has caused my rapid fire! it is gone and forever! Fool that I was; why did I not “blow up” the servants for paper, wood, and coals, and be “done for properly” instead of thus “doing for myself.” Ye alchymistical spirits, said I, invoking the dark drapery, aid me to extract my gold from yonder ashes! but they were deaf to my calls, and the old *caput mortum* seemed to grin in mockery. I could bear it no longer, and rushing from the sanctum, met the servant girl on the stairs. “A draft! a draft!” repeated I; she thought me mad; I was mad with vexation. “Sir,” said she, “you will catch cold if there is a draught such a day as this.” A cold day as this, you wretch, Eliza, why did you not bring my coals to the door this morning, then I could have had my fire without a draft; I want a ten guinea draft, not a foggy, frosty draught. The girl stood amazed, but replied, “Please, sir, I didn’t bring the coals this morning because you said never to do so on a Sunday, sir.” “Sunday,” I exclaimed, “is this Sunday?” “Lord bless me, sir, yes, and new year’s day too, sir; happy new year, sir,” said the provoking little wench, who was now joined by another. I could stand it no longer, but slunk back into the sanctum, “like a burnt child that dreaded the fire,” hearing them exclaim, “I thought how it would be, them odd things in his room has quite turned his brain, poor young gentleman, he did not even know it was Sunday, and new year’s day neither.”

I really did not know it was Sunday, for my calculaters were destroyed by the circumstance of our having kept Christmas Day on the Monday. I was aware that it was new year’s day, and had intended to begin 1832 with good works, instead of which I commenced it with destroying my property, thus literally “doing for myself,” and unlike most other people who invariably suffer from a draught, I am suffering from the loss of one.

PYRAMIS.

* * * * *

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

ADVENT.

(For the Mirror.)

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In the North Riding of Yorkshire, the young folks retain a very ancient custom during Advent. They make a wax figure representing the infant Jesus, and place it in a small wooden case, with evergreens, which hide all but the figure. A napkin is thrown over the box; and the puppet is thus carried about, and exhibited from door to door, by a boy, the others chanting some supplicatory lines. The same custom prevails in Wales.

In Italy, a wax figure representing the Virgin, inclosed in a beautifully carved wooden case, is placed on the back of an ass, and exhibited through the country during Advent. Every traveller on seeing it prostrates himself immediately, and crosses himself, and considers himself in duty bound to bestow his charity on the proprietor. Others carry emblematical figures through the different towns, or sit by the road side, and uncover the effigy to every passer-by.

W.H.H.

* * * * *

CURIOUS MANORIAL RIGHT.

(For the Mirror.)

At Ripley Castle, in Yorkshire, the seat of Sir William Ingilby, there is in the great staircase an elegant Venetian window, in the divisions of which, on stain-glass, are a series of escutcheons, displaying the principal quarterings and intermarriages of the Ingilby family since their settling at Ripley, during a course of 430 years.

In one of the chambers of the tower is the following sentence, carved on the frieze of the wainscot:—"In the yeire of owre Ld. MDLV. was this howse buyldyd, by Sir Wyllyam Ingilby, Knight, Philip and Marie reigning that time."

John Pallisser, of Bristhwaite, formerly held his lands of the manor of Ripley, by the payment of a red rose at Midsummer, and by carrying the boar's head to the lord's table all the twelve days of Christmas.

W.G.C.

* * * * *

NOTES OF A READER.

EUGENE ARAM.

We intend to quote a few scenes and snatches from Mr. Bulwer's extraordinary novel of this name. At present, however, we can only introduce the ill-fated hero.

(Two young ladies, daughters of the lord of the Manor, approach Aram's house:—)

“Madeline would even now fain have detained her sister's hand from the bell that hung without the porch half embedded in ivy; but Ellinor, out of patience—as she well might be—with her sister's unseasonable prudence, refused any longer delay. So singularly still and solitary was the plain around the house, that the sound of the bell breaking the silence had in it something startling, and appeared, in its sudden and shrill voice, a profanation to the deep tranquillity of the spot. They did not wait long—a step was heard within—the door was slowly unbarred, and the Student himself stood before them.”

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“He was a man who might, perhaps, have numbered some five and thirty years; but at a hasty glance, he would have seemed considerably younger. He was above the ordinary stature; though a gentle, and not ungraceful bend in the neck rather than the shoulders, somewhat curtailed his proper advantages of height. His frame was thin and slender, but well knit and fair proportioned. Nature had originally cast his form in an athletic mould, but sedentary habits and the wear of mind seemed somewhat to have impaired her gifts. His cheek was pale and delicate; yet it was rather the delicacy of thought than of weak health. His hair, which was long, and of a rich and deep brown, was worn back from his face and temples, and left a broad high majestic forehead utterly unrelieved and bare; and on the brow there was not a single wrinkle—it was as smooth as it might have been some fifteen years ago. There was a singular calmness, and, so to speak, profundity of thought, eloquent upon its clear expanse, which suggested the idea of one who had passed his life rather in contemplation than emotion. It was a face that a physiognomist would have loved to look upon, so much did it speak both of the refinement and the dignity of intellect.”

“Such was the person—if pictures convey a faithful resemblance—of a man, certainly the most eminent in his day for various and profound learning, and a genius wholly self-taught, yet never contented to repose upon the wonderful stores it had laboriously accumulated.”

