

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction

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THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

Vol. XVII, no. 477.] Saturday, February 19, 1831. [Price 2d.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Mount st. Michael, Normandy.*]

MOUNT ST. MICHAEL, NORMANDY.

The interest attached to this extraordinary place is of so popular a character as fully to justify its introduction to our pages. It is situate at the southern extremity of the ancient province of Normandy, a district of considerable importance in the early histories of France and England. The "Mount" is likewise one of the most stupendous of Nature's *curiosities*, it being *one mass of granite*, and referred to by geologists as a fine specimen of that primary or primitive rock; or, to speak untechnically, of that rock "which is most widely spread over the globe in the lowest relative situation," and which contains no remains of a former world.[1] St. Michael's therefore stands pre-eminently in the sublime philosophy of Nature. It figures also in the page of man's history: its early celebrity is recognised in the chronicles of olden France and England; and it promises note in the history of our own times; since to this monastic spot will the political balance of France, in all probability, exile the person of the ambitious Polignac, ex-minister of France. The reader will perhaps suspect the political concatenation of Lulworth Castle, the Hotel de Ville, and the Palais Royal in our last volume; and the Prison of Vincennes and Mount St. Michael in the present. Instead of catching "the manners living as they *rise*," we appear to be looking out for crowns and ministers headlong as they *fall*.



St. Michael's is in that portion of Normandy which is not often visited by English tourists. One of its recent visitors was Mrs. Charles Stothard, wife of the distinguished artist, who, in 1820, published a narrative of her journey in, the autumn of 1818. Mrs. Stothard's description of the "Mount" is dated from Avranches, a coast town of some consequence, not far from Caen. Speaking of the delightfully situated town of Avranches, the fair correspondent says,

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“Beyond, in the midst of the sea, arises 400 feet above the surface of the water, the majestic rock of Mount St. Michael, and near it another, but smaller rock, called the Tombalaine. In the distant and blue horizon appears the long and extending land of Brittany, mingling with the surrounding atmosphere, from which it is alone distinguished by a faint and uncertain line, that, like the prospect of our future years, impresses the mind with a deeper interest from its distant and impenetrable form. Mount St. Michael is a league in circumference; in some parts of the rock is perpendicular; it is flooded entirely at high water, but when the tide is out, the rock may be approached by the sands; some danger, however, attends the passage to those who are not perfectly well acquainted with the track, as many quicksands intercept, where travellers have frequently been lost.

“There is a small town on Mount St. Michael. The castle, which stands at the top, is accessible by steps cut in the solid rock. In the year 708, St. Aubert, Bishop of Avranches, here first created the chapel dedicated to St. Michael; in 966, Richard the first Duke of Normandy, established a convent of monks of the order of St. Benoit, and in 1024, Richard the second Duke of Normandy, built the church, which still exists. The provisions that supply the fortress, are sent up in a basket drawn by a machine. Tradition says, that there was in this castle an obligatory, or concealed trap-door, where, in feudal times, persons were taken, whom the state directed should be secretly put out of the way. Under pretext, of showing them the castle, they were conducted into a remote chamber, there they soon met their destined fate, for chancing to step upon the concealed door, they were precipitated into the abyss, many hundred feet below. They still exhibit at this fortress the sword and shield of St. Michael, and some cannon left by the English, when they made a fruitless attempt to take possession of the rock. Here it was that in former times, the Kings of France and the Dukes of Brittany made frequent pilgrimages, and performed penance at the shrine of St. Michael.”

The lofty situation of the church appears to be peculiar to the churches dedicated to St. Michael. In many parts of the world they are built on very lofty eminences, in allusion, it is said, to St. Michael's having been the highest of the heavenly host. St. Michael's, in Cornwall, is another confirmation of this remark.

We have the pleasure of acknowledging the original of our Engraving from an elegant Print Scrap Book, now in course of publication by Mr. H. Dawe. It consists of well executed mezzotinto prints which are worthy of the album of any fair subscriber.

[1] Primary rocks are supposed by geologists to constitute the foundation on which rocks of all the other classes are laid; and if we take an enlarged view of the structure of the globe, we may admit this to be the fact,—but the admission requires certain limitations.—Bakewell.

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* * * * *

NIOBE.

(For the Mirror.)

Hush'd are the groans of death, heart-piercing sound,
That mournful rose in peals on peals around;
Child after child by heav'nly darts expires,
And frequent corpses feed the gloomy pyres.
Aghast she stands!—now here in wild amaze—
Now there the mother casts her madd'ning gaze:
In fixedness of grief, in dumb despair,
Her looks, her mien, her inmost soul declare:
Her looks, her mien, her deep-sunk anguish show
With all the silent eloquence of woe.

See! from her cheek the rosy lustre flies;
How dim the beams that sparkled in her eyes.
No more so softly heaves the throbbing breast;
The purple currents in their channels rest;—
No more the Zephyr's balmy breath can wave
The graceful locks which laughing Hebe gave;—
And fade those lips where fresh vermilion shone,
Cold as the clay, or monumental stone;—
O'er all her limbs an icy numbness spreads,
And marble death eternal quiet sheds.

[2]Great sculptor hail! whom Nature's self design'd To trace the labyrinths of the human mind— To read the heart, and give with strong control, To stone the silent workings of the soul: Thine all-creative hand, thy matchless skill Could what unbounded genius plann'd, fulfil. Hence sprang that grief-wrung form—the languid eye— The bloodless lip, and look of agony— That face, where mute contending passions play— That life of pain, of anguish, and dismay.

To sink she seems beneath the afflictive weight
Of gloomy cares portentous of her fate;—
Yet on her brow still soft Affection beams,
Tho' Desperation prompts her sombre dreams.
Parental feelings thrill her tortur'd breast,
And all the frantic mother stands confest—
A very Niobe—sad, hapless name!
In figure, features, and in all the same:



The same in all as Vengeance fierce pursued
Far to a wild and cheerless solitude.
For Salmo's bard has sung (by Heaven's decrees)
In awful pomp she mounted on the breeze—
Borne by the buoyant wind—a ghostly form—
She sail'd along the region of the storm.

So oft 'tis said in Lapland's chill domain,
Where dreary winter holds a lengthen'd reign,
What time the Runic drum and magic spell
Evoke the rapt soul from its fragile cell,
Attendant spirits, won by charms and prayer,
In gliding motion float upon the air.

Sydenham.

S.S.

[2] Praxiteles.

