

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

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Page 1

OUR LADY'S CHAPEL,

[Illustration: *St. Saviour, Southwark.*]

The Engraving represents the interior of the Virgin Mary's Chapel, commonly called the Lady Chapel, and appended to the ancient collegiate church of St. Saviour, Southwark. The exterior view of the Chapel will be found in No. 456 of *The Mirror*. About eighteen months since part of the western side of the High-street was removed for the approach to the New London Bridge, when this Chapel was opened to view; but its dilapidated appearance was rather calculated to interest antiquarian than public curiosity. The London Bridge Committee recommended the parishioners of St. Saviour to cause the Chapel to be pulled down, and their selfish suggestion would have been complied with, had not some enlightened and public-spirited individuals stepped forth to frustrate the levellers. The parishioners now became two parties. One contended for the restoration of the Chapel, as "one of the most chaste and elegant specimens of early pointed architecture of the thirteenth century of which this country can boast." The levellers, whose muckworm minds, and love of the arts is only shown in that of money-getting—maintained that the demolition of the Chapel would be "a pecuniary saving;" but theirs was a penny-wise and pound-foolish spirit; for, by removing the Chapel, a greater expense would be incurred than in its restoration. The folks could not understand plain figures, and so resolved to take the sense and nonsense of the parish, and the subject has been decided by a majority of 240 in favour of repairing the Chapel. The funds for this purpose, it should be understood, were in course of provision by public subscription, so that the blindness of party zeal threatened to reject a special advantage—the public would find the money if they would allow the Chapel to remain—whereas, had the demolition taken place, the parishioners must themselves have defrayed the consequent expenses. Historians loudly condemn the royal and noble thieves who plundered the Coliseum and the Pantheon to build palaces, yet there are men in our times, who would, if they could, take Dr. Johnson's hint to pound St. Paul's Church into atoms, and with it macadamize their roads; or fetch it away by piecemeal to build bridges with its stones, and saw up its marble monuments into chimneypieces.

The church of St. Saviour is built in the form of a cathedral, with a nave, side aisles, transepts, a choir, with its side aisles; and the chapel of St. John, which now forms the vestry, and the chapel of the Virgin Mary, or Our Lady. To the east end of the latter there has since been added a small chapel, called the Bishop's Chapel. Another chapel, (of St. Mary Magdalen,) was also connected with the south aisle of the church. The parishioners seem to have hitherto neglected the Lady Chapel, and to have shown their cupidity in ages long past.

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Through the influence of Dr. Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, they were allowed to *purchase* the church of that wholesale sin-salesman, Henry *viii.*; but after the parish had obtained the grant of the church, they let the Lady Chapel to one Wyatt, a baker, who converted it into a bake-house. He stopped up the two doors which communicated with the aisles of the church, and the two which opened into the chancel, and which, though visible, still remain masoned up.[1] In 1607, Mr. Henry Wilson, tenant of the Chapel of the Holy Virgin, found himself inconvenienced by a tomb "of a certain cade," and applied to the vestry for its removal, which was very "friendly" consented to, "making the place up again in any reasonable sort." [2] In this state it continued till the year 1624, when the vestry restored it to its original condition, at an expense of two hundred pounds. "More than that sum," observes the Rev. Mr. Nightingale, "I should conceive would now be required to repair this venerable part of St. Saviour's Church in such a manner as is absolutely necessary. The pillars have in a great degree lost their perpendicular position: the mouldings and mullions of the windows are distorted in the most shameful manner; the walls are rapidly hastening to their final decay; and the whole place appears to be destined to become once more the resort of hogs and vermin of every description. That this should be the case is a great disgrace to the parish, and an insult to the diocese, in which St. Saviour's Church holds so conspicuous a character." [3]

The roof of the Chapel is divided into nine groined arches, supported by six octangular pillars in two rows, having small circular columns at the four points. At the back of the altar-screen of the church [4] are some tracery compartments, probably, according to Mr. Bray, once affording through them a view of this chapel. In the east end, on the north side, are three lancet-shaped windows, forming one great window, divided by slender pillars, and having mouldings, with zig-zag ornaments. The tracery windows on the south side are masoned up, but much of the original tracery remains. At the north-east corner are remains of sharp-pointed arches; here also is an enclosure with table, desk, and elevated seat. This part is, properly speaking, the Bishop's Court; but this name is common to the whole chapel, in which the Bishop of Winchester holds his Court; and in which are held the visitations for the Deanery of Southwark.

The annexed view was taken from the north-west entrance, and shows the character of the groined roof, the supporting pillars, and the entrance to the Bishop's Chapel adjoining, by an ascent of two steps; this Chapel being named from the Tomb of Bishop Andrews, formerly standing in the centre of it. We recommend the reader to a clever paper in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the present month, in which the writer proves that Our Lady's Chapel, so far from being an excrescence, as has been idly stated, "bears the same relation to the church as the head does to the body."

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[1] Stow—These have lately been re-opened.—*Ed.* M.

[2] Parish Books.

[3] Hist. and Antiq. Paroch. Church, St. Saviour, Southwark, 4to. 1818.

[4] This Screen is about to be partially restored at an expense of about L800. now in course of subscription among the more respectable and intelligent parishioners.

* * * * *

NIGHT-MARE.

(*For the Mirror.*)

Sleeping in night-mare's thunderstorm-wove lap,
On sunless mountain high above the pole;
With ice for sheets, and lightning for a cap,
And tons of loadstones weighing on his soul;
And eye out-stretched upon some vasty map
Of uncouth worlds, which ever onward roll
To infinite—like Revelation's scroll.
Now falling headlong from his mountain bed
Down sulph'rous space, o'er dismal lakes;
Now held by hand of air—on wings of lead
He tries to rise—gasping—the hands' hold breaks,
And downward he reels through shadows of the dead,
Who cannot die though stalking in hell's flakes,
Falling, he catches his heart-string on some hook, and—wakes.

E.H.[1]

[1] Where did the Sportsman's Letters come from?—*Ed.*

* * * * *

LACONICS.

There is nothing to be said in favour of fashion, and yet how many are contented implicitly to obey its commands: its rules are not even dictated by the standard of taste, for it is constantly running into extremes and condemns one day what it approves the next.



There are some people so incorrigibly stupid and prosing, that wherever they are anxious of securing respect, silence would be their best policy.

As we advance in age, it is singular what a revolution takes place in our feelings. When we arrive at maturity an unkind word is more cutting and distresses us more than any bodily suffering; in our youth it was the reverse.

There is nothing so ravishing to the proud and the great (with all their resources for enjoyment) as to be thought happy by their inferiors.

Such are the casualties of life, that the presentiment of fear is far wiser than that of hope; and it would seem at all times more prudent to be providing against accident, than laying out schemes of future happiness.

The character of any particular people may be looked for with best success in their national works of talent.

There is no absurdity in approving as well as condemning the same individual; for as few people are always in the right, so on the other hand it is improbable they should be always in the wrong.

The most elegant flattery is at second hand; *viz.*, to repeat over again the praises bestowed by others.

Ignorance, simple, helpless ignorance, is not to be imputed as a fault; but very often men are wilfully ignorant.

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We have fewer enemies than we imagine: many are too indolent to care at all about us, and if the stream of censure is running against us, the world is too careless to oppose it. If we could hear what is said of us in our absence we should torment ourselves without real cause, for we should seldom hear the real sentiments of the speaker; many things are said in mere wantonness, and many more from the desire of being brilliant.