(Aram thus describes his own character:—)

“Ah!” said Aram, gently shaking his head, “it is a hard life we bookmen lead. Not for us is the bright face of noon-day or the smile of woman, the gay unbending of the heart, the neighing steed and the shrill trump; the pride, pomp, and circumstance of life. Our enjoyments are few and calm; our labour constant; but that is it not, Sir?—that is it not? the body avenges its own neglect. We grow old before our time; we wither up; the sap of our youth shrinks from our veins; there is no bound in our step. We look about us with dimmed eyes, and our breath grows short and thick, and pains, and coughs, and shooting aches come upon us at night; it is a bitter life—a bitter life—joyless life. I would I had never commenced it. And yet the harsh world scowls upon us: our nerves are broken, and they wonder we are querulous; our blood curdles, and they ask why we are not gay; our brain grows dizzy and indistinct (as with me just now), and, shrugging their shoulders, they whisper their neighbours that we are mad. I wish I had worked at the plough, and known sleep, and loved mirth—and—and not been what I am.”

“As the Student tittered the last sentence, he bowed down his head, and a few tears stole silently down his cheek. Walter was greatly affected—it took him by surprise: nothing in Aram’s ordinary demeanour betrayed any facility to emotion; and he conveyed to all the idea of a man, if not proud, at least cold.”

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OLD JESTS.

Persons who gloat over dust and black-letter need scarcely be told that the best of “modern” jests are almost literally from the antique: in short, that what we employ to “set the table on a roar” were employed by the wise men of old to enliven *their* cups, deep and strong;—that to jest was a part of the Platonic philosophy, and that the excellent fancies, the flashes of merriment, of our forefathers, are nightly, nay hourly, re-echoed for our amusement. Yet such is the whole art of pleasing: what has pleased will, with certain modifications, continue to please again and again, until the end of time.

But we may displease; and, as Hamlet says, “We must speak by the card.” The *Athenaeum* a fortnight since drew forth a batch of these jests with antique humour richly dight, and here they are. The reader will recognise many old acquaintances, but he need not touch his hat, lest, his politeness weary him. These old stories are but “pick’d to be new vann’d.”

Hierocles’ Facetiae.

1. An irritable man went to visit a sick friend, and asked him concerning his health. The patient was so ill that he could not reply; whereupon the other in a rage said, “I hope that I may soon fall sick, and then I will not answer you when you visit me.”
2. A speculative gentleman, wishing to teach his horse to do without food, starved him to death. “I had a great loss,” said he; “for, just as he learned to live without eating, he died.”
3. A curious inquirer, desirous to know how he looked when asleep, sat with closed eyes before a mirror.
4. A young man told his friend that he dreamed that he had struck his foot against a sharp nail. “Why then do you sleep without your shoes?” was the reply.
5. A robustious countryman, meeting a physician, ran to hide behind a wall; being asked the cause, he replied, “It is so long since I have been sick, that I am ashamed to look a physician in the face.”
6. A gentleman had a cask of Aminean wine, from which his servant stole a large quantity. When the master perceived the deficiency, he diligently inspected the top of the cask but could find no traces of an opening. “Look if there be not a hole in the bottom,” said a bystander. “Blockhead,” he replied, “do you not see that the deficiency is at the top, and not at the bottom?”



7. A young man meeting an acquaintance, said, "I heard that you were dead." —"But," says the other, "you see me alive."—"I do not know how that may be," replied he: "you are a notorious liar, but my informant was a person of credit."
8. A man, hearing that a raven would live two hundred years, bought one to try.
9. During a storm, the passengers on board a vessel that appeared in danger seized different implements to aid them in swimming, and one of the number selected for this purpose the anchor.

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10. One of twin-brothers died: a fellow meeting the survivor asked, "Which is it, you or your brother, that's dead?"

11. A man whose son was dead, seeing a crowd assembled to witness the funeral, said, "I am ashamed to bring my little child into such a numerous assembly."

12. The son of a fond father, when going to war, promised to bring home the head of one of the enemy. His parent replied, "I should be glad to see you come home without a head, provided you come safe."

13. A man wrote to his friend in Greece begging him to purchase books. From negligence or avarice, he neglected to execute the commission; but fearing that his correspondent might be offended, he exclaimed when next they met, "My dear friend, I never got the letter that you wrote me about the books."

14. A wittol, a barber, and a bald-headed man travelled together. Losing their way, they were forced to sleep in the open air; and, to avert danger, it was agreed to keep watch by turns. The lot first fell on the barber, who, for amusement, shaved the fool's head while he slept; he then woke him, and the fool, raising his hand to scratch his head, exclaimed, "Here's a pretty mistake; rascal! you have waked the bald-headed man instead of me."

15. A citizen, seeing some sparrows in a tree, went beneath and shook it, folding out his hat to catch them as they fell.

16. A foolish fellow, having a house to sell, took a brick from the wall to exhibit as a sample.

17. A man meeting his friend, said, "I spoke to you last night in a dream." "Pardon me," replied the other, "I did not hear you."

18. A man that had nearly been drowned while bathing, declared that he would not again go into the water until he had learned to swim.