* * * * *

THE RHINE.

(To the Editor.)

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In looking over the last volume (16) of your interesting miscellany, I was much amused with a humorous legend at page 108, called the Rat's Tower, and according to your reference, having turned to page 68, of vol. xii. was equally entertained with the same laughable and well told story versified. This humorous production is extracted from a work entitled, if I mistake not, "The Rhinish Keepsake," containing many of the most wonderful and spirit-stirring legends connected with old chateaux, &c. on the banks of that majestic river, the Rhine. Amongst other pretty and choice *morceaux*, is a poem under the name of "*L'Envoy*," which may probably interest yourself and the readers of the *Mirror*. In perusing the enclosed, you will observe the infancy, manhood, and old age of "Father Rhine," as he is called, are all brought in succession before our eyes, which happy and ingenious idea is taken from a highly descriptive French publication, and perhaps having named the work, you will pardon my having extracted that portion which refers more particularly to the subject before us. The author says, "Dans son enfance le Rhin joue entre les fleurs des Alpes de la Suisse, il se berce dans le lac de Constance, il en sort avec des forces nouvelles, il devient un adolescent bouillant, fait une chute a Schaffhouse, s'avance vers l'age mur, se plait a remplir sa coupe de vin, court chercher les dangers et les affronte contre les ecueils et les rochers: puis parvenu a un age plus avancee il abandonne les illusions, les sites romanesques, et cherche l'utile. Dans sa caducite il desserit et disparaît enfin on ne sait trop comment!"

L'ENVOY.

Cologne! Cologne! Thy walls are won,
Farewell my bark—be hush'd my song;
My voyage is o'er—my task is done—
Too pleasant both to last me long.

Adieu, thou noble Rhine, adieu,
Thy scenes for ever rich and new,
Thy cheerful towns, thy Gothic piles,
Thy rude ravines, thy verdant isles;
Thy golden hills with garlands bound,
Thy giant crags with castles crown'd!

I have seen thee by morning's early light,
I have seen thee by evening gray;
With the crimson blush of sun-set bright,
And lit by the moon's pale ray;

Shrouded in mist and darken'd by storm,
With the countless tints of autumn warm:
In ev'ry hue that can o'er thee fall;
And lovely, lovely thou art in all.



The Rhine!—That little word will be
For aye a spell of power to me,
And conjure up, in care's despite,
A thousand visions of delight.

The Rhine! O where beneath the sun
Doth that fair river's rival run?
Where dawns the day upon a stream,
Can in such changeable beauty shine,
Outstripping Fancy's wildest dream,
Like yon green, glancing, glorious Rhine.

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Born where blooms the Alpine rose,
Cradled in the Boden—see,[3]
Forth the infant river flows,
Leaping on in childish glee.
Coming to a riper age,
He crowns his rocky cup with wine,
And makes a gallant pilgrimage
To many a ruin'd tower and shrine.
Strong and swift, and wild and brave,
On he speeds with crested wave;
And spurning aught like check or stay,
Fights and foams along his way,
O'er crag and shoal, until his flood
Boils like manhood's hasty blood!

Older, broader, deeper grown,
All romantic follies flown,
Now the laden Beurtschiff sails
Slowly o'er his sober tide,
Which wanders on through fertile vales,
And looks like Peace by Plenty's side.

Joy and strife, and labour past,
In his grave he sinks at last!
Not the common river's tomb—
Not the ocean's mighty womb;
Into earth he melts away,
Like that very thing of clay,
Man, whose brief and checker'd course
He hath copied from his source.[4]

Farewell thou "Father Rhine," as they
Who dwell beside thee fondly say,
May thy delicious valley long
Echo the sweet and grateful song.
Which ever round the goblet rose—
And well thy minstrel's lay may close.

Y.O.S.

[3] The Lake of Constance.

[4] The Rhine loses itself in the sands of Holland before its waters
can mingle with the sea.

* * * * *

KATERFELTO.

(To the Editor.)

In reply to the question of your correspondent—"Who was Katerfelto?" I am enabled to offer the few brief particulars which follow. With regard to his birth, parentage, and education, I am, however, not qualified to convey any information. I know not "to whom he was related, or by whom forgot." I became acquainted with him about the year 1790 or 1791, when he visited the City of Durham, accompanied by his wife and daughter. He then appeared to be about sixty years of age. His travelling equipage consisted of an old rumbling coach, a pair of sorry hacks, and two black servants. They wore green liveries with red collars, but the colours were sadly faded by long use.

Having taken suitable apartments, the black servants were sent round the town, blowing trumpets and delivering bills, announcing their master's astonishing performances, which in the day time consisted in displaying the wonders of the microscope, &c. and in the evening in exhibiting electrical experiments, in the course of which he introduced his two celebrated black cats, generally denominated the Doctor's Devils—for, be it understood, that our hero went under the dignified style and title of *Doctor* Katerfelto. Tricks of legerdemain concluded the evening's entertainments.

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The first night of the Doctor's performance was extremely wet, and the writer of this, who was then quite a boy, composed his whole audience. The Doctor's spouse invited me behind the curtains to the fire, on one side of which sat the great conjuror himself, his person being enveloped in an old green, greasy roquelaire, and his head decorated with a black velvet cap. On the other side of the fire-place sat Mrs. Katerfelto and daughter, in a corresponding style of dress—that is to say, equally ancient and uncleanly. The family appeared, indeed, to be in distressed circumstances. The Doctor told me the following odd anecdote:—Some time before he had sent up from a town in Yorkshire a fire-balloon, for the amusement of the country people, and at which they were not a little astonished; but in a few days afterwards the Doctor was himself more astonished on being arrested for having set fire to a hay rick! The balloon, it appeared, had in its descent fallen upon a rick, which it consumed, and the owner, having ascertained by whom the combustible material had been dispatched, arrested the doctor for the damage. As the Doctor was unable to pay the amount, he was obliged to go to prison, thus proving that it is sometimes easier to raise the devil than to “raise the wind.” Having been admitted behind the scenes, I had an opportunity of seeing the conjuror's apparatus, but the performance was postponed to another evening.