The man who feels he is in the right is seldom dogmatical, for truth is always calm and requires not violence to enforce her arguments: we should desist from the contest the moment we feel anxious about victory, because that anxiety must make us less particular about the truth.

Quickness of intellect is no proof of solidity: the deepest rivers flow on the smoothest.

The reason why there are so few instances of heroism in modern times is the total decay of political virtue: we are broken up into small parties and associate only with our families, thus forgetting the public, in our regard for private interest: the ancients were taught rather to live for the benefit of the whole community.

An over-refined philosophy begets sensitiveness, and is as little to be coveted as a moderate share of it is beneficial.

It seems to be the business of life to lay by fresh cause for anxiety and discontent by increasing our estate; whereas we should rather know how to lose it all, and yet be contented.

There are some people, who though very amiable in the main, and obliging in their offices to others, have yet that most unhappy propensity of being gloomy over every thing.

It is one of the wisest provisions of Fortune that the same vices which ruin our estates, take away also the means of enjoying them by depriving us of health.

There is more virtue in obscurity than is commonly supposed; and perhaps there have been nobler specimens of magnanimity in low life, than even the page of history can boast.

Knowledge of the world must be combined with study, for this, as well as better reasons: the possession of learning is always invidious, and it requires considerable tact to inform without a display of superiority, and to ensure esteem, as well as call forth admiration.

Deceit has the effect of impoverishing, as well as enriching, men: the prodigal becomes poor by pretending to be richer than he really is, while seeming poverty is the very making of a miser.

F.

* * * * *

STANZAS TO THE SPIRIT OF MORNING.

(For the Mirror.)

Angel of morn! whose beauteous home
In light's unfading fountain lies;
Whose smiles dispel night's sable gloom,
And fill with splendour earth and skies,
While o'er the horizon pure and pale,
Thy beams are dawning, thee I hail.

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The star that watches, pure and lone,
In yon clear heaven so silently,
Looks trembling from its azure throne
Upon thy beaming glories nigh;
And yields to thee first-born of day,
Reluctantly its heavenly sway.

Sweet spirit, with that early ray,
Which steals so softly through the gloom,
Trembling and brightening in its way,
What beauties o'er creation come;
Ere thy unclouded smiles arise
In all their splendour through the skies.

The rosy cloud—the azure sky,
Earth—ocean, with its heaving breast,
Where thy bright hues reflected lie,
And there in varying beauty rest,
Rejoice in thee; and from the grove,
To hail thee, bursts the voice of love.

Eternal beauty round thee dwells,
And joy thine early steps attends,
While music wildly breathing swells,
And with thy gales of perfume blends:
Pure, beautiful you smile above,
Like youth's fond dreams of hope and love.

Thy skies of blue, thy beaming light,
Thy gales so balmy, wild, and free,
Thy lustre on the mountain's height,
Have charms beyond all else for me;
Whilst my glad spirit fain would rise
To hail and meet thee in the skies.

Sylva.

* * * * *

NOTES OF A READER.

BRITAIN'S HISTORICAL DRAMA.

We understand Mr. Pennie's design, in this volume, to be the chronological arrangement of certain incidents of each king's reign in a series of National Tragedies. There are four such tragedies in the present portion, commencing with Arixina in which figure Julius Caesar, Cassfelyn, and Cymbaline, and extending to Edwin and Elgiva: the titles of the intervening pieces are the Imperial Pirate and the Dragon King. There is much wild and beautiful romance in the diction, but we take the most attractive portion to be the lyrical portion, as the Chants, Dirges, and Choruses. We recommend them as models for the play-wrights who do such things for the acting drama, and if the poetship to a patent theatre be worth acceptance, we beg to commend Mr. Pennie to the notice of managers. The poet of the King's Theatre figures in the bills of the day, and yet he is but a translator.

It is difficult to select an entire scene for quotation, so that we take a specimen from Arixina:

Chorus of bards.

Dirge.

Semi chorus.

Mightiest of the mighty thou!
Regal pearl-wreaths decked thy brow;
On thy shield the lion shone,
Glowing like the setting sun!
And thy leopard helmet's frown,
In the day of thy renown,
O'er thy foemen terror spread,
Grimly flashing on thy head.
Master of the fiery steed,
And the chariot in its speed,—
As its scythe-wedged wheels of blood
Through the battle's crimson flood,
Onward rushing, put to flight
E'en the stoutest men of might,—
Age to age shall tell thy fame;
Thine shall be a deathless name!
Bards shall raise the song for thee
In the halls of Chivalry.



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Grand chorus.

His shall he a noble pyre!
Robes of gold shall feed the fire;
Amber, gums, and richest pearl
On his bed of glory hurl:
Trophies of his conquering might,
Skulls of foes, and banners bright,
Shields, and splendid armour, won
When the combat-day was done,
On his blazing death-pile heap,
Where the brave in glory sleep!
And the Romans' vaunted pride,
Their eagle-god, in blood streams dyed,
Which, amid the battle's roar,
From their king of ships he tore;
Hurl it, hurl it in the flame,
And o'er it raise the loud acclaim!
Let the captive and the steed
On his death-pile nobly bleed;
Let his hawks and war-dogs share
His glory, as they claimed his care.

Semi-chorus.

Silent is his hall of shields
In Rath-col's dim and woody fields,
Night-winds round his lone hearth sing
The fall of Prythian's warlike king!—
Now his home of happy rest
Is in the bright isles of the west;
There, in stately halls of gold,
He with the mighty chiefs of old,
Quaffs the horn of hydromel
To the harp's melodious swell;
And on hills of living green,
With airy bow of lightning sheen,
Hunts the shadowy deer-herd fleet
In their dim-embowered retreat.
He is free to roam at will
O'er sea and sky, o'er heath and hill,
When our fathers' spirits rush
On the blast and crimson gush
Of the cloud-fire, through the storms,

Like the meteor's brilliant forms,
He shall come to the heroes' shout
In the battle's gory rout;
He shall stand by the stone of death,
When the captive yields his breath;
And in halls of revelry
His dim spirit oft shall be.

Grand chorus.

Shout, and fill the hirllass horn,
Round the dirge-feast quaff till morn;
Songs and joy sound o'er the heath,
For he died the warrior's death!
Garlands fling upon the fire,
His shall be a noble pyre!
And his tomb befit a king,
Encircled with a regal ring
Which shall to latest time declare,
That a princely chief lies there,
Who died to set his country free,
Who fell for British liberty;
His renown the harp shall sing
To mail clad chief and battle-king,
And fire the mighty warrior's soul
Long as eternal ages roll!

The Notes to each Tragedy are very abundant. Indeed, they are of the most laborious research. We quote an extract relative to "grinning skulls" as terrifically interesting:

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“The British warriors preserved the bones of their enemies whom they slew; and Strabo says of the Gauls (who were, as he informs us, far less uncivilized than the Britons, but still nearly resembled them in their manners and customs,) that when they return from the field of battle they bring with them the heads of their enemies fastened to the necks of their horses, and afterwards place them before the gates of their cities. Many of them, after being anointed with pitch or turpentine, they preserve in baskets or chests, and ostentatiously show them to strangers, as a proof of their valour; not suffering them to be redeemed, even though offered for them their weight in gold. This account is also confirmed by Diodorus. Strabo says that Posidonius declared he saw several of their heads near the gates of some of their towns,—a horrid barbarism, continued at Temple-bar almost down to the present period.”