(To understand the next, we must premise that a horse with his first teeth was called by the Greeks "a first thrower.")

19. A man selling a horse was asked if it was a first thrower. "By Jove," said he, "he's a second thrower, for he threw both me and my father."

20. A fellow had to cross a river, and entered the boat on horseback; being asked the cause, he replied, "I must ride, because I am in a hurry."

21. A student in want of money sold his books, and wrote home, "Father, rejoice; for I now derive my support from literature."

We thank the wits of the *Athenaeum* for these piquancies: they are in the right true Attic vein, and are therefore characteristic of that clever Journal.

* * * * *

KNOWLEDGE FOR THE PEOPLE.

(From Part xiii.—*Botany*.)

Why have vegetables the function of transpiration?

Because the sap, on arriving in the leaves, loses and gives out the superabundant quantity of water which it contained.

Why are limpid drops often observed hanging at the points of leaves at sunrise?

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Because of the vegetable transpiration condensed by the coldness of the night. It was long thought that they were produced by dew; but Mushenbroek first proved the above, by conclusive experiments. He intercepted all communication between a poppy and the ambient air, by covering it with a bell; and between it and the earth, by covering the vessel in which it grew with a leaden plate. Next morning the drop appeared upon it as before—*Richard*.

One of the hydrangea tribe perspires so freely, that the leaves wither and become crisp in a very short space of time, if the plant be not amply supplied with water: it has 160,000 apertures on every inch square of surface, on the under disk of the leaf.

Why is more or less of a gummy, resinous, or saccharine matter found in every tree?

Because it is formed by branches of those returning vessels that deposit the new alburnum.

Why is it inferred that these juices must be prepared in the plant itself, by various secretions, and changes of the fluids which it absorbs?

Because we find, that in the same climate, nay, even in the same spot of ground, rue has its bitter—sorrel its acid—and the lettuce its cooling juices; and that the juices of the various parts of one plant, or even of one fruit, are extremely different. Sir James Smith mentions the peach-tree as a familiar example. "The gum of this tree is mild and mucilaginous. The bark, leaves, and flowers, abound with a bitter secretion, of a purgative and rather dangerous quality, than which nothing can be more distinct from the gum. The fruit is replete, not only with acid, mucilage, and sugar, but with its own peculiar aromatic and highly volatile secretion, elaborated within itself, on which its fine flavour depends."—*Introduction to Botany, 6th edit.*

Why are these juices readily found in the bark?

Because they appear to be matured, or brought to greater perfection, in layers of wood or bark that have no longer any principal share in the circulation of the sap. Thus, the vessels containing them are often very large, as the turpentine cells of the fir tribe, in all the species of which these secretions abound. The substance from which spruce-beer is made, is an extract of the branches of the *Abies Canadensis*, or Hemlock Spruce; a similar preparation is obtained from the branches of *Dacrydium*, in the South Seas.

Why, in the spring, is the herbage under trees generally more luxuriant than it is beyond the spread of their branches?

Because the driving mists and fogs becoming condensed on the branches, cause a frequent drip beneath the tree not experienced in other places; and thus keep up a perpetual irrigation and refreshment of the soil.

Why are certain plants useful or injurious to others that grow in their vicinity?

Because of certain fluids which the roots excrete from their slender extremities; and in this manner the likings and antipathies of certain plants may be accounted for. Thus, it is well known that the creeping thistle is hurtful to oats, *erigeron acre* to wheat, *scabiosa arvensis* to flax, &c.

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Why are some resins odorous?

Because they contain essential oil; some afford benzoic acid when heated, and these have been termed balsams; such as tolu balsam and benzoin.

Common resin is obtained by distilling the exudation of different species of fir; oil of turpentine passes over, and the resin remains behind.

Why are the varieties of the cashew tribe, called varnish-trees?

Because their large flowers abound in a resinous, sometimes acrid, and highly poisonous juice, which afterwards turns black, and is used for varnishing in India. One kind is the common cashew nut. All these varnishes are extremely dangerous to some constitutions; the skin, if rubbed with them, inflames, and becomes covered with pimples that are difficult to heal; the fumes have also been known to produce painful swelling and inflammation.

Why do these varnishes, at first white, afterwards turn black?

Because the recent juice is an organized substance, consisting of an immense congeries of small parts, which disperse the sun's rays in all directions, like a thin film of unmelted tallow; while the varnish which has been exposed to the air loses its organized structure, becomes homogeneous, and then transmits the sun's rays, of a rich, deep, uniform, red colour.

The leaves of some species of Schinus are so filled with a resinous fluid, that the least degree of unusual repletion of the tissue causes it to be discharged; thus, some of them fill the air with fragrance after rain; and other kinds expel their resin with such violence when immersed in water, as to have the appearance of spontaneous motion, in consequence of the recoil. Another kind is said to cause swellings in those who sleep under its shade.—*Brewster's Journal*.

Why is the soap-tree so called?

Because its bark, if pulverized, and shaken in water, soon yields a solution, frothing, as if it contained soap. It is a native of Chili; the trunk is straight, and of considerable height; the wood is hard, red, and never splits; and the bark is rugged, fibrous, of ash-grey colour externally, and white within.

Why is a species of myrtle called the wax-tree?

