

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

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Page 1

BANKSIDE.—OLD THEATRES.

[Illustration: *Bankside in 1648.*]

[Illustration: *Bull and bear-baiting theatres.*]

[Illustration: *Bear-baiting—&sh
y;rose—globe.*]

The ancient topography of the southern bank of the Thames (or *Bankside*) between London and Blackfriars bridges is peculiarly interesting to the lover of dramatic lore, as well as to the inquirer into the sports and pastimes of our ancestors. It appears to have been the *Arcadia* of the olden metropolis, if such a term be applicable to a place notorious for the indulgence of brutal sports.

The Cut in the adjoining column represents Bankside in 1648, from which it appears to have been then in part waste and unenclosed. "It was land belonging to the crown, and on various parts of it stood the Globe Theatre, the Bear Garden, and other places of public show; here were also the Pike Gardens, some time called the Queen's Pike Gardens, with ponds for the preservation of fresh-water fish, which were said to be kept for the supply of the royal table, under the inspection of an officer, called the king's purveyor of pike, who had here a house for his residence." [1] On the Bankside, prior to the above date, were also the ancient Bordello, or Stews, which, according to Pennant, were distinguished by their respective signs painted against the walls, one of which, in particular, was the Cardinal's Hat; and a small court, now or till lately called *Cardinal's Hat Court*, still exists on the Bankside, and probably shows the precise site of the mansion of depravity. In like manner we find on Bankside, *Pike Garden, Globe Alley*, and in the vicinity a public-house with the sign of the *Globe*. On Bankside also stood an ancient Hall and Palace of the Bishops of Winchester, stated to have been built by William Gifford, Bishop of Winchester, about the year 1107, on a piece of ground belonging to the Prior of Bermondsey, to whom was paid a yearly acknowledgment. The great court, at one time belonging to this palace, is still known by the name of *Winchester Square*, and in the adjacent street was, some time since, an abutment of one of the gates. Near this Palace, on the south, at one time stood the Episcopal Palace of the Bishops of Rochester; which is supposed to have bequeathed its name to *Rochester Street*. The whole of the *Bank* shown in the Cut is now densely populated, and scarcely a pole of green sward is left to denote its ancient state. On the opposite or Middlesex bank may be distinguished the celebrated Castle Baynard.



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The second Cut represents the *bull and bear-baiting theatres*, as they appeared in their first state, A.D. 1560. This spot was called Paris Garden, and the two theatres are said to have been the first that were formed near London. In these, according to Stow, were scaffolds for the spectators to stand upon, an indulgence for which they paid in the following manner: "Those who go to Paris Garden, the Bell Savage, or Theatre, to behold bear-baiting, enterludes, or fence-play, must not account of any pleasant spectacle unless they first pay one penny at the gate, another at the entrie of the scaffold, and a third for quiet standing." One Sunday afternoon, in the year 1582, the scaffold, being overcharged with spectators, fell down during the performance, and a great number of persons were killed or maimed by the accident, which the puritans of the time failed not to attribute to a Divine judgment. These theatres were patronized by royalty: for we read that Queen Elizabeth, on the 26th of May, 1599, went by water with the French ambassadors to Paris Garden, where they saw a baiting of bulls and bears. Indeed, Southwark seems to have long been of sporting notoriety, for, in the *Humorous Lovers*, printed in 1617, one of the characters says, "I'll set up my bills, that the gamesters of London, Horsly-down, *Southwark*, and Newmarket, may come in and bait him (the bear,) here before the ladies, &c." [2]

The third Cut includes the *globe, rose, and bear-baiting theatres*, as they appeared about the year 1612. Of the Globe we have been furnished with the following account by a zealous correspondent, G.W.:

The Globe Theatre stood on a plot of ground, now occupied by four houses, contiguous to the present Globe Alley, Maiden Lane, Southwark. This theatre was of considerable size. It is not certain when it was built. Hentzner, the German traveller, who gives an amusing description of London in the time of Queen Elizabeth, alludes to it as existing in 1598, but it was probably not built long before 1596. It was an hexagonal, wooden building, partly open to the weather, and partly thatched with reeds, on which, as well as other theatres, a pole was erected, to which a flag was affixed. These flags were probably displayed only during the hours of performance; and it should seem from one of the old comedies that they were taken down in Lent, in which time, during the early part of King James's reign, plays were not allowed to be represented, though at a subsequent period this prohibition was dispensed with by paying a fee to the Master of the Revels.

It was called the Globe from its sign, which was a figure of Hercules, or Atlas, supporting a globe, under which was written, *Totus mundus agit histrionem*, (All the world acts a play):—and not as many have conjectured, that the Globe though hexagonal at the outside, was a rotunda within, and that it might have derived its name from its circular form.



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This theatre was burnt down June 29, 1613, but it was rebuilt with greater splendour in the following year. The Cut represents the original theatre. The account of this accident is given by Sir Henry Wotton, in a letter dated July 2, 1613.[3] “Now to let matters of state sleepe, I will entertain you at the present with what happened this week at the Banks side. The King’s players had a new play called *All is True*, representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry the Eighth, which set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty even to the matting of the stage; the knights of the order with their Georges and Garter, the guards with their embroidered coats, and the like: sufficient in truth within awhile to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous. Now King Henry making a Masque at the Cardinal Wolsey’s house, and certain cannons being shot off at his entry, some of the paper or other stuff, wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the thatch, where being thought at first but idle smoak, and their eyes more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train, consuming within less than an hour the whole house to the very ground. This was the fatal period of that virtuous fabrick, wherein yet nothing did perish but *wood* and *straw*, and a few forsaken cloaks; only one man had his breeches set on fire, that would perhaps have broyled him, if he had not by the benefit of a provident wit, put it out with a bottle of ale.”

From a letter of Mr. John Chamberlaine to Sir Ralph Winwood, dated July 8, 1613, in which this accident is likewise mentioned, we learn that the theatre had only two doors. [4] “The burning of the Globe or playhouse on the Bankside on St. Peter’s day cannot escape you; which fell out by a peal of chambers, (that I know not upon what occasion were to be used in the play,) the tampin or stopple of one of them lighting in the thatch that covered the house, burn’d it down to the ground in less than two hours, with a dwelling-house adjoining; and it was a great marvaile and a fair grace of God that the people had so little harm, having but *two narrow doors* to get out.”

In 1613, was entered in the Stationers’ books, “A doleful ballad of the General Conflagration of the famous Theatre called the Globe.”

Taylor, the water poet, commemorates the event in the following lines:

“As gold is better that in fire’s tried,
So is the Bankside Globe, that late was burn’d;
For where before it had a thatched hide,
Now to a stately theatre ’tis turn’d;
Which is an emblem that great things are won;
By those that dare through greatest dangers run.”

It is also alluded to in some verses by Ben Jonson, entitled, “An Execration upon Vulcan,” from which it appears that Ben Jonson was in the theatre when it was burnt.



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This theatre was open in summer and the performances took place by daylight; the King's company usually began to play in the month of May. The exhibitions appear to have been calculated for the lower class of people, and to have been more frequent than those at the Blackfriars, till 1604 or 5, when it became less fashionable and frequented. Being contiguous to the Bear Garden, it is probable that those who resorted there went to the theatre, when the bear-baiting sports were over, and such persons were not likely to form a very refined audience.