Lastly, *Speaking and Moving Stones*:

“Girald Cambrensis gives an account of a speaking-stone at St. David’s in Pembrokeshire. ‘The next I shall notice is a very singular kind of a monument, which I believe has never been taken notice of by any antiquarian. I think I may call it an oracular stone: it rests upon a bed of rock, where a road plainly appears to have been made, leading to the hole, which at the entrance is three feet wide, six feet deep, and about three feet six inches high. Within this aperture, on the right hand, is a hole two feet diameter, perforated quite through the rock sixteen feet, and running from north to south. In the abovementioned aperture a man might lie concealed, and predict future events to those that came to consult the oracle, and be heard distinctly on the north side of the rock, where the hole is not visible. This might make the credulous Britons think the predictions proceeded solely from the rock-deity. The voice on the outside was distinctly conveyed to the person in the aperture, as was several times tried.’—*Arch. Soc. Ant. Lond.* vol. viii.

“The moving stones, or Logans, were known to the Phoenicians as well as the Britons. Sanconiatho, in his Phoenician History, says, that Uranus devised the Boetylia, Gr.; Botal or Bothal, Irish; Bethel, Heb., or stones that moved *as having life*.—Damascius, an author in the reign of Justinian, says he had seen many of these Boetylia, of which wonderful things were reported, in Mount Libanus, and about Heliopolis, in Syria.”

The volume, a handsome octavo of more than 500 pages, has been, we perceive, published by subscription: the list contains about 400 names, with the King at the head. This is sterling patronage, yet not greater, if so great, as Mr. Pennie deserves. The Preface, we think, somewhat unnecessarily long: it needed but few words to commend the drama of our early history to the lovers of literature, among whom we do not reckon him who is insensible to the charms of such plays as *Cymbeline*, *Julius Caesar*, the *Winter’s*

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Tale, or Macbeth. Mr. Pennie mentions the popularity of Pizarro, “which faintly attempts to delineate the customs of the Peruvians” as a reason for “the hope that is in him” respecting the fate of his own tragedies. To our minds, Pizarro is one of the most essentially dramatic or stage-plays of all our stock pieces. It is of German origin, though Sheridan is said to have written it over sandwiches and claret in Drury Lane Theatre. The country, the scenery, and costume have much to do with this stage effect, and even aid the strong excitement of conflicting passions which pervades every act. Its representation is a scene-shifting, fidgeting business, but its charms tempt us almost invariably to sit it out.

Returning to Mr. Pennie’s Tragedies, we must add that a more delightful collection of notes was never appended to any poem. Would that all commentators had so assiduously illustrated their text. Here is none of the literary indolence by which nine out of ten works are disfigured, nor the fiddle-faddle notes which some folks must have written in their dreams.

* * * * *

SNATCHES FROM EUGENE ARAM.

A Landlord’s Benevolence.—No sooner did he behold the money, than a sudden placidity stole over his ruffled spirit:—nay, a certain benevolent commiseration for the fatigue and wants of the traveller replaced at once, and as by a spell, the angry feelings that had previously roused him.

A “Rich” Man.—One who “does not live so as not to have money to lay by.”

An old Soldier.—Set me a talking, and let out nothing himself;—old soldier every inch of him.

A Scholar.—A man not much inclined to reproduce the learning he had acquired:—what he wrote was in very small proportion to what he read.

Study of Mankind.—There seems something intuitive in the science which teaches us the knowledge of our race. Some men emerge from their seclusion, and find, all at once, a power to dart into the minds and drag forth the motives of those they see; it is a sort of second sight, born with them, not acquired.

Happiness.—No man can judge of the happiness of another. As the moon plays upon the waves, and seems to our eyes to favour with a peculiar beam one long track amidst the waters, leaving the rest in comparative obscurity; yet all the while she is no niggard in her lustre—for the rays that meet not our eyes seem to us as though they were not,

yet *she*, with an equal and unfavouring loveliness, mirrors herself on every wave: even so, perhaps, Happiness falls with the same brightness and power over the whole expanse of life, though to our limited eyes she seems only to rest on those billows from which the ray is reflected back upon our sight.

Influence of Cities.—When men have once plunged into the great sea of human toil and passion, they soon wash away all love and zest for innocent enjoyments. What was once a soft retirement, will become the most intolerable monotony; the gaming of social existence—the feverish and desperate chances of honour and wealth, upon which the men of cities set their hearts, render all pursuits less exciting, utterly dull and insipid.

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Love.—There is a mysterious influence in nature, which renders us, in her loveliest scenes, the most susceptible to love. * * In all times, how dangerous the connexion, when of different sexes, between the scholar and the teacher! Under how many pretences, in that connexion, the heart finds the opportunity to speak out.

Passion—The doubt and the fear—the caprice and the change, which agitate the surface, swell also the tides of passion.

Poverty—makes some humble but more malignant.

Want.—How many noble natures—how many glorious hopes—how much of the seraph's intellect, have been crushed into the mire, or blasted into guilt, by the mere force of physical want?

Benevolence.—How poor, even in this beautiful world, with the warm sun and fresh air about us, that alone are sufficient to make us glad, would be life, if we could not make the happiness of others.

Eloquence.—The magic of the tongue is the most dangerous of all spells.

Genius.—There is a certain charm about great superiority of intellect, that winds into deep affections which a much more constant and even amiability of manners in lesser men, often fails to reach. Genius makes many enemies, but it makes sure friends—friends who forgive much, who endure long, who exact little; they partake of the character of disciples as well as friends.

Experience.—'Tis a pity that the more one sees, the more suspicious one grows. One does not have gumption till one has been properly cheated—one must be made a fool very often in order not to be fooled at last!

Cat-kindness.—Paw to-day, and claw to-morrow.

London at Night.—One of the greatest pleasures in the world is to walk alone, and at night, (while they are yet crowded) through the long lamp-lit streets of this huge metropolis. There, even more than in the silence of woods and fields, seems to me the source of endless, various meditation.

How easy it is to forget!—The summer passes over the furrow, and the corn springs up; the sod forgets the flower of the past year; and the battlefield forgets the blood that has been spilt upon its turf; the sky forgets the storm; and the water the noon-day sun that slept upon its bosom. All Nature preaches forgetfulness. Its very order is the progress of oblivion.

* * * * *

SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

A DAY AT LULWORTH.[1]

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The abolition of monasteries, which succeeded the former revolution in France, caused a fraternity of Trappists to seek refuge from the general persecution of religious orders under the protection of the proprietor of Lulworth Castle, on the coast of Dorsetshire; their patron being a rigid Catholic, and much governed by the priests. They had been established many years when I visited them; my curiosity being excited by the current reports of the severities to which their order subjected them in the habitual discipline of the convent. The day selected for the visit was quite in harmony with the objects in view; a cold, bleak, cloudy morning, which terminated in rain, without a single ray of the sun to enliven a December gloom. Mr., now Cardinal, Weld was paying his temporal and spiritual devotions at the Quirinal Palace and the shrine of St. Peter; but, in the absence of the family from Lulworth, his huntsman regularly exercised a small pack of harriers round the neighbouring hills among the goss covers, for the amusement of a few sportsmen and his own profit. Three of us proceeded one morning to enjoy our customary diversion; but the bleakness of the wind which swept the hills overlooking the sea induced the huntsman to keep the hounds at home, and we, in consequence, determined to make up for our disappointment by riding over to Lulworth. In summer, this little retired spot is an object of attraction, from its romantic cove and fine castle; while many parties, doubtless, are drawn there by the savoury idea of boiled lobsters, usually provided for their refreshment at the small public-house of the village; where "mine host" was wont to rivet the attention of the juvenile portions of his guests especially, while the older refused him not their ears, to tales of the castle and the convent, about which, as in most Catholic families of distinction, and among religious institutions, there hung a cloud of mystery, which the young votaries of worldly enjoyments love to penetrate.