Because the leaves and stem, when bruised, and boiled in water, yield wax, which concretes on cooling. Mr. Brande observes, "the glossy varnish upon the upper surface of many trees is of a similar nature; and though there are shades of difference, these varieties of wax possess the essential properties of that formed by the bee: indeed, it

was formerly supposed that bees merely collected the wax already formed by the vegetable: but Huber's experiments show, that the insect has the power of transmuting sugar into wax, and that this is in fact a secretion."

The wax-palm of Humboldt has its trunk covered by a coating of wax, which exudes from the spaces between the insertion of the leaves. It is, according to Vaquelin, a concrete, inflammable substance, consisting of 1/3 wax, and 2/3 resin.

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Why are some oils called vegetable butters?

Because they become solid at the ordinary temperatures. Such are cocoa-nut oil, palm oil, and nutmeg oil.

Why are some volatile oils obtained by expression?

Because they are contained in distinct vesicles in the rind of fruits, as in the lemon, orange, and bergamot.

Why is the oil of poppy-seed perfectly wholesome?

Because it is in no degree narcotic; nor has it any of the properties of the poppy itself. This oil is consumed on the Continent in considerable quantity, and employed extensively in adulterating olive oil. Its use was at one time prohibited in France, by decrees issued in compliance with popular clamour; but it is now openly sold, the government and people having grown wiser.

Why is the juice of the poppy called opium?

Because of its derivation from the Persian *afioun*, and the Arabian *aphium*. The botanical name of the poppy, *papaver*, is said to be derived from its being commonly mixed with the pap, papa, given to children in order to ease pain, and procure sleep.

Why does opium produce sleep?

Because it contains an alkaline substance called Morphia. The same drug contains a peculiar acid called the Meconic; and a vegetable alkali named Narcotine, to which unpleasant stimulating properties are attributed by Majendie.

Why is sugar so generally found in plants?

Because it is not only the seasoning of most eatable fruits, but abounds in various roots, as the carrot, beet, parsnip, and in many plants of the grass, or cane kind, besides the famous sugar cane.

Sir James Smith observes that "there is great reason to suppose sugar not so properly an original secretion, as the result of a chemical change in secretions already formed, either of an acid or mucilaginous nature, or possibly a mixture of both. In ripening fruits, this change is most striking, and takes place very speedily, seeming to be greatly promoted by heat and light. By the action of frost, as Dr. Darwin observes, a different change is wrought in the mucilage of the vegetable body, and it becomes starch."

M. Berard considers gum and lignin as the principles in unripe fruits which chiefly tend to the formation of sugar during their ripening, and he has given several analyses of



fruits in illustration of these views. Mr. Brande also considers the elements of water as probably concerned in the change.

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THE NATURALIST.

THE SUGAR CANE.

At the island of Tahiti (Otaheite) South Pacific Ocean, there are several varieties of the sugar cane, differing, however, in their qualities. The number of varieties are eight, and are as follow:—

1. Rutu—of good quality.
2. Avae—of indifferent quality.



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3. Irimotu—a rich cane, but does not grow to a large size.
4. Patu—a good cane, of a red colour.
5. To-ura—a dark-striped cane, hard and good.
6. Toute—a bad cane, of a red colour.
7. Veu—a good cane.
8. Vaihi—this attains a large size, and is considered of the best quality. It is said by the natives to have been introduced from the Sandwich Islands.

At Manilla (Island of Luconia) the planters mention three cultivated varieties of the sugar cane:—

1. Cana negra—black sugar cane.
2. " morada—brown "
3. " blancha—white "

of which the black or cana negra is considered the best, from its strength and the quantity of syrup contained in it.

Mr. G.B.'s MS. Journal, 1829-30.

* * * * *

THE BARN OWL;

and the Benefits it confers on Man. By Charles Waterton, Esq.

This pretty aerial wanderer of the night often comes into my room; and after flitting to and fro, on wing so soft and silent that he is scarcely heard, he takes his departure from the same window at which he had entered.

I own I have a great liking for this bird; and I have offered it hospitality and protection on account of its persecutions, and for its many services to me,—I say services, as you will see in the sequel. I wish that any little thing I could write or say might cause it to stand better with the world at large than it has hitherto done: but I have slender hopes on this score; because old and deep-rooted prejudices are seldom overcome; and when I look back into the annals of remote antiquity, I see too clearly that defamation has done its



worst to ruin the whole family, in all its branches, of this poor, harmless, useful friend of mine.

Ovid, nearly two thousand years ago, was extremely severe against the owl. In his *Metamorphoses* he says:—

“Foedaque fit volucris, venturi nuncia luctus,
Ignavus bubo, dirum mortalibus omen.”[1]

In his *Fasti* he openly accuses it of felony:—

“Nocte volant, puerosque petunt nutricis egentes.”[2]

Lucan, too, has hit it hard:—

“Et laetae juranter aves, bubone sinistro.”[3]

and the Englishman who continued the *Pharsalia*, says—

“Tristia mille locis Stylus dedit omina bubo.”[4]

Horace tells us that the old witch Canidia used part of the plumage of the owl in her dealings with the devil:—

“Plumamque nocturnae strigis.”[5]

Virgil, in fine, joined in the hue and cry against this injured family:—

“Solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo Saepe queri, et longas in fletum
ducere voces.”[6]

In our own times we find that the village maid cannot return home from seeing her dying swain, without a doleful salutation from the owl:—

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"Thus homeward as she hopeless went,
The churchyard path along,
The blast grew cold, the dark owl scream'd
Her lover's funeral song."