We have no description of the interior of the Globe, but that it was somewhat similar to our modern theatres, with an open space in the roof: or perhaps it more resembled an inn-yard, where, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, many of our ancient dramatic pieces were performed. The galleries in both were arranged on three sides of the building; the small rooms under the lowest, answered to our present boxes and were called rooms; the yard bears a sufficient resemblance to the pit, as at present in use, and where the common people stood to see the exhibition; from which circumstance they are called by Shakspeare "the *groundlings*," and by Ben Jonson, "the *understanding* gentlemen of the *ground*." The stage was erected in the area, with its back to the gateway where the admission money was taken. The price of admission into the best *rooms*, or boxes, was in Shakspeare's time, a shilling, though afterwards it appears to have risen to two shillings and half-a-crown. The galleries, or scaffolds, as they were sometimes called, and that part of the house which in private theatres was named the pit, seem to have been the same price, which was sixpence, while in some meaner playhouses it was only a penny, and in others two-pence.

We learn from Sir Henry Hebert, that 20_l_. was the greatest receipt for one day's performance; by that we may calculate upon the house having contained about 700 persons, at the prices before stated; that is to say, 100 for the boxes, and the rest in the other parts of the house.

Part of the site of this theatre is now occupied by the brewery of Messrs. Barclay and Perkins; and in the *History of St. Saviour's*, already quoted, we read that "the passage which led to the Globe Tavern, of which the playhouse formed a part, was, till within these few years, known by the name of Globe Alley, and upon its site now stands a large store-house for porter."

The *Rose* or smaller theatre, was erected in the year 1592, and is stated to have cost L103. 2_s_. 7_d_.—a sum which would scarcely pay half the expenses of a modern patent theatre for a single night!

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These theatres appear to have been cited as nuisances by the parish officers of St. Saviour's, in which they stood; for in July, 1597-8, a resolution was agreed to by a vestry of the parish, "that a petition shall be made to the bodye of the Councill, (Privy Council,) concerning the play-houses in this parish; wherein all the enormities shall be showed that come thereby to the parish, and that in respect thereof they may be dismissed, and put down from playing: and that four, or two of the Churchwardens, &c. shall present the cause with a collector of the Boroughside, and another of the Bankside." The presentation of this petition did not produce the desired effect; for some time afterwards the play-houses not having been put down, the Churchwardens of St. Saviour's, as appears from an entry in their Parish Register, endeavoured to obtain tithes and poor-rates from the owners and managers of the theatres on the Bankside.[5] This corresponds with the state of the English theatre, at this period, at the height of its glory and reputation. Dramatic authors of the first excellence, and eminent actors equally abounded; every year produced a number of new plays; nay, so great was the passion for show or representation, that it was the fashion for the nobility to celebrate their weddings, birthdays, and other occasions of rejoicing, with masques and interludes; the king, queen, and court frequently performing in those represented in the royal palaces, and all the nobility being actors in their old private houses. Alas!

What's gone and what's past help
Should be past grief.

Dryden sung

Support the stage,
Which so declines that shortly we may see
Players and plays reduced to second infancy!

—What would he sing in these times!

Among the numerous memoranda of the topography of this interesting district, we find that the well-known iron foundry of Messrs. Bradley, now occupies the site of a Bear-garden. The Falcon public-house adjoining the foundry of that name, was once the most considerable inn in the county of Surrey, the adjoining foundry being anciently a part of it: and it is said that very near the Falcon was once a mill for the grinding of corn, for the Priory of St. Mary Overy.

To conclude. The accompanying Cuts are copied from one of a series of prints illustrative of the antiquities of the metropolis, published by Messrs. Boydell, in the year 1818.

[1] Hist. and Antiq. St. Saviour, Southwark, 1795.



[2] The first we read of Bear-baiting in England, was in the reign of King John, at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, where “thyss strayne passtyme was introduced by some Italyans for his highness’ amusement, wherewith he and his court were highly delighted.”

[3] Reliq. Wotton, p. 425. Edit. 1685

[4] Winwood’s Memorials, vol. iii. p. 469.

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[5] Annals of the Stage. By J.P. Collyer, Esq. F.S.A. Vol. I.

* * * * *

LACONICS.

(For the Mirror.)

Amongst men of the world comfort merely signifies a great consideration for themselves, and a perfect indifference about others.

Every one who gives way to thought, must, of necessity, become wiser every day; for either the ideas that present themselves to his mind will confirm his yet rickety theories, or observation will teach him that his previous views of things were ill-founded.

Party spirit is like gambling—a vast number of persons trouble themselves about what in the end can be beneficial only to a few.

It is as difficult to win over an enthusiast by force of reasoning, as to persuade a lover of his mistress's faults; or to convince a man who is at law of the badness of his cause.

Knowledge of the world is regarded as an useful, if not an elegant, accomplishment, but this advantage, like every other good, is mixed with some alloy: the acute observer of men and manners cannot but be disgusted with the scenes that take place around him, and his knowledge may at last have the effect of souring his own disposition.

Talents, without the accompaniment of religion, are but fatal presents: they not only add strength to the vices of the individual, but what is worse they render them more conspicuous to the world.

It is strange that the eye of man should have that magic power we have all felt that it possesses. We can contemplate other bright and beautiful objects without withdrawing our gaze; and what is there in the formation of an eye that should create in us any uneasiness? It is the consciousness that the eye is the index of the mind—that when a man fixes his eye on us we are the subject of his thoughts, and that a being gifted with a soul like ourselves is employing its energies and setting its machinery at work about ourselves. It is this conviction that makes us modestly, and almost involuntarily, shrink from such an inspection.

To put ourselves in a passion, in consequence of the misconduct of others, is unquestionably very weak behaviour, but it has also something generous about it; for we are clearly annoying and punishing ourselves, when the offenders only ought to have been the sufferers.



Meanness and conceit are frequently combined in the same character: for he who to obtain transient applause can be indifferent to truth and his own dignity, will be as little scrupulous about them if, by subserviency, he can improve his condition in the world.

The most trivial circumstances are able to put an end to our gratifications; they are like beds of roses, where it is very unlikely all the leaves should be smooth, and even one that is doubled suffices to make us uncomfortable.

Garrulous men are commonly conceited, and they will be found (with very few exceptions) to be superficial as well. They who are in a hurry to tell what they do know, will be equally inclined, from the impulse of prevailing habit, to tell what they do not know.



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LEGAL RHYMES.

(*For the Mirror.*)

According to Goguet, "the first laws of any people were composed in verses, which they sang;" and why should it not be so when Apollo was one of the first of legislators? and under his auspices they were published to the sound of the harp. Pittacus, one of the seven sages of Greece, formed a code of laws in verse, that they might be the easier remembered. The ancient laws of Spain also were chanted in verse, and the custom was preserved a long time among many nations. Mio. Psellus, who lived in the reign of Constantine Ducas, published a synopsis of the law, in verse, and in 1701, Gumaro, a civilian of Naples, taught the dry and intricate system of civil law, in a *novel*. Coke's Reports have been "done into verse" by an anonymous author; and Cowper, the poet, tells us, that a relation of his who had studied the law, "a gentleman of sprightly parts," began to versify Coke's Institutes; he gives the following specimen of the performance:

"Tenant in fee
Simple is he,
And need neither quake nor quiver,
Who hath his lands,
Free from demands,
To him and his heirs for ever."