On the next night of the Doctor's appearance he had a tolerably respectable auditory, and the following incidents may amuse your readers, as they occasioned much laughter at the moment. Among the company was the Rev. Mr. P., a minor canon. The conjuror, in the course of his tricks, desired a card to be drawn from the pack, by one of the company, which was done, the card examined and returned into the pack, in the presence of the audience; but on the company being requested to take the card again from the pack, it could not be found. The Doctor said it must have been taken out by some one present, and civilly begged the reverend gentleman to search his pockets. Indignant at such an insinuation, the inflamed divine for some time refused to comply, but at length being persuaded, he drew forth the identical card, much to his own surprise and the amusement of the spectators. A similar trick was also played with some money, which unaccountably found its way into the reverend gentleman's pocket, a circumstance which put him out of all patience; and he proceeded most sternly to lecture the astounded Doctor for having practised his levity on a gentleman of his cloth, upon which, and threatening the poor conjuror with vengeance, he strode out of the room. Katerfelto declared that, although he was a conjuror, he did not know the gentleman was a divine.

Katerfelto left Durham soon afterwards, and I have heard died at Bristol.

Pentonville.

DUNELM.

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(To the Editor.)

A correspondent having expressed a wish to obtain some knowledge of Dr. Katerfelto, of juggling memory, perhaps the following may be acceptable: Between thirty and forty years ago he travelled through the principal towns of the northern counties with a caravan filled with philosophical apparatus, giving lectures where a sufficient audience could be collected. He appeared to be about five feet ten, rather thin, and towards fifty. He was dressed in a black gown and square cap; his apparatus was in excellent order, and very well managed, he conducted every experiment with great certainty, never failing; and though much knowledge might be gained from his lecture, people seemed more inclined to laugh than to learn; perhaps from his peculiar manner, and partly from his introducing something ludicrous, as on exhibiting the powers of a magnet, by lifting a large box, he observed it was not empty, and on opening the lid, five or six black cats put up their heads, which he instantly put down, saying, "it is not your hour yet." Also when about to prove the truth of what he advanced, by experiment, he had a strange way of calling your attention by saying, "But then look *here*," raising his voice loud at the word "here." The lecture was succeeded by a display of legerdemain, in which I thought him very superior to Breslaw.

It was said then, that he had originally been a soldier in the Prussian service, and had procured his discharge.

J.G.

P.

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NOTES OF A READER.

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PUBLIC EXECUTIONS.

Far better would it be if, in the few cases for which death ought to be inflicted, the execution were to take place within the walls of the prison, none being present except the proper officers, the clergyman, and those persons whom the sufferer might desire to have with him at his departure. The effect might possibly be impressive to some good end, which most certainly it is not now, if there were no other announcement than that of tolling a bell, when all was over, and hoisting a black flag, where it might be seen far and wide; and if the body of a murderer were carried under a pall, with some appropriate solemnity, to the place of dissection. Executions ought never to be made a spectacle for the multitude, who, if they can bear the sight, always regard it as a pastime; nor for the curiosity of those who shudder while they gratify it. Indeed, there



are few circumstances in which it is not expedient that a veil should be drawn over the crimes and sufferings of our fellow-creatures; and it is greatly to be wished, that in all cases of turpitude and atrocity, no further publicity were given to the offence than is necessary for the ends of justice. For no one who is conversant with criminal courts, or has obtained any insight into the human mind, can entertain a doubt that such examples are infectious.—*Qry. Review.*

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(There is so much sterling sense and knowledge of life displayed in these “Notes” from the last published *Quarterly Review*, that we continue their selection without apology to the reader.)

* * * * *

BURNING ALIVE.

Little more than fifty years have elapsed since a girl, just turned fourteen, was condemned to be burnt alive, having been found guilty of treason as an accomplice with her master in coining, because, at his command, she had concealed some whitewashed counters behind her stays. The master was hanged. The fagots were placed in readiness for her execution; and it was averred, in the House of Commons, by Sir William Meredith, at the time, that “the girl would have been burnt alive, on the same day, had it not been for the humane, but casual interference of Lord Weymouth.” Mere accident saved the nation from this crime and this national disgrace; but so torpid was public feeling in those days, that the law remained unaltered till the year 1790; till which time the sheriff who did not execute a sentence of this kind was liable to prosecution; though, it may well be believed, no sheriff was then inhuman enough to adhere to the letter of such a law.—*Ibid.*

* * * * *

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS,

As at present conducted, are said to do more harm than good. But though this should be admitted, it would still be true that they have even now their good as well as their evil; that there have been times when the good greatly preponderated; that they have contributed in no slight degree to civilization and refinement; and that in calling forth Shakspeare’s genius, which, by no other means, and in no other way, could have been called forth with equal effect, they have done more good than outweighs all the evil that they ever have done, or can do. Public spectacles have been regarded in this light by the wisest legislators; nor is it only human authority which has given them its sanction; they made an essential part of the Jewish law; there is nothing opposed to them in the spirit of Christianity; and if they are at any time perverted to the gratification of evil passions, or the depravation of manners, the fault is in that public opinion which calls for and encourages such gratification, and in those governments which, neglecting their paramount duty, tolerate such perversion.—*Ibid.*

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LAW AND LAWYERS.

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It is related by Laud, in his Diary, that when he was standing one day, during dinner, near his unfortunate master, then Prince Charles, the prince, who was in cheerful spirits, talking of many things as occasion offered, said, that if necessity compelled him to choose any particular profession of life, he could not be a lawyer; “for,” said he, “I can neither defend a bad cause, nor yield in a good one.” “*Sic in majoribus succedas, in aeternum faustus!*” was the aspiration which his faithful servant and fellow victim breathed, when he recorded this trait of Christian character in private notes, which, beyond all doubt, were never intended to be seen by any eyes but his own. Even then, the practice had become so much an exercitation of subtlety, on the part of its professors, to the utter disregard of its original end and object, that, as Donne strongly expressed himself, the name of “law” had been “strumpeted.” It has been asked, if this be the fault of the men or of the institutions—of the lawyers or of the law? and maintained that the original fault is in the law: a conclusion more charitable than satisfactory; for, by whom has the law been made what it is, but by the lawyers?

By the Roman laws, every advocate was required to swear that he would not undertake a cause which he knew to be unjust, and that he would abandon a defence which he should discover to be supported by falsehood or iniquity. This is continued in Holland at this day; and if an advocate brings forward a cause there, which appears to the court plainly iniquitous, he is condemned in the costs of the suit: the example will, of course, be very rare; more than one, however, has occurred within the memory of persons who are now living. The possible inconvenience that a cause just in itself might not be able to find a defender, because of some strong and general prejudice concerning it, is obviated in that country by an easy provision: a party who can find no advocate, and is nevertheless persuaded of the validity of his cause, may apply to the court, which has, in such cases, the discretionary power of authorizing or appointing one.—*Ibid.*

* * * * *

RICH AND POOR.