Leaving our horses at the inn, we walked directly up to the convent situated a little way beyond the village, impressed with feelings which the stories we had heard unavoidably excited. Nor were these feelings diminished by the gloomy solitude and silence of the scenery around, interrupted only by the howling wind and the roaring of the waves, which beat against the precipitous rocks surrounding the cove, and sustaining the massive walls of the castle.

A plain white-washed building, with few and small windows, apparently created out of a barn or granary and an old farm-house, was encircled by a high wall enclosing also a muddy courtyard, and a garden destined to supply the fraternity merely with the necessary herbs and seeds on which the meagre-fed brethren were nourished. We lifted the heavy knocker of a rude door surmounted by a crucifix, and a lay-brother, resembling him represented in the Opera of the Duenna, answered our modest knocking. An order from "the family" was demanded; and for want of it we urged our special journey (about twenty miles), names, and rank; all of which was transmitted to the superior, while we remained some time unbidden in the courtyard, where the only sign of life was the deep barking of an old house-dog, who rivalled his human associates in misanthropy.

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At length the creaking hinges of the door were heard again, and, with an injunction to be sparing of speech, we were bidden to follow the animated shadow which flitted in the owl-light before us, through various winding passages. Had I been alone, and had that crime which has lately so shocked humanity been then in existence, I think I should have “pulled in resolution,” and told the miserable *cicerone* that I would call another time. But, as companionship imparts courage, on we went, filled with vivid recollections of Mrs. Radcliffe’s romances, accompanied with an urgent curiosity also to see, for the first time, living monks and a real monastery. One of the former passed us in our way, clothed in the dingy habit of his order fastened round the waist with a twisted cord. He bowed as he passed; and we were told, in a whisper, that he was recently arrived; and from not associating with the rest of the brethren, and having a separate apartment, he was supposed to be a man of rank, known only to the superior, and concerning whom conjecture was rife, but no inquiry permitted. What this recluse really was my story will hereafter disclose.

The general furniture of the convent appeared to be neat and clean, but of coarse materials and rude construction, while its scantiness evinced either the penury of the institution, or the denial which formed part of the monastic discipline peculiar to the order of La Trappe. There might be a third explanation of the ill-lighted bareness of the walls and floors, together with the general aspect of privation and devotion, an explanation which occurred to us subsequently—there might have been studied effect and deception in their display before visitors.

We entered the refectory and the dormitory, neither of which bore any sign of luxury, nor even of ordinary comfort. The needful repose of man seemed scarcely provided for in the one, nor the “creature comforts” in the other. Meat was forbidden, except when prescribed for the health of the inmates. Vegetable broth, bread, and water, formed, we were told, the chief resources of the culinary department of the convent; and, in the very act of enjoying these, around the disconsolate-looking table, the superior was accustomed to remind the brotherhood occasionally during the repast not to indulge the appetite for food, so as to divert their thoughts for an instant from heaven. This spiritual memento was introduced by the rap of a stout oaken-stick upon the table; when instantly, every hand raised to the mouth was arrested and held still where it was, until a second rap permitted it to proceed in its carnal office, the interval being employed in silent ejaculation to the Deity, or perhaps, with some, in “curses not loud but deep” against the inexorable superior, who so compelled them to mortify a not unnatural desire.

In the dormitory a similar mortification nightly awaited the unconscious sleepers, although “upon uneasy pallets stretching them,” in the occasional tinkling of an obtrusive bell, that peremptorily hurried them from their recumbent position to the cold stones of the chapel, where on bended knees they were obliged to pray and meditate.

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From the refectory and the dormitory we were conducted to the chapel, with renewed injunctions to ask no questions while there, and to preserve the strictest silence. Here we found about thirty, I think, of the brethren, in their coarse black habits and cord belts, with rosary, shaved crowns, and fixed eyes; some kneeling, and others prostrate upon the stony floor,—picturesquely grouched, *a la Rembrandt*, about the steps of the altar and other parts of the chapel. All were silent and motionless, and regarded our intrusion no more than if they were so many marble statues. Some of the monks were old and haggard, and others young and better conditioned than might be conceived of men fed, or rather starved, as they were represented to be. Their features appeared generally to be coarse and vulgar. The chapel itself was perfectly plain, and unadorned but by a few of the customary figures and paintings, representing disgusting situations of saints and martyrs under voluntary torture and privation. Lamps that “shed a pale and ineffectual light,” crucifixes, and images of the Virgin and Son, were duly scattered about the niches of the chapel.

From the chapel we were conducted to the superior’s room, a small scantily-furnished apartment, with however an appearance of greater comfort than elsewhere about the building, from the presence of a plain chair and table, some religious books, a cot, and a little fire. The superior himself possessed somewhat more of the aspect of a gentleman than the rest of the brethren, as well as the dim light of a lamp allowed us to observe his figure; of which certainly, whatever might have been his mode of living, rotundity formed no such feature as I have seen among the jolly monks in Spain and Portugal. He related to us the habits of his order, from which we learnt further particulars than had been related by the *cicerone*. Silence seemed to be the rule of the establishment during the whole twenty-four hours, the exceptions being very few: one of the brethren, we were told, had never been known to speak for about thirty years, in accordance with a vow, and was supposed to have become dumb.

When one monk met another, the salutation was limited to this simple expression——“Brother, we must die.” And lest this fact should not have been sufficiently kept in recollection, a grave was constantly open in the burying-ground at hand, the digging of which was a source of bodily exercise and recreation to the brethren; a new one being always made when a tenant was found for that which already gaped to receive him.

I need scarcely observe, that from the rigid silence vowed and practised, the order of La Trappe includes no females in its over-zealous ordinances. The only books allowed those who could read were Missals and the Bible, which were constantly in their hands.

Medical aid was not denied, when occasion required it, from one qualified to practise among the Weld colony in the village, who of course was no heretic; but the ordinary management of the *materia medica*, furnished by the garden, rested with such of the fraternity as were gifted in the art of healing.

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In addition to all the mortification of the flesh pointed out to us, we were given to understand that the twisted cords around the waist were frequently employed in self-inflicted scourgings at the altar, to which the superior exhorted the brethren as a penance for past, and humiliation for future, sins; a ceremony which, by all accounts, was in some instances unjustly taken out of the hands of the public executioner, while in others, perhaps, the cord might not at all have been misapplied if its adjustment to the neck, instead of the waist, had been anticipated by the same functionary.—*Metropolitan*.

[1] See *Mirror*, vol. xvi p. 201.

* * * * *

COLONEL BRERETON.

Through the still midnight—hark’—that startling sound Tells of deed of blood! a soldier’s hand
With aim too true himself hath reft of life! * * * Beneath that roof For many days
none had heard sounds of gladness. He was distressed—each fond retainer then
Softened his voice to whispers—each pale face Did but reflect the sadness fixed in his:
Save where the two—two fair and lovely ones, Too young for guilt or sorrow, or to know
Such words as wordlings know them—save where they, Pranking in childhood’s
headlong gaiety, Sent the loud shout—like laughter through the tomb— And mocked his
anguish, with their joyousness. Oh, that in sleep, some cry of joy or pain From forth
those lips had bursten piercingly, When that sad Man his daring hand had lain,
Maddened with hours of musing, on his death! Then would great Nature, o’er the
soldier’s heart Her power have all recovered; his seared soul With gushing tears
enflooded, been restored; Mistaken Honour, false chivalric Pride, Flown with the
Tempter;—life have been preserved,— And unendangered an immortal soul.