Records, charters, and wills, and many other legal documents, have been written in verse. The following grant was made by Edward the Confessor to Randolph Peperking:

"Iche Edward konyng (*king*)
Have given of my forest the keping,
Of the Hundred of Cholmer and Daucing,
To Randolph Peperking and to his kindling, (*heirs*)
With heart and hynd, doe and bock, (*buck*)
Hare and fox, cat and brock, (*badger*)
Wild fowell and his flock,
Partridge, fesant hen, and fesant cock,
With green and wyld stob and stock,
To kepen and to yemen (*hold*) by all his might,
Both by day and eke by night:
And hounds for to holde,
Gode and swift and bolde,
Four greyhounds and six beaches, (*hound bitches*)



For hare and fox, and wild cats,
And thereof Iche made him my booke,
Witness the Bishop Wolston,
And book ycleped many on,
And Sweyne of Essex, our brother,
And token him many other,
And our steward Hamelyn,
That bysought me for him.”

The Dunmow matrimonial flich of bacon is a well known custom; the oath is in verse, and as follows:

“You shall swear by the custom of your confession,
That you never made any nuptial transgression,
Since you were married to your wife,
By household brawls, or contentious strife,
Or otherwise, in bed or at board,
Offended each other in deed or in word—
Or since the parish clerk said Amen,
Wish’d yourselves unmarried again;
Or in a twelvemonth and a day,
Repented not in thought, any way,
But continued true, and in desire,

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As when you join'd hands in holy quire.
If to these conditions, without all fear,
Of your own accord you will freely swear,
A gammon of bacon you shall receive,
And beare it hence with love and good leave,
For this is our custom at Dunmow well known,
Though the sport be ours, the bacon's your own."

For the custom of riding the black ram, and the penal rhyme thereto attached, we refer the reader to the *Spectator*, No. 614.

The following rhyming wills have been proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

"The fifth of May,
Being airy and gay
And to hip not inclined,
But of vigorous mind,
And my body in health.
I'll dispose of my wealth,
And all I'm to leave
On this side the grave,
To some one or other,
And I think to my brother;
Because I foresaw
That my brethren in law,
If I did not take care,
Would come in for their share,
Which I nowise intended,
'Till their manners are mended,
And of that God knows there's no sign.
I do therefore enjoin,
And do strictly command,
Of which witness my hand,
That naught I have got
Be brought into hotchpot:
But I give and devise,
As much as in me lies,
To the son of my mother,
My own dear brother.
And to have and to hold



All my silver and gold,
As th' affectionate pledges
Of his brother, JOHN HEDGES.”

In the next, the items are more curious and particular:

“What I am going to bequeath
When this frail part submits to death—
But still I hope the spark divine,
With its congenial stars shall shine,
My good executors fulfill,
And pay ye fairly my last will,
With first and second codicil.
And first I give to dear Lord Hinton,
At Twyford school now, not at Winton,
One hundred guineas and a ring,
Or some such memorandum thing,
And truly much I should have blunder'd,
Had I not given another hundred
To dear Earl Paulett's second son,
Who dearly loves a little fun.
Unto my nephew, Stephen Langdon,
Of whom none says he e'er has wrong done,
The civil laws he loves to hash,
I give two hundred pounds in cash.
One hundred pounds to my niece, Tudor,
(With luring eyes one Clark did view her,)
And to her children just among 'em,
A hundred more—and not to wrong 'em,
In equal shares I freely give it,
Not doubting but they will receive it.
To Betsy Mudford and Mary Lee,
If they with Mrs. Mudford be,
Because they round the year did dwell
In Davies-street, and serv'd full well.
The first ten pounds, the other twenty,
And girls, I hope that will content ye.
In seventeen hundred and sixty-nine,
This with my hand I write and sign,
The sixteenth day of fair October,

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In merry mood, but sound and sober.
Past my threescore and fifteenth year,
With spirits gay and conscience clear—
Joyous and frolicsome, though old,
And like this day, serene, but cold;
To foes well wishing, and to friends most kind,
In perfect charity with all mankind.
For what remains I must desire,
To use the words of Matthew Prior.
Let this my will be well obey'd,
And farewell all, I'm not afraid,
For what avails a struggling sigh.
When soon, or later, all must die?
M. DARLEY.”

Joshua West, who was known in his sphere “as the poet of the Six Clerks’ Office,” made his will in rhyme; it is dated 13th December, 1804:

“Perhaps I die not worth a groat,
But should I die worth somewhat more,
Then I give that, and my best coat,
And all my manuscripts in store,
To those who will the goodness have
To cause my poor remains to rest,
Within a decent shell and grave,
This is the will of JOSHUA WEST.”

In 1654, Henry Phillips published the “Purchasers’ Pattern,” in which he gives advice to purchasers of estates of inheritance, in verse.

There is also a long article in verse, “On the Distribution of Intestates’ Effects: it begins

“By the laws of the land,
It is settled and planned,
That intestates’ effects shall be spread,
At the end of the year,
When the debts are all clear,
’Mong the kindred as here may be read.”



Before the conclusion, the author says,

“To the rest that succeed,
We need not proceed,
Enough has already been penn’d,
And now it’s high time,
For our doggrel rhyme
To come, lest it err, to an end.”

This hint I shall apply to myself, lest my article become as dry and uninteresting as my subject, and conclude with a declaration in which I heartily concur:

“Fee simple, and a simple fee,
And all the fees in tail,
Are nothing when compared to thee,
Thou best of fees—female.”

W.A.R.

* * * * *

FINE ARTS

THE NINTH EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS.

We are happy to learn that the “British Artists” continue to flourish. Their association, we believe, originated in the inefficiency of similar Institutions. They started in a spirit of generous rivalry, and, above all things, with the view to aid aspiring merit. It could, however, scarcely be called rivalry to any other Institution, and to this line of conduct we attribute much of the success of the Society of British Artists. As the Secretary states in an Address to the Public, prefixed to this year’s Catalogue, “they have never opposed, either directly or indirectly, any existing Institution for the promotion

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of the Fine Arts, but have uniformly sought to go hand in hand with whatever tended to their general advancement." It appears likewise, that works in Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and Engraving, to the amount of L18,000. and upwards, have been sold from the walls of the Exhibition, since the formation of the Society, and numerous commissions given in consequence of the talent thus displayed; and that all future donations will be devoted towards completing the purchase of the galleries occupied by the Society, in Suffolk-street.

The full attendance at the private view on Friday, accorded with these gratifying statements. Suffolk-street and Pall Mall East were crowded with the carriages of visitors, and in the rooms was an abundant sprinkling of nobility, patrons of art, men of letters, and some note of purchases at the keeper's table. There are upwards of 800 Pictures, and about 100 specimens of Sculpture and Engraving. The crowded state of the rooms during the hour that we were there, allowed us only to note a few works.

1. *Cardinal Weld*; a well painted portrait, by James Ramsey, of the benevolent owner of Lulworth Castle. The features are dignified and finely intellectual. We could, too, associate their expression with the philanthropic act of the Cardinal's affording an asylum to fallen royalty.

13. *Ruins*. D. Roberts. A delightful composition, from these exquisite lines by Mrs. Hemans:

"There have been bright and glorious pageants here,
Where now grey stones and moss-grown columns lie—
There have been words, which earth grew pale to hear,
Breath'd from the cavern's misty chambers nigh:
There have been voices through the sunny sky,
And the pine woods, their choral hymn-notes sending,
And reeds and lyres, their Dorian melody,
With incense clouds around the temple blending,
And throngs, with laurel boughs, before the altar bending."

27. *A Philosopher*. H. Wyatt. Admirably coloured: the flesh tints and deep expression of the features will not escape notice.

52. *The Town of Menagio, on the Lake of Como*. T.C. Hofland. A scene of beautiful repose in the artist's best style.

57. *Portrait of Mrs. Davenport* in the character of the Nurse in "Romeo and Juliet." James Holmes. Almost speakingly characteristic. You may imagine the actress



drawling out, “awear—y,” and her attitude admirably accords with “Fie, how my bones ache.”