The most rational, the wisest, the best portion of mankind, belong to that class who possess “neither poverty nor riches.” Let the reader look around him; let him observe who are the persons that contribute most to the moral and physical melioration of mankind; who they are that practically and personally support our unnumbered institutions of benevolence; who they are that exhibit the worthiest examples of intellectual exertion; who they are to whom he would himself apply if he needed to avail himself of a manly and discriminating judgment. That they are the poor is not to be expected; we appeal to himself, whether they are the rich?—*Dymond’s Principles of Morality.*

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SUNDAY.

A day of rest it is by the laws of the land, and ought to be by the laws of God—let us be thankful when we thus find them in agreement; but a day wholly dedicated to devotion it was not intended to be by either, nor in the nature of things can it possibly be so. The greater part of it must be spent in the quiet enjoyment of domestic life, or in out-of-door recreation, or in idleness. In the former and better manner it is passed by the majority of the middle classes; it is the day on which friends and relations meet, whom business keeps apart during six days of the week; and the stoppage of stage-coaches within twenty miles of London on the Sunday would take away more moral and wholesome enjoyment than any act of the legislature can produce. But supposing public worship were duly attended by all persons, as, according to what has now become a fiction of the law, it is designed to be, how are the remaining portions of the day to be disposed of by those who have no domestic circle to which they can repair—no opportunities for that refreshment both of body and mind, which the Sabbath, when wisely and properly observed, affords? Or who, if belonging to or placed in religious families, are not yet at years of such discretion as suffices to repress their natural activity and the instinctive desire of recreation? Rigorous gamelaws do not more certainly encourage poaching, than the puritanical observance of the Sabbath leads to Sabbath-breaking.—*Quarterly Review*.

* * * * *

BURNS.

This extraordinary man, before he produced any of the pieces on which his fame is built, had educated himself abundantly; and when he died, at the age of thirty-seven, knew more of books, as well as of men, than fifty out of a hundred in any of the learned professions in any country of the world are ever likely to do.—*Ibid*.

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THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

When the Ettrick Shepherd was first heard of, he had indeed but just learned to write, by copying the letters of a printed ballad, as he lay watching his flock on the mountains; but thirty years or more have passed since then, and his acquirements are now such, that the Royal Society of Literature, in patronizing him, might be justly said to honour a laborious and successful student, as well as a masculine and fertile genius. We may take the liberty of adding, in this place, what perhaps may not be known to the excellent



managers of that excellent institution, that a more worthy, modest, sober, and loyal man does not exist in his majesty's dominions than this distinguished poet, whom some of his waggish friends have taken up the absurd fancy of exhibiting in print as a sort of boozing buffoon; and who is now, instead of revelling in the license of tavern-suppers and party politics, bearing up, as he may, against severe and unmerited misfortunes, in as dreary a solitude as ever nursed the melancholy of a poetical temperament.—*Ibid.*

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MR. ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

Needs no testimony either to his intellectual accomplishments or his moral worth; nor, thanks to his own virtuous diligence, does he need any patronage. He has been fortunate enough to secure a respectable establishment in the *studio* of a great artist, who is not less good than great, and would thus be sufficiently in the eye of the world, even were his literary talents less industriously exercised than they have hitherto been. His recent *Lives of the British Painters and Sculptors* form one of the most agreeable books in the language; and it will always remain one of the most remarkable and delightful facts in the history of letters, that such a work—one conveying so much valuable knowledge in a style so unaffectedly attractive—so imbued throughout, not only with lively sensibility, amiable feelings, honesty and candour, but mature and liberal taste, was produced by a man who, some twenty years before, earned his daily bread as a common stone-mason in the wilds of Nithsdale. Examples like these will plead the cause of struggling genius, wherever it may be found, more powerfully than all the arguments in the world.—*Ibid.*

* * * * *

DUELLING

Is the only crime into which an upright man, wanting in moral firmness, can be impelled by the law of honour. Surely there could be no difficulty in putting an end to this absurd and abominable practice by wholesome laws. Appoint six months' imprisonment for the offence of sending a challenge, or of accepting it; two years if the parties meet; and if one falls, transport the other for life. Appoint the same punishment in all cases for the seconds; and from the day in which such a law should be enacted, not a pair of duelling pistols would ever again be manufactured in this country, even for the Dublin market.—*Ibid.*

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CARDINAL MAZARIN.

The pecuniary wealth, the valuables and pictures of Mazarin, were immense. He was fond of hoarding,—a passion that seized him when he first found himself banished and destitute. His love of pictures was as strong as his love of power—stronger, since it survived. A fatal malady had seized on the cardinal, whilst engaged in the conferences of the treaty, and worn by mental fatigue. He brought it home with him to the Louvre. He consulted Guenaud, the great physician, who told him that he had two months to

live. Some days after receiving this dread mandate, Brienne perceived the cardinal in night-cap and dressing gown tottering along his gallery, pointing to his pictures, and exclaiming, "Must I quit all these?" He saw Brienne, and seized him: "Look," exclaimed he, "look at that Correggio! this Venus of Titian!

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that incomparable Deluge of Caracci! Ah! my friend, I must quit all these. Farewell, dear pictures, that I loved so dearly, and that cost me so much!" His friend surprised him slumbering in his chair at another time, and murmuring, "Gueriaud has said it! Guenaud has said it!" A few days before his death, he caused himself to be dressed, shaved, rouged and painted, "so that he never looked so fresh and vermilion," in his life. In this state he was carried in his chair to the promenade, where the envious courtiers cruelly rallied, and paid him ironical compliments on his appearance. Cards were the amusement of his death-bed, his hand being held by others; and they were only interrupted by the visit of the Papal Nuncio, who came to give the cardinal that plenary indulgence to which the prelates of the sacred college are officially entitled. Mazarin expired on the 9th of March, 1661.

Lardner's Cyclopaedia, vol. xv.

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"GOD SAVE THE KING" IN ITALY.

On the 26th of December last, the King and Queen of Sardinia went in state to the *Carlo Felice* Theatre at Genoa, and presented to the public, says an Italian correspondent, his niece, the betrothed bride of the heir-apparent of the house of Austria. At seven the court arrived, the curtain rose, and displayed the whole *corps dramatique*, who sang *Dio Salve il Re*; or an Italian version of the words and music of our "God save the King," in which Madame Caradori took the principal part. Thus our national anthem is getting naturalized in Italy, the parent of song, and once the manufacturer of it for all Europe. It is already adopted in Russia, I am told, and is well known in France, though not likely to supplant the fine national air, "*Vive Henri Quatre*."—*Harmonicon*, Feb. 1.