Amongst the numberless verses which might be quoted against the family of the owl, I think I only know of one little ode which expresses any pity for it. Our nursery maid used to sing it to the tune of the Storm, "Cease rude Boreas, blust'ring railer." I remember the first two stanzas of it:—

"Once I was a monarch's daughter,
And sat on a lady's knee;
But am now a nightly rover,
Banish'd to the ivy tree—
Crying, hoo hoo, hoo hoo, hoo hoo,
Hoo hoo hoo, my feet are cold!
Pity me, for here you see me,
Persecuted, poor, and old."

I beg the reader's pardon for this exordium. I have introduced it, in order to show how little chance there has been, from days long passed and gone to the present time, of studying the haunts and economy of the owl, because its unmerited bad name has created it a host of foes, and doomed it to destruction from all quarters. Some few, certainly, from time to time, have been kept in cages and in aviaries. But nature rarely thrives in captivity, and very seldom appears in her true character when she is encumbered with chains, or is to be looked at by the passing crowd through bars of iron. However, the scene is now going to change; and I trust that the reader will contemplate the owl with more friendly feelings, and quite under different circumstances. Here, no rude schoolboy ever approaches its retreat; and those who once dreaded its diabolical doings are now fully satisfied that it no longer meddles with their destinies, or has any thing to do with the repose of their departed friends. Indeed, human wretches in the shape of body-snatchers seem here in England to have usurped the office of the owl in our churchyards; "et vendunt tumulis corpora rapta suis." [7]

Up to the year 1813, the barn owl had a sad time of it at Walton Hall. Its supposed mournful notes alarmed the aged housekeeper. She knew full well what sorrow it had brought into other houses when she was a young woman; and there was enough of mischief in the midnight wintry blast, without having it increased by the dismal screams of something which people knew very little about, and which every body said was far too busy in the churchyard at nighttime. Nay, it was a well-known fact, that if any person were sick in the neighbourhood, it would be for ever looking in at the window, and holding a conversation outside with somebody, they did not know whom. The gamekeeper agreed with her in every thing she said on this important subject; and he always stood better in her books when he had managed to shoot a bird of this bad and

mischievous family. However, in 1813, on my return from the wilds of Guiana, having suffered myself, and learned mercy, I broke in pieces the code of penal laws which

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the knavery of the gamekeeper and the lamentable ignorance of the other servants had hitherto put in force, far too successfully, to thin the numbers of this poor, harmless, unsuspecting tribe. On the ruin of the old gateway, against which, tradition says, the waves of the lake have dashed for the better part of a thousand years, I made a place with stone and mortar, about 4 ft. square, and fixed a thick oaken stick firmly into it. Huge masses of ivy now quite cover it. In about a month or so after it was finished, a pair of barn owls came and took up their abode in it. I threatened to strangle the keeper if ever, after this, he molested either the old birds or their young ones; and I assured the housekeeper that I would take upon myself the whole responsibility of all the sickness, woe, and sorrow that the new tenants might bring into the Hall. She made a low courtesy; as much as to say, "Sir, I fall into your will and pleasure:" but I saw in her eye that she had made up her mind to have to do with things of fearful and portentous shape, and to hear many a midnight wailing in the surrounding woods. I do not think that up to the day of this old lady's death, which took place in her eighty-fourth year, she ever looked with pleasure or contentment on the barn owl, as it flew round the large sycamore trees which grow near the old ruined gateway.

(To be concluded in our next.)

[1] "Ill-omen'd in his form, the unlucky fowl,
Abhorr'd by men, and call'd a screeching owl."—*Garth's Trans.*

[2] "They fly by night, and assail infants in the nurse's absence."

[3] "Even the ill-boding owl is declared a bird of good omen."

[4] "The Stygian owl gives sad omens in a thousand places."

[5] "A feather of the night owl."

[6] ——"And, on her palace top,
The lonely owl with oft repeated scream
Complains, and spins into a dismal length
Her baleful shrieks."—*Trapp's Trans.*

[7] "And sell bodies torn from their tombs."

* * * * *

SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

BLONDEL DE NESLE.



“Blondel de Nesle the favourite minstrel of Richard Coeur de Lion, and an attendant upon his person, devoted himself to discover the place of his confinement during the crusade against Saladin, emperor of the Saracens. He wandered in vain from castle to palace, till he learned that a strong and almost inaccessible fortress upon the Danube was watched with peculiar strictness, as containing some state-prisoner of distinction. The minstrel took his harp, and approaching as near the castle as he durst, came so nigh the walls as to hear the melancholy captive soothing his imprisonment with music. Blondel touched his harp; the prisoner heard and was silent: upon this the minstrel played the first part of a tune, or lay, known to the captive; who instantly played the second part; and thus, the faithful servant obtained the certainty that the inmate of the castle was no other than his royal master.”—*Tales of a Grandfather*, p 69.