114. *The Baptism*. G. Harvey, S.A. Foremost among the attractions of the Exhibition, though of a serious turn. The quotation will best describe the subject:

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“Here, upon a semicircular ledge of rocks, over a narrow chasm, down which the tiny stream played in a murmuring waterfall, and divided into two equal parts, sat the congregation, devoutly listening to their minister, who stood before them on what might well be called a small natural pulpit of living stone.... Divine service was closed, and a row of maidens, all clothed in purest white, arranged themselves at the foot of the pulpit, with the infants about to be baptized. “The fathers of the infants, just as if they had been in their own Kirk, had been sitting there during worship, and now stood up before the minister.... Some of the younger ones in that semicircle kept gazing down into the pool, in which the whole scene was reflected; and now and then, in spite of the grave looks or admonishing whispers of their elders, letting a pebble fall into the water, that they might judge of its depth from the length of time that elapsed before the clear air-bells lay sparkling on the agitated surface.”—Vide “*Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life.*”

155. *His Most Gracious Majesty William the Fourth.* H.E. Dawe. The King in his state robes: the likeness is excellent.

156. *The Grecian Choirs at the Temple of Apollo.* A sweet composition by W. Linton, from Petrarch; “representing the passage of the Choirs across the narrow strait between Delos and Rhenia, by a bridge magnificently decorated with gold and garlands, rich stuffs and tapestry,” the splendour of which is enhanced by the brightness of a summer’s morning.

162. “*In peace love tunes the Shepherd’s reed,*” a pretty composition from this line by Scott, painted by Mrs. John Hakewill. A rustic boy and girl are seated beneath a woody bank: the intent expression of the boy playing the pipe and of the listening girl are really delightful.

195. *Edinburgh Castle from the Grass Market.* D. Roberts. A fine picture of the associated sublimities of nature and art.

208. *The Ettrick Shepherd in his Forest Plaid.* J.W. Gordon. Correct in likeness, but strangely shadowed.

224. *Coronation of William IV.* The first picture of a series to represent the procession to the Abbey on the day of the Coronation of his present Majesty, containing the portraits of distinguished personages who attended on that occasion.—Painted for his Majesty, by R.B. Davis. This picture occupies comparatively as much length on the walls as its description would in our columns: it is some yards long, and perhaps four feet in height. It is but hastily painted. The framework is excellent, and well appointed for St. James’s, Windsor, or Buckingham Palace. We hope the *picture* will be liked there as well as the frame.

244. *Elizabeth relieving the Exile,* by Miss A. Beaumont, is an interesting picture, from the well-remembered incident in the *Exiles of Siberia.*



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296. *Interior of a Gaming-house*. H. Pidding. We take this to represent one of the *salons* of Frescati's, or other Parisian gaming-house, where females are admitted to participate in the game, and witness the madness and folly of the stronger sex. The party are chiefly about a *rouge et noir* table, and are in the highest stage of recklessness. One of them, a female, has flung herself from the lure across a chair, apparently in the last stage of wretchedness and despair. The excitement of the players is powerfully wrought up and contrasted with the *sang froid* of the *croupier*, who seems to treat all the world as a ball. Other persons are seeking fresh excitement at the hands of a liveried waiter. But we must leave the rest, which it would take a column or two to describe, especially as to our mind, a gaming-house furnishes an epitome of all the bad passions that rankle in the human breast.

301. *The Reform Question*. Thomas Clater. A pleasanter scene than the preceding picture. A village blacksmith is reading the newspaper, by a candle held by a boy, to a listening neighbour. The puzzling of the reader, the vacant stare of the candle-holder, and the intent expression of the absorbed listener, are excellent. Perhaps the light of the candle is objectionable.

311. *Love in the Dairy*. H.H. Hobday. A ticklish village amour: a young fellow importuning a buxom dairy-maid, and apparently on the verge of conquest; in the distant door-way stands a mar-loving, wrinkled old woman, whose crabbed face ought not to be trusted in a dairy.

466. *The Lord Chancellor*, seated in a chair, in his official robes, by J. Lonsdale. The likeness is excellent, as are the robes, wig, ruffles, &c. but the great seal and mace are even dingier than the originals. We could have spared the books thrown on the floor, though the paper register in one of them almost *comes out*.

We reserve a few pictures for another visit. The Portraits, as might be expected, are numerous. The King's supporters are two ex-sheriffs: by the way, how many good turns does *office* yield to art; there is nothing like a portrait to perpetuate your brief authority. Works of imagination are scarce, especially as empainting the ideas of poets and passion-writers has become fashionable.

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NOTES OF A READER.

THE VEGETABLE WORLD.

We pencil a few passages, at random, from Part 14 of *Knowledge for the People*— (Botany, concluded.)



Why does snow, when in contact with leaves and stems, melt more speedily than when lodged upon dead substances?

Because of the internal heat of the plants, heat being a production of the vegetable as well as animal body, though in a much lower degree in the former than the latter. Mr. Hunter appears to have detected this heat by a thermometer applied in frosty weather to the internal parts of vegetables newly opened. It is evident that a certain appropriate portion of heat is a necessary stimulus to the constitution of every plant, without which its living principle is destroyed.—*Smith*.



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Why is fructification so important to plants?

Because it continues them by seeds, and, according to Sir James Smith, "all other modes of propagation are but the extension of an individual, and, sooner or later, terminate in its total extinction." Dr. Drummond is of a contrary opinion, and quotes the following fact:—"In South America there is a species of bamboo which forms forests in the marshes of many leagues in extent, and yet Mutis, who botanized for nearly twenty years in the parts where it grows, was never able to detect the fructifications."—

Humboldt.

The produce of vegetable seeds in a hundred-fold degree is common, and many trees and shrubs bring forth their fruit by thousands. A single plant of the poppy will produce above 30,000 seeds; and, of tobacco, above 40,000; and Buffon remarks, that from the seeds of a single elm-tree, one hundred thousand young elms may be raised from the product of one year. Some ferns, it is said, produce their seeds by millions.

Why should seeds be uniformly kept dry before sown?

Because the least damp will cause an attempt at vegetation, when the seeds necessarily die, as the process cannot, as they are situated, go on.

Why, in summer, is continued watering required to newly sown seeds?

Because, if the soil is only moistened at the time of sowing, it induces the projection of the radicle, or first root, which, in very parching weather, and in clayey cutting soil, withers away, and the crop is consequently lost, for want of a continued supply of moisture.

Why is selection important for procuring abundance of genuine seeds?

Because we may then choose the most vigorous plants, which naturally prove of greater fecundity. Thus, in 1823, Mr. Shirreff marked one vigorous wheat plant, near the centre of a field, which produced him 2,473 grains. These were dibbled in the autumn of the same year, the produce sown broadcast the second and third years, and the fourth harvest produced forty quarters of sound grain. A fine purple-topped Swedish turnip produced 100,296 grains, which was seed enough for five imperial acres, and thus, in three years, one turnip would produce seed enough for Great Britain for a year.—*Quarterly Journal of Agriculture.*

Why are winds the great agents by which seeds are diffused?

Because seeds are, as it were, provided with various wings for seizing on the breeze. The thistle and dandelion are familiar examples of this mode of dissemination. "How little," Sir J.E. Smith observes, "are children aware, as they blow away the seeds of dandelion, or stick burs in sport upon each other's clothes, that they are fulfilling one of

the great ends of nature.” Dr. Woodward calculates, that one seed of the common spear thistle will produce “at the first crop, twenty-four thousand, and consequently five hundred and twenty-six millions of seeds, at the second.”