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ILLUSTRATIONS OF SHAKSPEARE.

[Illustration: FLINT CASTLE.]

This Castle is, or rather was, situated on an insulated rock, in a marsh on the river Dee, which still, at high tides, washes its walls. It is a site of considerable historical interest, being the place where the unhappy King Richard II was delivered into the hands of his rival, Bolingbroke. The unfortunate monarch, it appears, finding himself deserted, had withdrawn to North Wales, with a design to escape to France. He was, however, decoyed to agree to a conference with Bolingbroke, and on the road was seized by an



armed force, conveyed to Flint Castle, and thence led by his successful rival to the metropolis.

Shakspeare has perpetuated Flint Castle by its frequent mention in his “Life and Death of King Richard the Second.” He has indeed invested it with high poetical interest. Thus, in Scene 2 of Act iii. where occurs that touching lament of unkingship—

——Of comfort, no man speak:
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs, &c.

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Again, where the moody monarch says—

—What comfort have we now?

By heaven! I'll hate him everlastingly,
That bids me be of comfort any more.
Go, to *Flint Castle*, there I'll pine away;
A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey.

Then, the investiture of the Castle—"Scene 3.—*Wales—Before Flint Castle;*" "*Enter, with drums and colours, BOLINGBROKE and Forces.*" "*A parle sounded, and answered.—Flourish.—Enter on the walls KING RICHARD, &c.*" Shakspeare makes the capture *in the castle*. Thus, Northumberland (from Bolingbroke before the castle) parleys with the King—

My lord, in the base court he doth attend
To speak with you, may't please you to come down?

KING RICHARD.

Down, down I come; like glistening Phaeton,
Wanting the management of unruly jades.
(*North retires to Boling.*)
In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base,
To come at traitors' calls, and do them grace.
In the base court? Come Down? Down Court, Down King!
For night-owls shriek where mounting larks should sing.
(*Exeunt from above.*)

Richard has been described as a prince of surpassing beauty; but his mental powers did not correspond with his personal form, and his character was both weak and treacherous. He, however, had some redeeming points. His ordering some trees to be cut down at Sheen, because they too forcibly reminded him of his deceased wife Anne, in whose company he used to walk under them, affords a favourable testimony of his susceptibility of the social affections. Of this sensitiveness, there is also an interesting trait recorded by Froissart. From Flint Castle, Richard was conveyed to London, and immured within the Tower cells. While he was here one day conversing with Bolingbroke, his favourite greyhound, Math, having been loosed by his keeper, instead of running to the King, as usual, fawned upon the Duke. The latter inquiring the cause of this unusual circumstance, was answered—"This greyhound fondles and pays his court to you this day as King of England, which you will surely be, and I shall be deposed."

To return to Flint Castle. After the civil wars under Charles I. it was ordered to be dismantled; but, among other rights, it was restored to Sir Roger Mostyn, after the

Restoration, in whose family it is still vested, though the mayor of the borough acts as its constable.

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

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WEBER AND DER FREISCHUTZ.

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In 1821, the newly-erected Royal Opera at Berlin was opened with “Der Freyschuetz.” The effect produced by the first representation of this romantic opera, which we shall never cease to regard as one of the proudest achievements of genius, was almost unprecedented. It was received with general acclamations, and raised his name at once to the first eminence in operatic composition. In January it was played in Dresden, in February at Vienna, and everywhere with the same success.—Weber alone seemed calm and undisturbed amid the general enthusiasm. He pursued his studies quietly, and was already deeply engaged in the composition of a comic opera, “The Three Pintos,” never completed, and had accepted a commission for another of a romantic cast for the Vienna stage. The text was at first to have been furnished by Rellstab, but was ultimately written by Madame de Chezy, and written in so imperfect and impracticable a style, that, with all Rellstab’s alterations never had a musician more to contend with than poor Weber had to do with this old French story. As it is, however, he has caught the spirit of the tale.

“Dance and Provençal song, and vintage mirth”

breathe in his melodies; and although a perplexed plot and want of interest in the scene greatly impaired its theatrical effect, the approbation with which it was notwithstanding received by all judges of music on its first representation in Vienna (10th Oct. 1823) sufficiently attested the triumph of the composer over his difficulties. He was repeatedly called for and received with the loudest acclamations. From Vienna, where he was conducting his *Euryanthe*, he was summoned to Prague, to superintend the fiftieth representation of his “Freyschuetz.” His tour resembled a triumphal procession; for, on his return to Dresden, he was greeted with a formal public reception in the theatre.

But while increasing in celebrity, and rising still higher, if that were possible, in the estimation of the public, his health was rapidly waning, amidst his anxious and multiplied duties. “Would to God,” says he in a letter written shortly afterwards—“Would to God that I were a tailor, for then I should have a Sunday’s holiday!” Meantime a cough, the herald of consumption, tormented him, and “the slow minings of the hectic fire” within began to manifest themselves more visibly in days and nights of feverish excitement. It was in the midst of this that he accepted the task of composing an opera for Covent Garden Theatre. His fame, which had gradually made its way through the North of Germany (where his *Freyschuetz* was played in 1823) to England, induced the managers to offer him liberal terms for an opera on the subject of *Oberon*, the well-known fairy tale on which Wieland has reared his fantastic, but beautiful and touching comic Epos. He received the first act of Planche’s manuscript in December, 1824, and forthwith began his labours, though he seems to have thought that the worthy managers,

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in the short time they were disposed to allow him, were expecting impossibilities, particularly as the first step towards its composition, on Weber's part, was the study of the English language itself, the right understanding of which, Weber justly considered as preliminary to any attempt to marry Mr. Planche's ephemeral verses to his own immortal music. These exertions increased his weakness so much, that he found it necessary to resort to a watering-place in the summer of 1825. In December he returned to Berlin, to bring out his Euryanthe there in person. It was received, as might have been anticipated, with great applause, though less enthusiastically than the Freyschuetz, the wild and characteristic music of which, came home with more intensity to the national mind. After being present at two representations, he returned to his labours at Oberon.