Gentleman's Magazine.

* * * * *

SELECT BIOGRAPHY.

THE LATE MR. MUNDEN.

(With Recollections.)

Great actors have two lives, or rather they have double deaths. Their leave-taking of the public, their “retirement,” as biographers call it, is one death; since a playgoer then considers an actor dead “to all intents and purposes”—a very *non est*. Public regrets are showered about your great actor, and by some he is forgotten with the last trump of his praise. He “retires:” that is, he looks out for a cottage in the country, far removed

from his former sphere of action, (as plain John Fawcett did the other day,) or he diverges to a snug box in the suburbs of London, still lingering about the great stage, as did honest Joseph Munden about seven years since. People in the boxes or pit look out for his successor in the bills of the play—then say “we ne’er shall look upon his like again,” (the greatest, though perhaps the most equivocal, tribute ever paid

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to genius,) but a few months reconcile them to the loss; they approve the successor, though they deplore the change, “and though the present they regret, they are grateful for the past.” Then comes your actor’s second farewell—his final exit—and “last of all comes death.” A line or two in a newspaper tells you that Munden died on Monday last. One exclaims “I thought he had been dead these seven years;” but another, of more grateful and reflective temperament, throws down the “*diurnal*” to lament the death of the man as he had hitherto regretted the loss of the actor. His former regret too is resuscitated. A mere paragraph rounds the little life of your actor, his entrances and exits, and he who “appeared” on one stage in 1790, as Sir Francis Gripe and Jemmy Jumps, disappeared from that greater stage, or all the world, as Joseph Munden. We have often thought these *farewells* of actors must be with them dismal affairs, especially in old age. They must remind them of a last farewell, and we know

The sense of death is most in apprehension.

But, is this fitting for the obituary of a *comic* actor? Yes, we reply, and as both are but occasions of appeal to the passions, we may think the death of a tragedian less striking than the former, since all tragedies end with death, and death in itself is but a scene of tragedy. Is any lament of Shakspeare’s heroes more touching than his apostrophe to the scull of Yorick, the King’s jester, the mad fellow that poured a flagon of Rhenish on the clown’s head: “a fellow of infinite jest; of most excellent fancy. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen?”

Munden was the son of a poulterer in Brooke’s Market, Holborn, where he was born in the year 1758. His father died soon afterwards, leaving his widow with slender means, and Munden was thrust upon the world to seek his fortune at twelve years of age. He was placed in an apothecary’s shop, but soon left it for an attorney’s office. Perhaps, like Dr. Wolcot, he fancied the clinking of the pestle and mortar said “Kill ’em again! kill ’em again.” From the attorney’s office, he “fell off,” as Hamlet’s Ghost would say, to a law-stationer’s shop, and became “a hackney writer:” the technicality needs not explanation: to hack at anything is neither the road to fame nor a good meal. He was apprenticed in Chancery Lane: his master died and was succeeded by an older man, of the square-toed fraternity, who taxed Munden with being a Macaroni more than a tradesman. Munden, in consequence, parted from his master, and once more returned to the office of a solicitor. They who remember Munden, a staid-dressing man in later years, may smile at his early observance of the glass of fashion.

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About this time Munden appears to have first imbibed a taste for the stage, and with it an admiration of the genius of Garrick; indeed, he had seen more of Garrick's acting than had any of his contemporaries in 1820, Quick and Bannister excepted. What a fine president would Munden have been of the *Garrick Club*, the members of which probably know as much about Garrick as they care about Thespis. Acquaintance with an actor fed Munden's *penchant* for the stage, but did not fill his pocket. Both started for Liverpool, the actor upon an engagement, but Munden in *hope* of one; the latter engaged in the office of the Town Clerk, but only realized his hope in copying for the theatre, walking in processions, and bearing banners, at one shilling per night! At length he *acted* the *first Carrier* in *Henry IV*. He next joined a company at Rochdale, which he soon left, and returning to Liverpool, smothered his dramatic passion for two years, when he started for Chester, with a light heart, a bundle wardrobe, and a guinea. He entered Chester with his "last shilling," which he paid for admission to the theatre, little thinking of provision for the night. Yet Munden, in later life, was a prudent, parsimonious man. At the close of the performance he fell in with a person who had been a butcher's apprentice in Brooks's Market, and who remembering young Joseph's antic tricks, gave him good cheer, and money for his return to London. On the road, necessity overtook him, when meeting a Warwickshire militia-man, who was marching to the town at which he was billeted, Munden prevailed on the soldier to represent him as a comrade. The trick told: he was ordered to the general mess-room and received as one among the warriors; and his lively humour made him king of the company for the night. Next morning the regiment mustered, and Munden was told to follow and be enlisted; but, as he had obtained all he wished, a supper and a bed, he left his military friends to their glory,[1] and proceeded to London. Here he again returned to the law, but once more emerged from it, and joined a company at Leatherhead, as a representative of old men. But the theatre was burnt. Munden next played at Windsor with tolerable success, at half a guinea per week; and subsequently at Colnbrook and Andover. He returned to London, and thence went to Canterbury, in 1780, to play low comedy characters, where he first became what theatrical biographers term "a favourite." After other provincial engagements and a short trial of management at Sheffield, Munden appeared December 2, 1790, (a few nights after the first appearance of Incledon,) at Covent Garden Theatre as *Sir Francis Gripe*, in the *Busy Body*, and *Jemmy Jumps* in the *Farmer*; his success in which parts after the impressions made by Parsons and Edwin was little short of a miracle. His popularity now became settled. He was the original representative of *Old Rapid*, *Caustic*, *Brummagem*, *Lazarillo*, (*Two Strings*

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to your Bow,) *Crack*, *Nipperkin*, *Sir Abel Handy*, *Sir Robert Bramble*, *Old Dornton*, &c. In 1797 and 1798, he played at the Haymarket, but his summer vacations were chiefly filled up by engagements at the provincial theatres. Munden remained at Covent Garden Theatre till 1813, when he joined the Drury Lane company. Here he remained until May 31, 1824, when he took his farewell of the stage, in the characters of *Sir Robert Bramble*, (*Poor Gentleman*, [2]) and *Old Dozy*, (in *Past Ten o'clock*.) He read his farewell address, thus rendering it strikingly ineffective, since his spectacles became obscured with tears. The leave-taking had, however, a touch of real tragedy, which few could withstand. He now retired with a respectable fortune, and lived in genteel style in Bernard-street, Russell Square, till his 74th year.

Munden's style of acting was exuberant with humour. His face was his fortune: it was all changeful nature: his eye glistened and rolled, and lit up alternately every corner of his laughing face: "then the eternal tortuosities of his nose, and the alarming descent of his chin, contrasted, as it eternally was, with the portentous rise of his eyebrows." He has been blamed for grimace, but it should be remembered that many of his characters verged on caricatures. That he could play comic characters chastely was amply shown in his *Polonius*; and touch the finer feelings of our nature was exemplified in his *Old Dornton*, in Holcroft's catching play of the *Road to Ruin*. The fine discrimination evinced by Munden in the grief and joy of the exclamations "Who would be a father," and "Who would *not* be a father," will not soon be forgotten. We think we see and hear his stout figure, in black, with florid face, and powdered hair, his raised and clasped hands,—rushing out of the lockup-house scene in all the fervid extasy of a father rejoicing at the escape of his son from destruction. In *Crack*, *Dozey*, *Nipperkin*, and other drunken characters, his drollery was irresistible. His intoxication displayed as much discrimination as his pathetic performances. Who can forget his stare in being detected in his fuddling as *Dozey*, and his plea for drinking to "*wa-ash* down your honour's health:" or his *anti-polarity* as *Nipperkin*, when his very legs seemed drunk beneath him; his attempt to set down the keg would stagger the disbelievers of perpetual motion. Again, who did not relish the richness of his voice, and the arch crispness which he gave to some words, while others came not trippingly off his tongue, but lingered and jarred with an effect which accounts for so many imitators. His mouth had a peculiar twist, somewhat resembling that of Mathews, which at times almost forbade his plain speaking.