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Some plants discharge their seeds. Thus, a certain fungus has the property of ejecting its seeds with great force and rapidity, and with a loud cracking noise, and yet it is no bigger than a pin's head!

Why is a milky fluid found in the cocoa-nut?

Because in this case, as well as in a few others, all the fluids destined to nourish the embryo of the fruit does not harden, whence a greater or less quantity of this kind of mild emulsion is contained within the kernel.

Why are certain eatable roots unfit for the table when the plants have flowered?

Because the mucus or proper juice in the tubular cells being appropriated for perfecting the flower stem, the flower, and the fruit, is absorbed as the fructification of the stem advances; and, as these are perfected, the cells are emptied, and their sides become ligneous.

Why is the Jerusalem Artichoke so called?

Because of its corruption from its Italian name, *Girasole Articiocco*, sunflower artichoke, as the plant was first brought from Peru to Italy, and thence propagated throughout Europe.—*Smith*.

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AMERICAN MANNERS.

We suspect certain pages of Mrs. Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* to be highly coloured, but they are cleverly written, and will be read with considerable interest.

A Backwoodsman.

"We visited one farm, which interested us particularly from its wild and lonely situation, and from the entire dependence of the inhabitants upon their own resources. It was a partial clearing in the very heart of the forest. The house was built on the side of a hill, so steep that a high ladder was necessary to enter the front door, while the back one opened against the hill-side; at the foot of this sudden eminence ran a clear stream, whose bed had been deepened into a little reservoir, just opposite the house. A noble field of Indian corn stretched away into the forest on one side, and a few half-cleared acres, with a shed or two upon them, occupied the other, giving accommodation to cows, horses, pigs, and chickens innumerable. Immediately before the house was a small potato garden, with a few peach and apple trees. The house was built of logs, and consisted of two rooms, besides a little shanty or lean-to, that was used as a kitchen. Both rooms were comfortably furnished with good beds, drawers, &c. The



farmer's wife, and a young woman who looked like her sister, were spinning, and three little children were playing about. The woman told me that they spun and wove all the cotton and woollen garments of the family, and knit all the stockings; her husband, though not a shoe-maker by trade, made all the shoes. She manufactured all the soap and candles they used, and prepared her sugar from the sugar-trees on their farm. All she wanted with money, she said, was to buy coffee,



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tea, and whiskey, and she could 'get enough any day by sending a batch of butter and chicken to market.' They used no wheat, nor sold any of their corn, which, though it appeared a very large quantity, was not more than they required to make their bread and cakes of various kinds, and to feed all their live stock during the winter. She did not look in health, and said they had all had ague in 'the fall' but she seemed contented, and proud of her independence; though it was in somewhat a mournful accent that she said, "'Tis strange to us to see company: I expect the sun may rise and set a hundred times before I shall see another *human* that does not belong to the family.'

"These people were indeed, independent—Robinson Crusoe was hardly more so, and they eat and drink abundantly; but yet it seemed to me that there was something awful and almost unnatural in their loneliness. No village bell ever summoned them to prayer, where they might meet the friendly greeting of their fellow-men. When they die, no spot sacred by ancient reverence will receive their bones—Religion will not breathe her sweet and solemn farewell upon their grave; the husband or the father will dig the pit that is to hold them, beneath the nearest tree; he will himself deposit them within it, and the wind that whispers through the boughs will be their only requiem. But then they pay neither taxes nor tithes, are never expected to pull off a hat or to make a curtsy, and will live and die without hearing or uttering the dreadful words, 'God save the king.'"

A Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati.

"It was in the middle of summer, but the service we were recommended to attend did not begin till it was dark. The church was well lighted, and crowded almost to suffocation. On entering, we found three priests standing side by side, in a sort of tribune, placed where the altar usually is, handsomely fitted up with crimson curtains, and elevated about as high as our pulpits. We took our places in a pew close to the rail which surrounded it.

"The priest who stood in the middle was praying; the prayer was extravagantly vehement, and offensively familiar in expression; when this ended a hymn was sung, and then another priest took the centre place and preached. The sermon had considerable eloquence, but of a frightful kind. The preacher described, with ghastly minuteness, the last feeble fainting moments of human life, and then the gradual progress of decay after death, which he followed through every process up to the loathsome stage of decomposition. Suddenly changing his tone, which had been that of sober, accurate description, into the shrill voice of horror, he bent forward his head, as if to gaze on some object beneath the pulpit, and made known to us what he saw in the pit that seemed to open before him. The device was certainly a happy one for giving effect to his description of hell. No image that fire, flame, brimstone, molten lead, or



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red-hot pincers could supply, with flesh, nerves, and sinews quivering under them, was omitted. The perspiration ran in streams from the face of the preacher; his eyes rolled, his lips were covered with foam, and every feature had the deep expression of horror it would have borne, had he, in truth, been gazing at the scene he described. The acting was excellent. At length he gave a languishing look to his supporters on each side, as if to express his feeble state, and then sat down, and wiped the drops of agony from his brow.

“The other two priests arose, and began to sing a hymn. It was some seconds before the congregation could join as usual; every upturned face looked pale and horror-struck. When the singing ended, another took the centre place, and began in a sort of coaxing, affectionate tone, to ask the congregation if what their dear brother had spoken had reached their hearts? Whether they would avoid the hell he had made them see? ‘Come, then!’ he continued, stretching out his arms towards them, ‘come to us, and tell us so, and we will make you see Jesus, the dear gentle Jesus, who shall save you from it. But you must come to him! You must not be ashamed to come to him! This night you shall tell him that you are not ashamed of him; we will make way for you; we will clear the bench for anxious sinners to sit upon. Come, then! come to the anxious bench, and we will show you Jesus! Come! Come! Come!’

“Again a hymn was sung, and while it continued, one of the three was employed in clearing one or two long benches that went across the rail, sending the people back to the lower part of the church. The singing ceased, and again the people were invited, and exhorted not to be ashamed of Jesus, but to put themselves upon ‘the anxious benches,’ and lay their heads on his bosom. ‘Once more we will sing,’ he concluded, ‘that we may give you time.’ And again they sung a hymn.

“And now in every part of the church a movement was perceptible, slight at first, but by degrees becoming more decided. Young girls arose, and sat down, and rose again; and then the pews opened, and several came tottering out, their hands clasped, their heads hanging on their bosoms, and every limb trembling, and still the hymn went on; but as the poor creatures approached the rail their sobs and groans became audible. They seated themselves on the ‘anxious benches;’ the hymn ceased, and two of the three priests walked down from the tribune, and going, one to the right, and the other to the left, began whispering to the poor tremblers seated there. These whispers were inaudible to us, but the sobs and groans increased to a frightful excess. Young creatures, with features pale and distorted, fell on their knees on the pavement, and soon sunk forward on their faces; the most violent cries and shrieks followed, while from time to time a voice was heard in convulsive accents, exclaiming, ‘Oh Lord!’ ‘Oh Lord Jesus!’ ‘Help me, Jesus!’ and



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the like. Meanwhile the two priests continued to walk among them; they repeatedly mounted on the benches, and trumpet-mouthed proclaimed to the whole congregation 'the tidings of salvation;' and then from every corner of the building arose in reply, short sharp cries of 'Amen!' 'Glory!' 'Amen!' while the prostrate penitents continued to receive whispered comfortings, and from time to time a mystic caress. More than once I saw a young neck encircled by a reverend arm. Violent hysterics and convulsions seized many of them, and when the tumult was at the highest, the priest who remained above, again gave out a hymn as if to drown it. It was a frightful sight to behold innocent young creatures, in the gay morning of existence, thus seized upon, horror-struck, and rendered feeble and enervated for ever. One young girl, apparently not more than fourteen, was supported in the arms of another, some years older; her face was pale as death; her eyes wide open, and perfectly devoid of meaning; her chin and bosom wet with slaver; she had every appearance of idiotism. I saw a priest approach her, he took her delicate hand, 'Jesus is with her! Bless the Lord!' he said, and passed on. Did the men of America value their women as men ought to value their wives and daughters, would such scenes be permitted among them?