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The Danube's wide-flowing water lave
The captive's dungeon cell,
And the voice of its hoarse and sullen wave
Breaks forth in a louder swell,
And the night-breeze sighs in a deeper gust,
For the flower of chivalry droops in dust!

A yoke is hung over the victor's neck,
And fetters enthrall the strong,
And manhood's pride like a fearful wreck,
Lies the breakers of care among;
And the gleams of hope, overshadow'd, seem
The phantoms of some distemper'd dream.

But the heart—the heart is unconquer'd still—
A host in its solitude!
Quenchless the spirit, though fetter'd the will,
Of that warrior unsubdued;
His soul, like an arrow from rocky ground,
Shall fiercely and proudly in air rebound.

But the hour of darkness girds him now
With a pall of deepest night,
Anguish sits throned on his moody brow,
And the curse of thy withering blight,
Despair, thou dreariest deathliest foe!
His senses hath steep'd in a torpid woe.

From the dazzling splendour of gloriest past
The warrior sickening turns.
To list to the sound of the wailing blast,
As the wan lamp dimly burns:
For the daring might of the lion-hearted
With Freedom's soul-thrilling notes hath parted.

O'er his harp-string droops his palsied hand,
And the fitful strain alone
Murmurs the notes of his native land—
Does echo repeat that moan
From the dungeon wall so grim and so drear?—
No!—an answering minstrel lingers there.

Up starts the listening king—a flash
Of memory's gifted lore



Bursts on his soul—a deed so rash,
What captive would e'er deplore?
Since bonds no longer unnerve the free,
And valour hath won fidelity.

Dark child of sorrow, sweet comfort take,
In thy lone heart's widowhood,
Some charmed measure may yet awake
Arresting affliction's flood,
And thy prison'd soul unfetter'd be
By the answering spirit of sympathy!

Metropolitan.

* * * * *

ASMODEUS AT LARGE.

The design of this paper, in the *New Monthly Magazine*, is by no means novel; but the fine, cutting satire—the pleasant, lively banter on our vices and follies—which pervades every page of the article, is a set-off to the political frenzy and the literary lumber of other Magazines of the month. Each of them, it is true, has a readable paper, but one gem only contributes to a Magazine in the proportion of one swallow to a summer.

Here are three pages of the *New Monthly Devil*:

“A stranger, Sir, in the library,” said my servant in opening the door.

“Indeed! what a short, lame gentleman?”

“No, Sir; middle-sized,—has very much the air of a lawyer or professional man.”

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I entered the room, and instead of the dwarf demon Le Sage described, I beheld a comely man seated at the table, with a high forehead, a sharp face, and a pair of spectacles on his nose. He was employed in reading the new novel of "The Usurer's Daughter."

"This cannot be the devil!" said I to myself; so I bowed, and asked the gentleman his business.

"Tush!" quoth my visiter; "and how did you leave the Doctor?"

"It is you, then!" said I; "you have grown greatly since you left Don Cleofas."

"Wars fatten our tribe," answered the Devil; "besides shapes are optional with me, and in England men go by appearances more than they do abroad; one is forced to look respectable and portly; the Devil himself could not cheat your countrymen with a shabby exterior. Doubtless you observe that all the swindlers, whose adventures enliven your journals, are dressed 'in the height of fashion,' and enjoy 'a mild prepossessing demeanour.' Even the Cholera does not menace 'a gentleman of the better ranks;' and no bodies are burked with a decent suit of clothes on their backs. Wealth in all countries is the highest possible morality; but you carry the doctrine to so great an excess, that you scarcely suffer the poor man to exist at all. If he take a walk in the country, there's the Vagrant Act; and if he has not a penny to hire a cellar in town, he's snapped up by a Barker, and sent off to the surgeons in a sack. It must be owned that no country affords such warnings to the spendthrift. You are one great moral against the getting rid of one's money."

On this, Asmodeus and myself had a long conversation; it ended in our dining together, (for I found him a social fellow, and fond of a broil in a quiet way,) and adjourning in excellent spirits, to the theatre.

"Certainly," said the Devil, taking a pinch of snuff, "certainly, your drama is wonderfully fine, it is worthy of a civilized nation; formerly you were contented with choosing actors among human kind, but what an improvement to go among the brute creation! think what a fine idea to have a whole play turn upon the appearance of a broken-backed lion! And so you are going to raise the drama by setting up a club; that's another exquisite notion! You hire a great house in the neighbourhood of the theatre; you call it the Garrick Club. You allow actors and patrons to mix themselves and their negus there after the play; and this you call a design for exalting the drama. Certainly you English are a droll set; your expedients are admirable."

"My good Devil, any thing that brings actors and spectators together, that creates an *esprit de corps* among all who cherish the drama, is not to be sneered at in that inconsiderate manner."

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"I sneer! you mistake me; you have adduced a most convincing argument—*esprit de corps*!—good! Your clubs certainly nourish sociality greatly; those little tables, with one sulky man before one sulky chop—those hurried nods between acquaintances—that, monopoly of newspapers and easy chairs—all exhibit to perfection the cementing faculties of a club. Then, too, it certainly does an actor inestimable benefit to mix with lords and squires. Nothing more fits a man for his profession, than living with people who know nothing about it. Only think what a poor actor Kean is; you would have made him quite a different thing, if you had tied him to a tame gentlemen in the 'Garrick Club'. He would have played 'Richard' in a much higher vein, I doubt not."