We have seen that Munden was

A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Had ta'en with equal thanks.

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As he ripened, he became tinged with the old gentlemanly vice. He almost made penury his hobby. Oxberry's widow asked him, after his retirement, to play for her benefit: he said he could not, but that, if ever he performed again, he would present her with 100_l_. It is related of him too, that a friend asking him for a keepsake, he exchanged his old cotton umbrella for his friend's silk one. Elliston and Munden were on good terms, though men of very opposite habits. Munden had played twelve nights for Elliston at Leamington. The manager had his wine, and the actor his brandy and water, in the greenroom; before leaving the town, Munden sent for his bill at the next tavern—14 glasses as many shillings. He asked Elliston to contribute 3_s_, which the manager refused to do, as Munden had drunk his wine; "but," retorted Munden, screwing his features up to the very point of exaction, "Sip-pings, remember sip-pings," alluding to Elliston's occasional visits to his glass, while he was playing his part. It is said too, though we know not how truly, that Munden was once seen, walking to Kentish Town, with four mackerel, suspended from his fingers by a twig, he having purchased the fish at a low price in Clare-Market. But this is venial: for a *string of fish* is one of the parcels which John Wilkes said, a gentleman may carry. Munden was a willing diner-out, and his conviviality made him a welcome guest at any board. His hospitality at home was unbounded; and above all, he has left an exemplary character for honesty and integrity: he was one of those

Whose blood and judgment are so well comingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please.

Mr. Munden has left a widow, a son, and a daughter to share his well-earned fortune.

[1] The recital of these circumstances induced O'Keefe to introduce the incident in the part of Nipperkin, in *Springs of Laurel*, or "Rival Soldiers_".

[2] Oxberry appeared on the stage for the last time, this night, as Corporal Foss.

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THE SELECTOR; AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

MEMOIRS OF SIR RALPH Esher,

By Leigh Hunt, Esq.

These volumes exhibit a lively picture of the gayest and most profligate periods of the history of the English Court. The writer, Sir Ralph Esher, is an adventurer in the Court of our Second Charles, where he is introduced by luckily securing a feather that escapes from the hat of one of the ladies of the Court on horseback. The work opens with some account of the writer's family, of some antiquity, in the county of Surrey, with a few delightful sketches of the great men of the period. Witness this slight outline of

Cowley.

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"I rode one day on purpose to see Cooper's Hill, because Mr. Denham had written a poem upon it; and hearing that Cowley was coming to see Mr. Evelyn at Wootton, I went there and waited all the morning, till I saw him arrive. He had a book in his hand, with his finger between the leaves, as if he had been reading. He was a fleshy, heavy man, not looking in good health, and had something of a stare in his eye. Before he entered the gate, he stooped down to pinch the cheeks of some little children at play; and afterwards, when I heard he was put in prison, I could not, for the life of me, persuade myself that he deserved it."

The third chapter describes one of Charles's visits to Durdans, a rural retreat built with materials from Nonsuch in the vicinity. The opening has all the summer freshness of a race-day morning at Epsom:

"The bells awoke me in the morning, ringing a merry peal. When the wind died, they seemed to be calling towards London; when it rose again, they poured their merriment through the town, as if telling us that the King was coming. I got up, and went into the street, where the people were having their breakfasts under the trees, as the gentry do in the time of the races. It was a very animated scene. The morning was brilliant. A fine air tempered the coming warmth. The tables set out with creams and cakes under the trees, had a pretty country look, though the place was crowded. Everybody was laughing, chattering, and expecting; and the lasses, in their boddices and white sleeves, reminded me of Miss Warmestre."

The arrival of the King and his mistress is beautifully told, as are the costumes described, nay, coloured, for they are like highly-finished portraits.

Charles and his Court at Epsom.

"The King!—The silence now seemed to become more silent; and in spite of the opinions in which I had been brought up, I felt what it was to be in the presence of one who inherited sovereign power. His Majesty himself alighted first, and together with Buckingham, presented his hand to assist the Queen. Then came a handsome boy, Mr. Crofts (afterwards Duke of Monmouth); and last, assisted by her cousin the Duke, the long looked for beauty, beautiful indeed, triumphantly beautiful. She looked around, and the spectators could hardly refrain from another shout.

"The dress at that time was well calculated to set off a woman to advantage. Lady Castlemain was dressed in white and green, with an open boddice of pink, looped with diamonds. Her sleeves were green, looped up full on the shoulders with jewelry, and showing the white shift beneath, richly trimmed with lace. The boddice was long and close, with a very low tucker. The petticoat fell in ample folds, but not so long as to keep the ankles unexposed; and it was relieved from an appearance of too much weight by the very weightiness of the hanging sleeves, which counterpoising its magnitude, and looking flowery

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with lace and ribbons, left the arms free at the elbows, and fell down behind on either side. The hair was dressed wide, with ringlets at the cheeks; and the fair vision held a fan in one hand, while the Duke led her by the other. When she had ascended the steps, and came walking up the terrace, the lowness of her dress in the bosom, the visibility of her trim ankles, and the flourishing massiness of the rest of her apparel, produced the effect, not of a woman over-dressed, but of a dress displaying a woman; and she came on, breathing rosy perfection, like the queen of the gardens.

“I did not see all this at the time; there was not leisure for it; but I had the general impression, which I reduced into detail afterwards. The spectators forgot everybody but the King and her. His Majesty, at that period of his life, (he was little more than thirty,) looked at his best, and I thought I never saw a manlier face, or a more graceful figure. He was in mulberry coloured velvet and gold. He not only took off his hat in return to our salutations, but persisted in keeping it so, as if in the presence of the whole people of England. This fairly transported us. The royal features were strong, somewhat grim even, and he had a black brow and a swarthy complexion, reminding us of the southern part of his stock; but there was good temper in the smile of his wide though not unhandsome mouth; and his carriage was eminently that of the gentleman. Lady Castlemain at that time was little more than twenty. The Queen, though short of stature, was young also, and looked handsomer than we expected; and as all parties seemed pleased, and his Majesty’s little son came on the other side of the lady of the bed-chamber, we pretended to ourselves, that things were not so bad as report made them; though never more convinced, that everything which had been related was true.”

An animated snatch from court life:

“I passed a delightful winter, carrying messages, going to plays, dining, drinking, dressing, and hearing the King and his courtiers talk. By degrees I was encouraged to talk myself. I got a reputation for being both a hearty and a judicious admirer of wit and poetry, and this procured me the regard of the men I was most anxious to please. Lord Buckhurst liked me because I was discriminating; Sir John Denham, because I listened with respect; Sir Charles Sedley, because none of his similes were lost on me; and Mr. Waller, because I thought him the greatest poet that ever was, I had some misgiving on that point, when I thought of poor Mr. Cowley, who died not long afterwards. Mr. Sprat (lately made Bishop of Rochester, then the Duke of Buckingham’s chaplain,) took me to see that great and good man in his retreat in the country, where he talked so delightfully of rural pleasures, that I began to sigh after my old fields, till I heard him say he had realized nothing but agues, and that the Arcadians in his vicinity were anything but what they should be. He thought, however, he should find them a little higher up the river.”