"It is hardly necessary to say that all who obeyed the call to place themselves on the 'anxious benches' were women, and by far the greater number very young women. The congregation was in general, extremely well dressed, and the smartest and most fashionable ladies of the town were there; during the whole revival the churches and meeting-houses were every day crowded with well-dressed people."

"It is thus the ladies of Cincinnati amuse themselves; to attend the theatre is forbidden; to play cards is unlawful; but they work hard in their families and must have some relaxation. For myself, I confess that I think the coarsest comedy ever written would be a less detestable exhibition for the eyes of youth and innocence than such a scene."

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

THE COFFIN-MAKER.

The paper in the *New Monthly Magazine*, under this title, occupies a sheet or sixteen pages, and is stated to be from the pen of the Hon. Mrs. Norton. It is written in an almost breathless, and purposely hurried, style, and the narrative of feelings and incidents flows with such rapidity, that the reader is carried onward, *nolens volens, vi et verbis* through the adventures. The writer is the son of a carpenter: his father dies; unable to obtain any other employment, he obtains that of a coffin-maker. His aversion to the trade, and the state of his feelings is thus naturally described:



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“The first few weeks of my employment passed pleasantly enough; my master was satisfied with me, and on Sunday evenings I was able occasionally to enjoy a walk. But my spirits soon became less buoyant, and even my health began to suffer; I entirely lost the florid look which was my poor mother’s admiration; my very step grew slower, and there were Sundays when I declined the evening walk, which had been my only recreation, merely because the happy laugh and continued jests of (my friend) Henry Richards annoyed and distressed me while contrasted with my own heaviness of heart. Evening after evening, sometimes through a whole dismal night, I worked at my melancholy employment; and as my master was poor, and employed no other journeyman, I worked most commonly alone. Frequently as the heavy hammer descended, breaking at regular intervals the peaceful silence of night, I recalled some scene of sorrow and agony that I had witnessed in the day; and as the echo of some shriek or stifled moan struck in fancy on my ear, I would pause to wipe the dew from my brow and curse the trade of a coffin-maker. Every day some fresh cause appeared to arise for loathing my occupation; whilst all were alike strangers to me in the town where my master lived, I worked cheerfully and wrote merrily home; but now that I began to know every one, to be acquainted with the number of members which composed different families, to hear of their sicknesses and misfortunes; now that link after link bound me as it were by a spell, to feel for those round me, and to belong to them, my cheerfulness was over. The mother turned her eyes from me with a shuddering sigh, and gazed on the dear circle of little ones as if she sought to penetrate futurity and guess which of the young things, now rosy in health, was to follow her long lost and still lamented one. The dotting father pressed the arm of his pale consumptive girl nearer to his heart, as he passed me: friends who were yet sorrowing for their bereavement, gave up the attempt at cheerfulness, and relapsed into melancholy silence at my approach. If I attempted (as I often did at first) to converse gaily with such of the townspeople as were of my master’s rank in life, I was checked by a bitter smile, or a sudden sigh, which told me that while I was giving way to levity, the thoughts of my hearers had wandered back to the heavy hours when their houses were last darkened by the shadow of death. I carried about with me an unceasing curse; an imaginary barrier separated me from my fellow men. I felt like an executioner, from whose bloody touch men shrink, not so much from loathing of the *man*, who is but the instrument of death, as from horror at the image of that death itself—death, sudden, appalling, and inevitable. Like him, I brought the presence of death too vividly before them; like him, I was connected with the infliction of a doom I had no power to avert. Men withheld from me their affection, refused me their sympathy,



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as if I were not like themselves. My very mortality seemed less obvious to their imaginations when contrasted with the hundreds for whom my hand prepared the last narrow dwelling-house, which was to shroud for ever their altered faces from sorrowful eyes. Where *I* came, *there* came heaviness of heart, mournfulness, and weeping. Laughter was hushed at my approach; conversation ceased; darkness and silence fell around my steps—the darkness and the silence of *death*. Gradually I became awake to my situation. I no longer attempted to hold free converse with my fellow men. I suffered the gloom of their hearts to overshadow mine. My step crept slowly and stealthily into their dwellings; my voice lowered itself to sadness and monotony; I pressed no hand in token of companionship; no hand pressed mine, except when wrung with agony, some wretch, whose burden was more than he could bear restrained me for a few moments of maddened and convulsive grief, from putting the last finishing stroke to my work, and held me back to gaze yet again on features which I was about to cover from his sight. It is well that God, in his unsearchable wisdom, hath made death loathsome to us. It is well that an undefined and instinctive shrinking within us, makes what we have loved for long years, in a few hours

“That lifeless thing, the living fear.”

It is well that the soul hath scarcely quitted the body ere the work of corruption is begun. For if, even thus, mortality clings to the remnants of mortality, with ‘love stronger than death;’ if, as I have seen it, warm and living lips are pressed to features where the gradually sinking eye and hollow cheek speak horribly of departed life; what would it be if the winged soul left its tenement of clay, to be resolved only into a marble death; to remain cold, beautiful, and imperishable; every day to greet our eyes; every night to be watered with our tears? The bonds which hold men together would be broken; the future would lose its interest in our minds; we should remain sinfully mourning the idols of departed love, whose presence forbade oblivion of their loveliness; and a thin and scattered population would wander through the world as through the valley of the shadow of death! How often have I been interrupted when about to nail down a coffin, by the agonized entreaties of some wretch to whom the discoloured clay bore yet the trace of beauty, and the darkened lid seemed only closed in slumber! How often have I said, ‘Surely *that* heart will break with its woe!’ and yet, in a little while, the bowed spirit rose again, the eye sparkled, and the lip smiled, *because the dead were covered from their sight*; and that which is present to man’s senses is destined to affect him far more powerfully than the dreams of his imagination or memory. How often, too, have I seen the reverse of the picture I have just drawn; when the pale unconscious corse has lain abandoned in its loveliness, and grudging hands have scantily



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dealt out a portion of their superfluity, to obtain the last rites for one who so lately moved, spoke, smiled, and walked amongst them! And I have felt, even then, that there were those to whom that neglected being had been far more precious than heaps of gold, and I have mourned for them who perished among strangers. One horrible scene has chased another from my mind through a succession of years; and some of those which, perhaps, deeply affected me at the time, are, by the mercy of Heaven, forgotten. But enough remains to enable me to give a faint outline of the causes which have changed me from what I was, to the gloomy joyless being I am at length become. There is one scene indelibly impressed upon my memory.”