"Well," said I, "the stage is your affair at present, and doubtless you do right to reject any innovation."

"Why, yes," quoth the Devil, looking round; "we have a very good female supply in this quarter. But pray how comes it that the English are so candid in sin? Among all nations there is immorality enough, Heaven knows; but you are so delightfully shameless: if a crime is committed here, you can't let it 'waste its sweetness;' you thrust it into your papers forthwith; you stick it up on your walls; you produce it at your theatres; you chat about it as an agreeable subject of conversation; and then you cry out with a blush against the open profligacy abroad! This is one of those amiable contradictions in human nature that charms me excessively. You fill your theatres with ladies of pleasure—you fill your newspapers with naughty accounts—a robbery is better to you than a feast—and a good fraud in the city will make you happy for a week; and all this while you say: 'We are the people who send vice to Coventry, and teach the world how to despise immorality.' Nay, if one man commits a murder, your newspapers kindly instruct his associates how to murder in future, by a far safer method. A wretch kills a boy for the surgeons, by holding his head under water; 'Silly dog!' cries the Morning Herald, 'why did not he clap a sponge dipped in prussic acid to the boy's mouth?'"

Here we were interrupted by a slight noise in the next box, which a gentleman had just entered. He was a tall man, with a handsome face and very prepossessing manner.

"That is an Author of considerable reputation," said my Devil, "quiet, though a man of wit, and with a heart, though a man of the world. Talking of the drama, he once brought out a farce, which had the good fortune to be damned. As great expectations had been formed of it, and the author's name had transpired; the unsuccessful writer rose the next morning with a hissing sound in his ears, and that leaning towards misanthropy, which you men always experience when the world has the bad taste to mistake your merits. 'Thank Fate, however,' said the Author, 'it is damned thoroughly—it is off the stage—I cannot be hissed again—in

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a few days it will be forgotten—meanwhile I will take a walk in the Park.’ Scarce had the gentleman got into the street, before, lo! at a butcher’s shop blazed the ‘very head and front of his offending.’ ‘Second night of its appearance, the admired Farce of ——, by ——, Esq.’ Away posts the Author to the Manager.—‘Good Heavens! Sir, my farce again! was it not thoroughly damned last night?’—‘Thoroughly damned!’ quoth the Manager, drily; ‘we reproduce it, Sir—we reproduce it (with a knowing wink,) that the world, enraged at our audacity, may come here to damn it again.’ So it is, you see! the love of money is the contempt of man: there’s an aphorism for you! Let us turn to the stage. What actresses you have!—certainly you English are a gallant nation; you are wonderfully polite to come and see such horrible female performers! By the by, you observed when that young lady came on the stage, how timidly she advanced, how frightened she seemed. ‘What modesty!’ cry the audience; ‘we must encourage her!’ they clap, they shout, they pity the poor thing, they cheer her into spirits. Would you believe that the hardest thing the Manager had to do with her was to teach her that modesty. She wanted to walk on the stage like a grenadier, and it required fifteen lessons to make her be ashamed of herself. It is in these things that the stage mimics the world, rather behind the scenes than before!”

“Bless me, how Braham is improved!” cried a man with spectacles, behind me; “he acts now better than he sings!”

“Is it not strange,” said Asmodeus, “how long the germ of a quality may remain latent in the human mind, and how completely you mortals are the creatures of culture? It was not till his old age that Braham took lessons in acting; some three times a week has he of late wended his way down, to the comedian of Chapel-street, to learn energy and counterfeit warmth; and the best of it is, that the spectators will have it that an actor feels all he acts; as if human nature, wicked as it is, could feel Richard the Third every other night. I remember, Mrs. Siddons had a majestic manner of extending her arm as she left the stage. ‘What grace!’ said the world, with tears in its eyes, ‘what dignity! what a wonderful way of extending an arm! you see her whole soul is in the part!’ The arm was in reality stretched impatiently out for a pinch from the snuff-box that was always in readiness behind the scenes.”

It is my misfortune, Reader, to be rapidly bored. I cannot sit out a sermon, much less a play; amusement is the most tedious of human pursuits.

“You are tired of this, surely,” said I to the Devil; “let us go!”

“Whither?” said Asmodeus.

“Why, ’tis a starlit night, let us ride over to Paris, and sup, as you promised, at the Rocher de Cancale.”

“Volontiers.”

Away—away—away—into the broad still Heavens, the stars dancing merrily above us,
and the mighty heart of the City beating beneath the dusky garment of Night below.

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“Let us look down,” said Asmodeus; “what a wilderness of houses! shall I uncover the roofs for you, as I did for Don Cleofas; or rather, for it is an easier method, shall I touch your eyes with my salve of penetration, and enable you to see at once through the wall?”

“You might as well do so; it is pleasant to feel the power, though at present I think it superfluous; wherever I look, I can only see rogues and fools, with a stray honest man now and then, who is probably in prison.”

Asmodeus touched my eyes with a green salve, which he took out of an ivory box, and all at once, my sight being directed towards a certain palace I beheld * * * *

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THE GATHERER.