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Lely's Portrait of Cromwell

is thus introduced in the second volume:

“Oliver now stood erect, with his back to a fire-place, and resembled the picture which had been lately painted of him by Lely. The artist flattered him perhaps in the general air, as far as it implied ordinary good breeding, and an habitual urbanity of carriage; and yet the momentary look may not have been flattered even in that respect; for as the greater includes the less, so the princely serenity which Cromwell could assume as well as any man, or rather which was natural to him in his princely moments, involved of necessity whatever is of the like quality in the self-possession of an ordinary gentleman. You have heard what Cromwell said, when Lely was about to paint this picture? He desired him to omit nothing that could complete the likeness, however it might tell against smoothness and good looks. Not a wart, or a wrinkle was to be left out. Lely accordingly produced a stronger and bluffer face than is usual with him; though it is to be doubted, whether the sense of beauty to which he afterwards made such a sacrifice of his pencil, would have permitted him to go to the extent of Cromwell's direction, granting even that the instinct of a courtier had not prevented it. Nor are we to suppose, that Cromwell himself, however great a man, was displeased to think that his warts and wrinkles had been found less inimical to pleasingness of aspect, than might have been looked for. Be this as it may, I was afterwards when I came to see the picture, highly struck with the resemblance it bore to him at the period of this interview. If there was any defect on the wrong side it was, that the eyes were not fine enough; not sufficiently deep and full of meaning. And yet they are not vulgar eyes, in Lely's picture. The forehead, and the open flow of hair on either side, as if he was looking out upon the realm he governed, and the air of it was breathing upon him, are wonderfully like; and so is the determined yet unaffected look of the mouth. The nose, which in every face is, perhaps, the seat of refinement or coarseness, (at least I have never found the symptom fail) is hardly coarse enough; and in a similar proportion, it is wanting in power. Cromwell's nose looked almost like a knob of oak. Indeed, throughout his face there was something of the knobbed and gnarled character of that monarch of our woods. I will add, that as this picture was painted immediately after Cromwell's accession to the sovereign power, the princely aspect of the sitter was never more genuine, perhaps, than at that moment. But there was one thing which Lely assuredly took upon himself to qualify; to wit, the redness of the nose. It was too red in ordinary, though not so much so as his libellers gave out, nor so distinguished in colour from the rest of his face. When he was moved to anger, the whole irritability of his nature seemed to rush into both nose and cheeks; and this produced an effect, the consciousness of which was, perhaps, of no mean service in helping him to control himself. Upon the whole if many princes have had a more graceful aspect, few have shown a more striking one, and fewer still have warranted the impression by their actions.”

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The work, as our readers may imagine, is from first to last, an ever shifting round of adventure. It has its dark shades as well as its lively tints. The Great Plague and Fire furnish ample materials for the former, as do the court beauties and *intriguanes* for the latter. An episodal narrative of the Plague is one of the most touching pieces in the whole work. At present we subjoin one of

The Great Fire.

"I was pondering one night, as I was sitting in the parlour at Mickleham,[1] looking at a beautiful moon, and delaying to go to bed, when Bennett came in and told me, that there was a dreadful fire in London. One of the tradesmen had brought news of a dreadful fire the day before; but as every fire was dreadful, and I had seen the good people of London run away from a cow, crying out, a "mad bull," I had thought nothing of it, and was prepared to think as little of the new one. The old gentleman, however, assuring me that both fires were one and the same, that it had burnt a whole night and day, and was visible as far as Epsom, I thought it time to see into the truth of the matter. I ordered my horse, and promising to bring back a correct account, purely to satisfy the house that there was no such thing, (for some of the domestics had kindred in London,) I set off at a round gallop, looking towards the north, as if I could already discern what I had doubted. Nobody was stirring at Leatherhead; but at Epsom, sure enough, there was a great commotion, all the people being at their doors, and vowing they saw the fire; which, however, I could not discern. That there was a fire, however, and a dreadful one, was but too certain, from accounts brought into the town both by travellers and the inhabitants; so with the natural curiosity which draws us on and on upon much less occasions, especially on a road, I pushed forward, and soon had pretty clear indications of a terrible fire indeed. I began to consider what the King might think of it, and whether he would not desire to have his active servants about him. At Morden the light was so strong, that it was difficult to persuade one's-self the fire was not much nearer; and at Tooting you would have sworn it was at the next village. The night was, nevertheless, a very fine one, with a brilliant moon.[2] Not a soul seemed in bed in the villages, though it was ten o'clock. There was a talk of the French, as if they had caused it. By degrees, I began to meet carts laden with goods; and on entering the borders of Southwark, the expectation of the scene was rendered truly awful, there was such a number of people abroad, yet such a gazing silence. Now and then one person called to another; but the sound seemed as if in bravado, or brutish. An old man, in a meeting of cross-roads, was haranguing the people in the style of former years, telling them of God's judgments, and asserting that this was the pouring out of that other vial of wrath, which had been typified by the Fiery Sword,—a spectacle supposed to have been seen in the sky at the close of the year sixty-four. The plague was thought to have been announced by a comet.

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"Very different from this quieter scene, was the one that presented itself, on my getting through the last street, and reaching the water-side. The comet itself seemed to have come to earth, and to be burning and waving in one's face, the whole city being its countenance, and its hair flowing towards Whitehall in a volume of fiery smoke. The river was of a bloodish colour like the flame, and the sky over head was like the top of a pandemonium. From the Tower to St. Paul's there was one mass of fire and devastation, the heat striking in your eyes, and the air being filled with burning sparkles, and with the cries of people flying, or removing goods on the river. Ever and anon distant houses fell in, with a sort of gigantic shuffling noise, very terrible. I saw a steeple give way, like some ghastly idol, its long white head toppling, and going sideways, as if it were drunk. A poor girl near me, who paced a few yards up and down, holding her sides as if with agony, turned and hid her eyes at this spectacle, crying out, 'Oh, the poor people! oh the mothers and babies!' She was one of the lowest of an unfortunate class of females. She thought, as I did, that there must be a dreadful loss of lives; but it was the most miraculous circumstance of that miraculous time, that the fire killed nobody, except some women and infirm persons with fright.

"I took boat, and got to Whitehall, where I found the King in a more serious and stirring humour than ever I saw him. Mr. Pepys, begging God to forgive him for having an appetite at such a crisis, and interrupting his laughter at the supper they gave him, with tears of pity and terror, had brought word to his Majesty that the whole city would be destroyed, if some of the houses were not blown up. The King accordingly not only dispatched myself and many others to assist, but went in person with his brother, and did a world of good. I never saw him look so grim, or say so many kind things. Wherever he went, he gave the people a new life, for they seemed dead with fright. Those who had not fled, (which they did by thousands into the fields where they slept all night,) seemed only to have been prevented from doing so, by not knowing what steps to take. The Lord Mayor, a very different one from his predecessor, who showed a great deal of courage during the plague, went about like a mad cook with his handkerchief, perspiring, and lamenting himself; and nobody would have taken the citizens for the same men who settled my court friends at the battle of Naseby. The court, however, for that matter, was as frightened as the city, with the exception of the King and one or two others; so terrible is a new face of danger, unless there is some peculiar reason for meeting it. The sight indeed of the interior of the burning city, was more perilous, though not so awful, as its appearance outside. Many streets consisted of nothing but avenues between heaps of roaring ruins; the sound of the fire being nothing less than that of hundreds

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of furnaces, mixed up with splittings, rattlings, and thunderous falls; and the flame blowing frightfully one way, with a wind like a tempest. The pavement was hot under one's feet; and if you did not proceed with caution, the fire singed your hair. All the water that could be got seemed like a ridiculous dabbling in a basin, while the world was burning around you. The blowing up of the houses marked out by the King, was the ultimate salvation of some of the streets that remained; but as a whole, the city might be looked upon as destroyed. I observed the King, as he sat on his horse at the beginning of Cheapside, and cast his eyes up that noble thoroughfare; and certainly I had never seen such an expression in his countenance before.