The work, finally, having been completed, Weber determined himself to be present at the representation of this his last production. He hoped, by his visit to London, to realize something for his wife and family; for hitherto, on the whole, poverty had been his companion. Want had, indeed, by unceasing exertion, been kept aloof, but still hovering near him, and threatening with the decline of his health, and his consequent inability to discharge his duties, a nearer and a nearer approach. Already he felt the conviction that his death was not far off, and that his wife and children would soon be deprived of that support which his efforts had hitherto afforded them. His intention was to return from London by Paris, where he expected to form a definitive arrangement relative to an opera which the Parisians had long requested from him.

On the 2nd of March he left Paris for England, which he reached on the 4th amidst a heavy shower of rain—a gloomy opening to his visit. The first incident, however, that happened after his arrival, showed how highly his character and talents were appreciated. Instead of requiring to present himself as an alien at the Passport Office, he was immediately waited upon by the officer with the necessary papers, and requested to think of nothing but his own health, as everything would be managed for him. On the 6th he writes to his wife from London:

“God be thanked! here I sit, well and hearty, already quite at home, and perfectly happy in the receipt of your dear letter, which assures me that you and the children are well; what more or what better could I wish for? After sleeping well and paying well at Dover, we set out yesterday morning in the Express coach, a noble carriage, drawn by four English horses, such as no prince need be ashamed of. With four persons within, four in front, and four behind, we dashed on with the rapidity of lightning, through this inexpressibly beautiful country: meadows of the loveliest green, gardens blooming with flowers, and every building displaying a neatness and elegance which form a striking contrast to the dirt of France. The majestic river, covered with ships of all sizes (among others, the largest ship of the line, of 148 guns), the graceful country houses, altogether made the journey perfectly unique.”

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He took up his residence with Sir George Smart, where everything that could add to his comfort, or soothe his illness, had been provided by anticipation. He found his table covered with cards from visitors who had called before his arrival, and a splendid pianoforte in his room from one of the first makers, with a request that he would make use of it during his stay.

“The whole day,” he writes to his wife, “is mine till five—then dinner, the theatre, or society. My solitude in England is not painful to me. The English way of living suits mine exactly; and my little stock of English, in which I make tolerable progress, is of incalculable use to me.

“Give yourself no uneasiness about the opera (Oberon), I shall have leisure and repose here, for they respect my time. Besides, the Oberon is not fixed for Easter Monday, but some time later; I shall tell you afterwards when. The people are really too kind to me. No king ever had more done for him out of love; I may almost say they carry me in their arms. I take great care of myself, and you may be quite at ease on my account. My cough is really a very odd one; for eight days it disappeared entirely; then, upon the 3rd (of March) a vile spasmodic attack returned before I reached Calais. Since that time it is quiet again. I cannot, with all the consideration I have given it, understand it at all. I sometimes deny myself every indulgence, and yet it comes. I eat and drink every thing, and it does not come. But be it as God will.

“At seven o’clock in the evening we went to Covent Garden, where Rob Roy, an opera after Sir Walter Scott’s novel, was played. The house is handsomely decorated, and not too large. When I came forward to the front of the stage-box, that I might have a better look of it, some one called out, Weber! Weber is here!—and although I drew back immediately, there followed a clamour of applause which I thought would never have ended. Then the overture to the Freyschuetz was called for, and every time I showed myself the storm broke loose again. Fortunately, soon after the overture, Rob Roy began, and gradually things became quiet.—Could a man wish for more enthusiasm, or more love? I must confess that I was completely overpowered by it, though I am of a calm nature, and somewhat accustomed to such scenes. I know not what I would have given to have had you by my side, that you might have seen me in my foreign garb of honour. And now, my dear love, I can assure you that you may be quite at ease, both as to the singers and the orchestra. Miss Paton is a singer of the first rank, and will play Reiza divinely; Braham not less so, though in a totally different style. There are also several good tenors; and I really cannot see why the English singing should be so much abused. The singers have a perfectly good Italian education, fine voices, and expression. The orchestra is not remarkable, but still very good, and the choruses particularly so. In short, I feel quite at ease as to the fate of Oberon.”

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The final production of the drama, however, was attended with more difficulty than he had anticipated. He had the usual prejudices to overcome, particular singers to conciliate, alterations to make, and repeated rehearsals to superintend, before he could inspire the performers with the proper spirit of the piece.

“Braham,” says he, “in another of his confidential letters to his wife,” (29th March, 1826) “begs for a grand scena instead of his first air, which, in fact, was not written for him, and is rather high. The thought of it was at first quite horrible; I could not hear of it. At last I promised, when the opera was completed, if I had time enough, it should be done; and now this grand scena, a confounded battle piece and what not, is lying before me, and I am about to set to work, yet with the greatest reluctance. What can I do? Braham knows his public, and is idolized by them. But for Germany I shall keep the opera as it is. I hate the air I am going to compose (to-day I hope) by anticipation. Adieu, and now for the battle. * * * So, the battle is over, that is to say, half the scene. To-morrow shall the Turks roar, the French shout for joy, the warriors cry out victory!”

The battle was, indeed, nearly over with Weber. The tired forces of life, though they bore up gallantly against the enemy, had long been wavering at their post, and now in fact only one brilliant movement remained to be executed before they finally retreated from the field of existence. This was the representation of Oberon, which for a time rewarded him for all his toils and vexations. He records his triumph with a mixture of humility, gratitude, affection, and piety.

“12th April, 1826.

“My best beloved Caroline! Through God’s grace and assistance, I have this evening met with the most complete success. The brilliancy and affecting nature of the triumph is indescribable. God alone be thanked for it! When I entered the orchestra, the whole of the house, which was filled to overflowing, rose up, and I was saluted with huzzas, waving of hats and handkerchiefs, which I thought would never have done. They insisted on encoring the overture. Every air was interrupted twice or thrice by bursts of applause. * * * So much for this night, dear life. From your heartily tired husband, who, however, could not sleep in peace until he had communicated to you this new blessing of heaven. Good-night.”

But his joy was interrupted by the gradual decline of his health. The climate of London brought back all those symptoms which his travelling had for a time alleviated or dissipated. After directing twelve performances of his Oberon in crowded houses, he felt himself completely exhausted and dispirited.—His melancholy was not abated by the ill success of his concert, which, from causes which we cannot pretend to explain, was no benefit to the poor invalid. His next letters are in a desponding tone.

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“17th April, 1826.