A clergyman preaching in the neighbourhood of Wapping, observing that most part of his audience were in the seafaring way, very naturally embellished his discourse with several nautical tropes and figures. Amongst other things, he advised them “to be ever on the watch, so that on whatsoever tack the evil one should bear down on them, he might be crippled in action.” “Ay, master,” said a son of Neptune, “but let me tell you, that will depend upon your having the weather gage of him.”

* * * * *

A poacher escaping one morn with his pillage,
Unexpectedly met with the lord of the village;
Who seeing a hare o’er his shoulder was thrown,
Hail’d him quickly, “You fellow is that hare your own.”
“My own!” he replied, “you inquisitive prig,
Gad’s curse, pompous sir, do you think I’ve a wig?”

* * * * *

ORIGIN OF THE PHRASE “TO BOOT.”

Bote or *Bota*, in our old law books, signifies recompense, repentance, or fine paid by way of expiation, and is derived from the Saxon. Hence our common phrase “to boot,” speaking of something given by way of compensation. P.T.W.

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OLD SONG.

“Syr Tankarde he is as bold a wight
As ever Old England bred;
His armour it is of the silver bright,
And his coloure is ruby red;
And whene’er on the bully ye calle,
He is readye to give ye a falle;
But if long in the battle with him ye be,
Ye weaker are ye, and the stronger is he,
For Syr Tankarde is victor of alle.”

“A barley-corn he mounts for a speare,
His helmet with hops is hung,
He lightes the eye with a laughing leere,
With a carolle he tipps the tongue—
And he marshals a valyant hoste
Of spices and crabbes and toast;
And the stoutest of yeomen they well can o’erthrow,
When he leads them in beakers and jugs to the foe,—
And Syr Tankarde his prowess may boaste.”

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FRENCH—ENGLISH LOVE.

The following is a copy of a letter addressed some years ago to a lady of fortune at Portsmouth, upwards of four score years of age, by a French prisoner of war at Porchester Castle:—

“Porchester.—Madam—Me rite de English very leet, and me very fears you no saave vat me speak; but me be told dat you vant one very fine man for your hosband; upon my soul me love you very well; and thou you be very old woman, and very cross, and ugly, and all de devil, and the English no like you, upon my soul we have one great passion for you, and me like you very well for all dat; and me told dat de man for you must be one very clen man, and no love de drink. Me be all dat: indeed me be one very grand man in France—upon my soul me be one count, me have one grand equipage in France, and me be very good for de esprit: indeed me be one grand beau-a-la-mode—one officier in de regiment: me be very good for de Engleterres. Indeed you be one very good old woman upon my soul; and if you have one inclination for one man, me be dat gentleman for you—one grand man for you. Me will be your hosband, and take de care for yourself, for de house, for de gardin, for de Schoff, for de drink, and for de little childs dat shall come. Upon my soul me kill myself very soon, if you no love me for this grand amour. Me be, madam, your great slave, votre tres humble serviteur, PRES A. BOIRE.”

W.G.C.

* * * * *

OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

It is well known that Peter of Colechurch, the founder of *Old* London Bridge, did not live to witness the completion of the structure, but died in 1205, and was buried in a crypt within the centre pier of the bridge, over which a chapel was erected, dedicated to St. Thomas-a-Becket. Mr. Brayley, in his *Londiniana*, wrote about five years since that “if due care be taken when the old bridge is pulled down, the bones and ashes of its venerable architect may still be found;”—and, true enough, *the bones of old Peter were found on removing the pier about a fortnight since.*

* * * * *



TAME LIONS.

Hanno, a Carthaginian, was the first who tamed a lion. He was condemned to death, for what his fellow-citizens considered so great a crime. They asserted that the republic had to fear the worst consequences from a man who had been able to subdue so much ferocity. A little more experience, however, convinced them of the fallacy of that ridiculous judgment. The triumvir Antony, accompanied by an actress, was publicly drawn by lions in a chariot.

SAD-USING.

* * * * *

CITY OF LYONS.

Lyons is situated on a sort of peninsula, formed by the confluence of two great rivers—the Rhone and the Laone. All the bridges, with the exception of one of stone, are of wood; and although in general more useful than ornamental, they are justly admired for the boldness of their construction. They form numerous and convenient communications between the city and the faubourgs.

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Lyons is walled round, and strongly fortified. In 1791 it contained 121,000 inhabitants; but, in consequence of the siege of 1793, and the cruelties practised at that memorable period of French history, the numbers were reduced to less than 80,000. In 1802, the numbers were 88,662; and in 1827, the fixed population had increased to 97,439;—but there was a floating population, estimated at 43,684, which, with the inmates of the barracks and hospitals, stated at 8,600, made the total population at that period 149,723; and by adding the population of the suburbs, reckoned at 36,000, the whole amount of the inhabitants at the period of the census, in 1827, was 185,723; at the present time it is said to be, in round numbers, 200,000.

In 1828, the number of workshops in all branches of the silk trade within the walls, amounted to 7,140; that of the silk frames or looms to 18,829; and from 10,000 to 12,000 in the communes.

W.G.C.

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The ditty sung by the first grave-digger in *Hamlet*, beginning—

“In youth, when I did love, did love”—

was written by Lord Vaux, an ancestor of Lord Brougham. It will be found entire in *Percy's Reliques*.

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