A scene of domestic tragedy follows, which is wrought up with great effect:

“I was summoned late at night to the house of a respectable merchant, who had been reduced, in a great measure, by the wilful extravagance of his only son, from comparative wealth to ruin and distress. I was met by the widow, on whose worn and weary face the calm of despair had settled. She spoke to me for a few moments, and begged me to use dispatch and caution in the exercise of my calling:—‘for indeed,’ said she, ‘I have watched my living son with a sorrow that has almost made me forget grief for the departed. For five days and five nights I have watched, and his bloodshot eye has not closed, no, not for a moment, from its horrible task of gazing on the dead face of the father that cursed him. He sleeps now, if sleep it can be called, that is rather the torpor of exhaustion; but his rest is taken on that father’s death-bed. Oh! young man, feel for me! Do your task in such a manner, that my wretched boy may not awake till it is over, and the blessing of the widow be on you for ever!’ To this strange prayer I could only offer a solemn assurance that I would do my utmost to obey her; and with slow creeping steps we ascended the narrow stairs which led to the chamber of death. It was a dark, wretched-looking, ill-furnished room, and a drizzling November rain pattered unceasingly at the latticed window, which was shaken from time to time by the fitful gusts of a moaning wind. A damp chillness pervaded the atmosphere, and rotted the falling paper from the walls; and, as I looked towards the hearth, (for there was no grate,) I felt painfully convinced that the old man had died without the common comforts his situation imperiously demanded. The white-washed sides of the narrow fire-place were encrusted with a green damp, and the chimney-vent was stuffed with straw and fragments of old carpet, to prevent the cold wind from whistling through the aperture. The common expression, ‘He has seen better days,’ never so forcibly occurred to me as at that moment. He *had* seen better days: he had toiled cheerfully through the day, and sat down to a comfortable evening meal. The wine-cup had gone round; and the voice of laughter had been heard at his table for many a year, and yet



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here he had crept to die like a beggar! I looked at the flock bed, and felt my heart grow sick within me. The corpse of a man, apparently about sixty, lay stretched upon it, and on his hollow and emaciated features the hand of death had printed the ravages of many days. The veins had ceased to give even the appearance of life to the discoloured skin; the eyelids were deep sunken, and the whole countenance was (and none but those accustomed to gaze on the face of the dead can understand me) utterly expressionless. But if a sight like this was sickening and horrible, what shall I say of the miserable being to whom a temporary oblivion was giving strength for renewed agony? He had apparently been sitting at the foot of the corpse, and, as the torpor of heavy slumber stole over him, had sunk forward, his hand still retaining the hand of the dead man. His face was hid; but his figure, and the thick curls of dark hair, bespoke early youth. I judged him at most, to be two-and-twenty. I began my task of measuring the body, and few can tell the shudder which thrilled my frame as the carpenter's rule passed those locked hands—the vain effort of the living still to claim kindred with the dead! It was over, and I stole from the room, cautiously and silently as I entered. Once, and only once, I turned to gaze at the melancholy group. There lay the corpse, stiff and unconscious; there sat the son, in an unconsciousness yet more terrible, since it could not last. There, pale and tearless, stood the wife of him, who, in his dying hour, cursed her child and his. How little she dreamed of such a scene when her meek lips first replied to his vows of affection! How little she dreamed of such a scene when she first led that father to the cradle of his sleeping boy! when they bent together with smiles of affection, to watch his quiet slumber, and catch the gentle breathing of his parted lips! I had scarcely reached the landing-place before the wretched woman's hand was laid lightly on my arm to arrest my progress. Her noiseless step had followed me without my being aware of it. 'How soon will your work be done?' said she, in a suffocated voice. 'To-morrow I could be here again,' answered I. 'To-morrow! and what am I to do, if my boy wakes before that time?' and her voice became louder and hoarse with fear. 'He will go mad, I am sure he will; his brain will not hold against these horrors. Oh! that God would hear me!—that God would hear me! and let that slumber sit on his senses till the sight of the father that cursed him is no longer present to us! Heaven be merciful to me!' and with the last words she clasped her hands convulsively, and gazed upwards. I had known opiates administered to sufferers whose grief for their bereavement almost amounted to madness. I mentioned this hesitatingly to the widow, and she eagerly caught at it. 'Yes! that would do,' exclaimed she; 'that would do, if I could but get him past that horrible moment! But stay; I dare not leave him alone as he is, even



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for a little while:—what will become of me!’ I offered to procure the medicine for her, and soon returned with it. I gave it into her hands, and her vehement expressions of thankfulness wrung my heart. I had attempted to move the pity of the apothecary at whose shop I obtained the drug, by an account of the scene I had witnessed, in order to induce him to pay a visit to the house of mourning; but in vain. To him, who had *not* witnessed it, it was nothing but a tale of every-day distress. All that long night I worked at the merchant’s coffin, and the dim grey light of the wintry morning found me still toiling on. Often, during the hours passed thus heavily, that picture of wretchedness rose before me. Again I saw the leaning and exhausted form of the young man, buried in slumber, on his father’s death-bed: again my carpenter’s rule almost touched the clasped hands of the dead and the living, and a cold shudder mingled with the chill of the dawning day, and froze my blood.”

“As I passed up one of the streets which led to the merchant’s lodgings, my head bending under the weight of the coffin I was carrying, at every step I took, the air seemed to grow more thick around me, and at length, overcome by weariness, both of body and mind, I stopped, loosed the straps which steadied my melancholy burden, and placing it in an upright position against the wall, wiped the dew from my forehead, and (shall I confess it?) the tears from my eyes. I was endeavouring to combat the depression of my feelings by the reflection that I was the support and comfort of my poor old mother’s life, when my attention was roused by the evident compassion of a young lady, who, after passing me with a hesitating step, withdrew her arm from that of her more elderly companion, and pausing for an instant, put a shilling into my hand, saying, ‘You look very weary, my poor man; pray get something to drink with that.’ A more lovely countenance (if by lovely be meant that which engages love) was never moulded by nature; the sweetness and compassion of her pale face and soft innocent eyes; the kindness of her gentle voice, made an impression on my memory too strong to be effaced. *I saw her once again!* I reached the merchant’s lodgings and my knock was answered as on the former occasion, by the widow herself. She sighed heavily as she saw me, and after one or two attempts to speak, informed me that her son was awake, but that it was impossible for her to administer the opiate, as he refused to let the smallest nourishment pass his lips; but that he was quite quiet, indeed had never spoken since he woke, except to ask her how she felt; and she thought I might proceed without fear of his interruption. I entered accordingly, followed by a lad, son to the landlady who kept the lodgings, and with his assistance I proceeded to lift the corpse, and lay it in the coffin. The widow’s son remained motionless, and, as it were, stupified during this operation: but the moment he saw me prepare the lid of the coffin



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so as to be screwed down, he started up with the energy and gestures of a madman. His glazed eyes seemed bursting from their sockets, and his upper lip, leaving his teeth bare, gave his mouth the appearance of a horrible and convulsive smile. He seized my arm with his whole strength; and, as I felt his grasp, and saw him struggling for words, I expected to hear curses and execrations, or the wild howl of an infuriated madman. I was mistaken. The wail of a sickly child, who dreads its mother's departure, was the only sound to which I could compare that wretched man's voice. He held me with a force almost supernatural; but his tongue uttered supplications in a feeble monotonous tone, and with the most humble and beseeching manner. 'Leave him,' exclaimed he, 'leave him a little while longer. He will forgive me; I know he will. He spoke that horrible word to rouse my conscience. But I heard him and came back to him. I would have toiled and bled for him; he knows that well. Hush! hush! I cannot hear his voice for my mother's sobs; but I know he will forgive me. Oh! father, do not refuse! I am humble—I am penitent. Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee—father, I have sinned! Oh! mother, he is cursing me again. He is lifting his hand to curse me—his right hand. Look, mother, look! Save me, O God! my father curses me on his dying bed! Save me, oh!—' The unfinished word resolved itself into a low hollow groan, and he fell back insensible. I would have assisted him, but his mother waved me back. 'Better so, better so,' she repeated hurriedly; 'it is the mercy of God which has caused this—do you do your duty, and I will do mine,' and she continued to kneel and support the head of her son, while we fastened and secured down the coffin. At length all was finished, and then and not till then we carried the wretched youth from the chamber of death, to one as dark, as gloomy, and as scantily furnished, but having a wood fire burning in the grate, and a bed with ragged curtains at one end of it. And here, in comparative comfort, the landlady allowed him to be placed, even though she saw little chance of her lodgers being able to pay for the change. Into the glass of water held to his parched lips, as he recovered his senses, I poured a sufficient quantity of the opiate to produce slumber, and had the satisfaction of hearing his mother fervently thank God, as still half unconscious, he swallowed the draught. I thought he would not have survived the shock he had received; but I was mistaken. The merchant was buried and forgotten; the son lived, and we met again in a far, far different scene."