“To-day is enough to be the death of any one. A thick, dark, yellow fog overhangs the sky, so that one can hardly see in the house without candles. The sun stands powerless, like a ruddy point, in the clouds. No: there is no living in this climate. The longing I feel for Hosterwitz, and the clear air, is indescribable. But patience,—patience,—one day rolls on after another; two months are already over. I have formed an acquaintance with Dr. Kind, a nephew of our own Kind. He is determined to make me well. God help me, that will never happen to me in this life. I have lost all hope in physicians and their art. Repose is my best doctor, and henceforth it shall be my sole object to obtain it. * * * * *

“To-morrow is the first representation of my (so called) rival's opera, ‘Aladdin.’ I am very curious to see it. Bishop is a man of talent, though of no peculiar invention. I wish him every success. There is room enough for all of us in the world.”

“30th May.

“Dearest Lina, excuse the shortness and hurry of this. I have so many things on hand, writing is painful to me—my hands tremble so. Already too impatience begins to awaken in me. You will not receive many more letters from me. Address your answer not to London, but to Frankfort—*poste restante*. You are surprised? Yes, I don't go by Paris. What should I do there—I cannot move—I cannot speak—all business I must give up for years. Then better, better, the straight way to my home—by Calais, Brussels, Cologne, and Coblenz, up the Rhine to Frankfort—a delightful journey. Though I must travel slowly, rest sometimes half a day, I think in a fortnight, by the end of June, I shall be in your arms.

“If God will, we shall leave this on 12th June, if heaven will vouchsafe me a little strength. Well, all will go better if we are once on the way—once out of this wretched climate. I embrace you from my heart, my dear ones—ever your loving father Charles.”

This letter, the last but one he ever wrote, shows the rapid decline of his strength, though he endeavours to keep up the spirits of his family by a gleam of cheerfulness. His longing for home now began to increase till it became a pang. On the 6th of June he was to be present at the Freyschuetz, which was to be performed for his benefit, and then to leave London for ever. His last letter, the thirty-third he had written from England, was dated the second of June. Even here, though he could scarcely guide the pen, anxious to keep up the drooping spirits of his wife, he endeavours to speak cheerfully, and to inspire a hope of his return.

“As this letter will need no answer, it will be short enough. Need no answer! Think of that! Furstenau has given up the idea of his concert, so perhaps we shall be with you in two days sooner—huzza! God bless you all and keep you well! O were I only among

you! I kiss you in thought, dear mother. Love me also, and think always of your Charles, who loves you above all."

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On Friday the 3rd of June, he felt so ill, that the idea of his attending at the representation of “Der Freyschuetz” was abandoned, and he was obliged to keep his room. On Sunday evening, the 5th, he was left at eleven o'clock in good spirits, and at seven next morning was found dead upon his pillow, his head resting upon his hand, as though he had passed from life without a struggle. The peaceful slumber of the preceding evening seemed to have gradually deepened into the sleep of death.

He was interred on the 21st, with the accustomed solemnities of the Catholic Church, in the chapel at Moorfields, the Requiem of Mozart being introduced into the service. In person, Weber is described as having been of the middle height, extremely thin, and of dark complexion. His countenance was strikingly intelligent, his face long and pale, his forehead remarkably high, his features prominent, his eyes dark and full. His usual look was one of calm placid thought, an expression which was increased in some degree by spectacles, which he wore on account of his shortness of sight. The force and acuteness of his mind were indicated in the occasional brilliancy of the expression of his countenance; the habitual patience and mildness of his disposition, in its permanent look of placidity and repose.—*From an interesting paper in No. XIII. of the Foreign Quarterly Review.*

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DIRGE.

The moon was a-waning,
The tempest was over;
Fair was the maiden,
And fond was the lover;
But the snow was so deep,
That his heart it grew weary,
And he sunk down to sleep,
In the moorland so dreary.

Soft was the bed
She had made for her lover,
White were the sheets
And embroider'd the cover;
But his sheets are more white,
And his canopy grander,
And sounder he sleeps
Where the hill foxes wander.

Alas, pretty maiden,
What sorrows attend you!



I see you sit shivering,
With lights at your window;
But long may you wait
Ere your arms shall enclose him,
For still, still he lies,
With a wreath on his bosom.

How painful the task
The sad tidings to tell you!—
An orphan you were,
Ere this misery befell you;
And far in yon wild,
Where the dead-tapers hover,
So cold, cold and wan,
Lies the corpse of your lover.

The Ettrick Shepherd.

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MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

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**PREPARATIONS OF MILK, PARTICULARLY OF MARES' MILK, USED BY THE
KALMUCK TARTARS.**

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The ordinary drink of the Kalmucks, and which forms an essential part of their food, consists of various preparations of the milk supplied by their cattle. The mares yield milk as well as the cows; and, for several reasons, they prefer the former. When fresh, this milk has a taste of onions, which is very repulsive; but, in proportion as it sours, if the operation is performed with cleanliness, it becomes more liquid than the other, acquires an agreeable vinous taste, and neither forms cream nor coagulates. In this state, it furnishes a wholesome and refreshing drink, and which, when in sufficient quantity, froths in a remarkable degree. The cow's milk, on the contrary, both on account of the cheesy matter which it contains and its disagreeable taste, becomes unpleasant to drink when it sours; and, in persons not accustomed to it, induces colics and diarrhoeas, although the Kalmucks themselves experience no inconvenience from it, unless they have neglected to boil it. This they do, in the first place, and never use it until it has undergone this operation, without which they would be exposed to the inconveniences with which sour milk affects Europeans. In like manner, the Kalmucks do not relish water that has not been boiled. Poor persons, to prevent their being reduced to the necessity of drinking it pure, mix it with their milk, in the proportion of a third part or half, in order to make the most of the latter as a drink.

The milk is therefore heated as soon as it is withdrawn from the animal; and, when warm, it is poured into a large skin bottle, with which the poorest hut is furnished, and in which there is always a remnant of sour milk sufficient to sour the new milk, after it has been stirred with a stick kept for the purpose. Those bottles are never washed or cleaned: they are therefore always incrustated with cheese and dirt, and the smell admitted by them is sufficient to show what they contain. But it is precisely in this that the secret for making the milk undergo the vinous fermentation consists. If it be intended to sour milk in empty or new bottles, all that is necessary is to put into them the least drop of the milk-brandy to be presently described, or a little of the curdled milk that is found in the stomach of young lambs.