"The fire raged four days and nights; and on the fifth of September, London, from the Tower to Fleet-street, was as if a volcano had burst in the midst of it, and destroyed it, the very ruins being calcined, and nothing remaining in the most populous part, to show the inhabitants where they had lived, except a church here and there, or an old statue. I looked into it, three days afterwards, when the air was still so hot, that it was impossible to breathe; and the pavement absolutely scorched the soles of my shoes.

"The loss of property by the fire was of course far greater than that by the plague, and yet assuredly it was not felt a thousandth part so much, even in the city; for money, even with the lovers of it, is not so great a thing, after all, as their old habits and affections. The wits at court never chose to say much about the plague; but the fire, after the fright was over, was a standing joke. And the beneficial consequences to the city itself soon became manifest, in the widening and better building of the streets, an improvement which came in aid of the cleanliness that was resorted to against the plague; so that instead of a judgment against the King and his government, Rochester said, in his profane way, that heaven never showed a judgment of a better sort."

We need scarcely add our commendation of these delightful volumes. Each page teems with life, and everywhere to use an expression of the writer, his "soul rises with springy freshness." The portraits, and to use a familiar term of artists, the bits of painting, have the touches of a master-hand, and they are interwoven with genius which enlivens art and embellishes nature.

[1] At or near Mickleham, by the way, the writer might have commanded a distant view of the burning City. On a fine, clear day we have often discerned the dome of St. Paul's from one of the hills rising from Mickleham to Norbury Park.

[2] Evelyn, speaking of this night, says, that it was "light as day for about ten miles round about, after a dreadful manner."—*Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 391. second edit 4to. Sir Ralph does not seem to make the light so strong, though he does not absolutely say it was otherwise. Perhaps

Evelyn speaks of a later hour. The flames appear to have become visible afterwards to the distance of forty miles.—*Edit.*

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THE GATHERER

AN ODD STORY.

About 150 years since, there was in France one Captain Coney, a gallant gentleman of ancient extraction, and Governor of Coney Castle. He fell in love with a young gentlewoman and courted her for his wife. There was reciprocal love between them, but her parents, understanding it, by way of prevention, shuffled up a forced match between her and one Mr. Fayel, who was heir to a great estate. Hereupon Captain Coney quitted France in discontent, and went to the wars in Hungary against the Turks, where he received a mortal wound, near Buda. Being carried to his quarters he languished four days, but a little before his death, he spoke to an old servant, of whose fidelity and truth he had ample experience, and told him he had a great business to trust him with, which he conjured him to perform; that after his death he should cause his body to be opened, take out his heart, put it in an earthen pot, and bake it to a powder, then put the powder into a handsome box, with the bracelet of hair he had long worn about his left wrist, (which was a lock of Madame Fayel's hair,) and put it amongst the powder with a little note he had written to her with his own blood, and after he had given him the rites of burial, to make all speed to France and deliver the box to Madame Fayel. The old servant did as his master had commanded him, and so went to France; and coming one day to Monsieur Fayel's house, he suddenly met him with one of his servants, who knowing him to be Captain Coney's servant, examined him; and finding him timorous, and to falter in his speech, he searched him, and found the said box in his pocket, with the note which expressed what it contained; then he dismissed the bearer, with injunction that he should come no more thither. Monsieur Fayel, going in, sent for his cook, and delivered him the powder, charging him to make a well relished dish of it, without losing a jot, for it was a very costly thing, and enjoined him to bring it in himself, after the last course at supper. The cook bringing in his dish accordingly, Monsieur Fayel commanded all to leave the room, and began a serious discourse with his wife. That ever since he had married her, he observed she was always melancholy, and he feared she was inclining to consumption, wherefore he had provided a very precious cordial, which he was well assured would cure her, and for that reason obliged her to eat up the whole dish: she afterwards much importuned him to know what it was, when he told her she had eaten Coney's heart, and drew the box out of his pocket, and showed her the note and the bracelet. After a sudden shout of joy, she with a deep-fetched sigh said, "This is a precious cordial indeed," and so licked the dish, adding, "it is so precious that it is a pity ever to eat anything after it." She then went to bed, where in the morning she was found dead.

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SWAINE.

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A Singing Paganini.—In the year 1760, La Paganini, an admirable singer and actress, came to London from Berlin. Her reputation was so great, that when she had her benefit at the Opera, such a crowd assembled as was never before witnessed on a like occasion, not one third of the company that presented themselves at the Opera House doors being able to obtain admission. Caps were lost, and gowns torn to pieces, without number or mercy, in the struggle to get in. Ladies in full dress, who had sent away their servants and carriages were obliged to appear in the streets, and walk home in great numbers without caps or attendants. Luckily the weather was fine, and did not add to their distress by rain or wind, though their confusion was greatly augmented by its being broad daylight, and the streets full of spectators, who (says her biographer) could neither refrain from looking nor laughing at such splendid and uncommon street-walkers.

P.T.W.

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The old Teutonic word *rick* is still preserved in the termination of our English *bishoprick*. Stubbs, in his libel, *The Discovery of a Gaping Gulf*, &c. imprinted 1579, says, "The queen has the *kingrick* in her own power."—Notes to Pennie's *Britain's Historical Drama*.

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On Friendship.

"I love a friend that's frank and just,
To whom a tale I can entrust,
But when a man's to slander given,
From such a friend protect me heaven."

J.J.

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Sea Coal.—In the reign of Edward the First, dyers and brewers began to use sea coal. In consequence of an application from the nobility, &c. he published a proclamation against it, as a public nuisance. And afterwards, under a commission of Oyer and Terminer, the commission ordered that all who had "contumaceously" disobeyed the proclamation, should be punished by "pecuniary mulcts." P.T.W.

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Witty Optics.—A Jew went into a coffee-house to offer some spectacles for sale: one of the company, after trying several pairs, wishing to amuse himself at the Jew's expense, exclaimed, "Oh, these suit me very well; I see through them very well, and through you too, friend, and discern that you are a rogue." The Jew taking them from him and clapping them on his own nose, very composedly replied, "then our eyes are alike, for I see that you are the same."

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Cromwell's Fun.—Before the trial of Charles I., the chiefs of the Republican party and the general officers met to concert the model of the intended new government. One day, after the debates on this most interesting and important subject, Ludlow informs us, that Cromwell, by way of frolic, threw a cushion at his head, and even in the high court of justice, in that solemn moment when he took the pen to sign the warrant for the unhappy monarch's execution, he could not forbear the levity of daubing the face of his neighbour with the ink. G.M.

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The Conclusion of “Brighton in 1743,” in our next.

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