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THE GATHERER.

NOBLES OF JOHANNA.

We had long been aware that the potentates of the *Guinea coast* not only assume English titles, but wear under, or in place of, diadems, the cast-off wigs of our Lord

Chancellors—but we were not prepared for what follows in the latitude of the Mozambique Channel, as related by Captain Basil Hall.



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“We proceeded to our guide’s house, where he introduced us, not indeed to his wives, for all these ladies were stowed away behind a screen of mats, but to some of the males of his family, and, amongst others, to a queer copper-coloured gentleman, who styled himself, in his communications with us, ‘the Duke of Devonshire,’ and begged very hard to be allowed the honour of having our linen to wash. His Grace was a little dumpy fellow, who stooped considerably, wore neither shoes nor stockings, and exhibited so little of a nose, that when you caught his countenance in profile, the facial line, as the physiognomists call it, suffered no interruption when drawn from the brow to the lips. The poor Duke little knew the cause of the laughter which his occupation, title, and the contrast of looks, excited in those of our party who had seen his grace’s noble namesake in the opposite hemisphere.”

“Most of the natives of Johanna, even the negro slaves, talk a little English; but the best examples of such acquirements were found, where they ought to be, amongst the grandees of the island. The following is a fair specimen of the conversation of the dukes and earls at the capital of the Comoros.—‘How do you do, sir? Very glad see you. D—n your eyes! Johanna man like English very much. God d—n! That very good? Eh? Devilish hot, sir! What news? Hope your ship stay too long while, very. D—n my eye! Very fine day.’ After which, in a sort of whisper, accompanied by a most insinuating smile, his lordship, or his grace, as the rank of the party might be, would add:—‘You want orange? You want goat? Cheap! I got good, very. You send me you clothes; I wash with my own hand—clean! fine! very! I got every thing, plenty, great, much! God d—n!’ And then, as if to clench the favourable opinion which these eloquent appeals had made, the speaker was sure to produce a handful of certificates from mates of Indiamen, masters of Yankee brigs, and middies of men-of-war; some written in solemn earnest, some quizzically, but all declaring his lordship, the bearer, to be a pretty good washerman, but the sort of person not to be trusted far out of sight, as he would certainly walk off with your clothes-bag if he could safely do so.”—*Autobiography, Second Series.*

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Bed of Leaves.—In some countries the leaves of the beech tree are collected in autumn, before they have been injured by the frost, and are used instead of feathers for beds; and mattresses formed of them are said to be preferable to those either of straw or chaff.

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Pure Style.—Cardinal Bembo was so rigorous with regard to purity of style, that he is said to have had forty different partitions, through which his writings, as he polished them by degrees, successively passed; nor did he publish them till they had sustained these forty examinations. How would the cardinal have acted with the editorship of a daily newspaper.



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To lie at the Pool of Bethesda is used proverbially in Germany, in speaking of the theological candidates who are waiting for a benefice.

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Court Pun.—The witty Marquess de Bievre was asked by Louis XV. for a pun. "Give me a subject, sire," said B. "Make it on myself," said Louis. "Sire, the king is not a subject," was the pleasant reply.

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History.—The first page of Thucydides is, in my opinion, the commencement of real history. All preceding narrations are so intermixed with fable, that philosophers ought to abandon them in a great measure, to the embellishment of the poet and orator.—*Hume.*

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Old Squibs.—Richard Bentley and Charles Boyle (Earl of Orrery,) had a warm dispute relative to the genuineness of the Greek Epistles of Phalaris, an edition of which was published by the latter. Bentley was victorious, though he was kept in hot water with the critics and wits of the age. Dr. Garth assailed him thus:

So diamonds owe a lustre to their foil,
And to a *Bentley* 'tis we owe a *Boyle*.

Conyers Middleton was a sad thorn in Bentley's side, from the latter having called the former, when a young student in the university, *fiddling* Conyers, because he played on the violin. A punning caricature represented B. about to be thrust into the brazen bull of Phalaris, and exclaiming, "I had rather be *roasted* than *Boyled*."

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Hip, Hip, Hurra!—During the stirring times of the Crusades, the chivalry of Europe was excited to arms by the inflammatory appeals of the well-known Peter the Hermit. While preaching the Crusade, this furious zealot was accustomed to exhibit a banner emblazoned with the following letters, H.E.P., the initials of the Latin words, "*Hierosolyma Est Perdita*," Jerusalem is destroyed. The people in some of the countries which he visited, not being acquainted with the Latin, read and pronounced the inscription as if one word—HEP. The followers of the Hermit were accustomed, whenever an unfortunate Jew appeared in the streets, to raise the cry, "Hep, hep, hurra," to hunt him down, and flash upon the defenceless Israelite their maiden swords, before they essayed their temper with the scimitar of the Saracen.—*Tatler.*



Wool-gathering.—A very patriotic landlord, Squire Henry, of Straffan, county of Kildare, had hit on an expedient to benefit the wool-growers in general, and his numerous tenantry in particular. Knowing that market value is in the direct ratio of demand and scarcity, he annually buried the wool shorn from *his own* sheep, lest it might interfere with the profitable sale of his tenants' fleeces. But, alas! this generous system of self-sacrifice did not “work well.” The result was—though Squire Henry never suspected the existence of such turpitude in the human heart—the ungrateful tenantry dug up by night what he buried by day, wool never rose in price, and they never were able to pay up their arrears of rent.—*Fraser's Magazine*.

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One day, a physician alighted from his carriage, and entering the shop of a medical bookseller, inquired of its sleek-faced master, “whether he had a copy of Heberden’s *Commentaries*?” “No, sir,” replied the man of letters, “but we have Caesar’s *Commentaries*, and they are by far the best.”—*Metropolitan*.

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Mortality in the reign of William IV.—Since the accession of King William not less, we are told, than *twenty-four* generals and *twenty-six* admirals, have found their way into Westminster Abbey, or elsewhere. Considering that his majesty continues to receive the most friendly assurances from all foreign powers, this attack upon the army and navy list is rather prodigious. Napoleon himself could scarcely have made greater gaps in the United Service Club in the time. To be sure they were not all Nelsons and Marlboroughs, or we should have marked them as they dropped off; whereas one can hardly name, five of the fifty great warriors. —*Ibid.*

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Origin of Black Monday.—Black Monday—Easter Monday, in the year 1359, when hail stones killed both men and horses in the army of our King Edward the Third, in France. He was on his march, within two leagues of Chartres, when there happened a storm of piercing wind, that swelled to a tempest of rain, lightning, and hail stones, so prodigious, as instantly to kill 6,000 of his horses, and 1,000 of his best troops. P.T.W.

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*** MR. HAYDON’S Exhibition in our next.

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