All the preparations of milk are comprehended under the name of Tchigan. The drinks prepared from pure mare's milk (the Koumys of the Tartars), are named Gunna Tchigan, or Horse Tchigan; those into which mares' milk and cow's milk enter are called Besrek;—sour cows' milk is named Airek; and all kinds of fresh milk, Ussoun.

In summer, and in general whenever their flocks yield them much milk, the Kalmucks do not fail to inebriate themselves with the strong drink which they derive from it. Mares' milk affords most spirit, and the milk of the cow affords much less, especially in winter, when the fodder is dry. Sheep's milk is never employed, as it does not contain spirit.

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The milk intended for distillation is only allowed to remain twenty-four hours, in summer, in the skin-bottles to sour; but in winter, and in cold weather, it may be left two or three days to be rendered fit for distillation. The cream is not taken off; on the contrary, the milk is agitated very strongly, from time to time, with the stick, and the butter which forms of itself on the milk, or even on the common Tchigan, is removed and employed for other uses.

Notwithstanding the numerous testimonies on the subject, and the daily experience, not of the nomadic tribes alone, but also of all the Russians, many people in Europe cannot conceive how a spirituous and inebriating liquor could be obtained from milk. But it cannot be supposed that those travellers who have repeatedly seen these tribes distil their brandy from milk, without adding the least vegetable matter to the original liquid, and then, in their unbridled passion for debauch, drink until they stagger and fall, have said so merely to impose upon the public. Nor can it be objected that the weakness of their head renders them liable to be easily inebriated by the vapours of the milk, for the Kalmucks can take very large quantities of grain brandy without losing the use of their legs; and there are Russians, who, although professedly great drinkers, are sooner inebriated than the Kalmucks by milk-brandy, and often even by the sour milk of mares, and yet are extremely fond of this kind of drink. I am aware that strangers have in vain tried to make milk-brandy. I shall even confess that I had a trial made under my own eyes, at Selenginsk, by Kalmucks, and was so unsuccessful, that I only obtained a watery fluid which had the smell of sour milk; but the reason of this was, that two clean vessels had been used. On the contrary, whenever I allowed these people to use their own vessels, abundant alcoholic vapours were procured. It is, therefore, an important point to determine, by means of vessels impregnated by long use with a strong smell, and the remains of sour milk, that sudden souring which developes a spirituous principle. This fermentation of a rare species, and entirely *sui generis*, can only be brought to the desired perfection by frequent repetition of the process, just as, according to Russel,[5] the thick milk (*leban*), which the Arabs habitually use for making cheese, can only be obtained by producing the coagulation of the fresh milk by means of a milk previously curdled, or, in other words, by the cohobation many times repeated of curdled milk.

After describing the process of distillation, Pallas remarks, if the brandy is made from cows' milk, what is obtained is equal to the thirtieth, or at most to the twenty-fifth part of the mass; but when from mares' milk, it equals the fifteenth part. The new fluid is pale and watery, and does not inflame; but it keeps without spoiling, in glass bottles, like weak corn-brandy. The rich Kalmucks render it

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stronger by several distillations, and they have names for the products of each rectification. The *arki* is named *dang* after its first rectification; *arza*, after the second; *khortsa*, after the third. They seldom go farther, although the rectifications are sometimes pushed to six. The names given to the two last are *chingsta* and *dingsta*. The Kalmucks are generally, however, content with the products of the first distillation.

The receiver has scarcely been filled, when they pour the brandy warm from it into a large wooden vessel with a spout, from which they fill leather bottles, or gourds.

It is customary for the host, with whom the company is then, to pour brandy into a vessel, and afterwards to throw part of it into the fire, and part towards the hole by which the smoke issues to render the spirits of the air or his tutelary angel propitious. Lastly, the warm brandy circulates among the company, composed of kinsfolk and friends, in large cups, which often do not hold less than a bottle. If a little is left, it is heated again before it is drunk. This milk-brandy, on account of the aqueous parts which it contains, does not inebriate so easily when a small quantity is taken, as brandy made from grain; but it is found, by the example of the Russians and all the tribes of the Steppes, that the drunkenness which it causes continues longer, and entirely destroys the appetite. On the other hand, it does not produce violent head-aches, like corn-brandy.

The rich Kalmucks and Mongols are in the habit, when they pass the winter near towns, of distilling with or without milk brandy from leavened bread. The product, it is said, is stronger, and has a keener taste than milk-brandy. The residuum of the distillation of milk-brandy, which is sharp, and has a smell like wine lees, is applied to various uses. Sometimes it is mixed with fresh milk, and immediately eaten; sometimes it is applied for preparing sheep and lamb skins; sometimes the women boil it, either by itself, or, if it is too sharp, with a mixture of sweet milk, until it thickens, and then pour the cheesy substance into bags, which, when thoroughly dried, they throw into heaps. They also, like the Tartar tribes, frequently form it into round cakes, which they dry in the sun, and keep principally for journeys and for winter use. The residuum of distillation is called *bosson*, and by the Mongols *tsakha*.—The cheese formed in heaps is named *chourmyk*, that in cakes, *thorossoun*.

They make another kind of cheese also, chiefly of sheep's and goats' milk. The fresh milk is put into a kettle with a like sour milk (*ederecksen ussun*), or some remnant of brandy (*bossah*). They are well mixed, and then left for some time to sour. Fire is then put under the kettle, and the mixture is stirred while it boils briskly, that the cheesy parts may be converted into a kind of froth (*koosoun*). When all the aqueous parts of the milk are expelled by boiling, a little butter is added. The whole is again stirred, and left upon the fire until the froth begins to dry and turn brown. It is then ready, and if properly prepared, has an agreeable taste.

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The Kalmucks make their butter in the following manner: A sufficient quantity of cows' or sheep's milk is put into a kettle, and boiled for some time, after which there is added a little sour milk cream (*areyn*). It is then withdrawn, and allowed to stand until it sours, which does not require a whole day. This milk is then beaten with a kind of butterstick, and poured into an earthen pot or other vessel, when the decomposed butter comes to the surface, and is placed in vessels, skins, or dried stomachs, in which it is kept. If the milk still seems to contain fat, it is again treated in the same manner. This milk is called *toussoun* by the Kalmucks, and *oeroemae* by the Tartars.—*Jameson's Journal*.

[5] Russel's Aleppo, p. 54.

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SOMERSET.

In Congresbury parish, and the contiguous one of Puxton, were two large pieces of common land, called East and West Dale Moors, (from the Saxon *Dob*, share or portion) which were occupied till within these few years in the following remarkable manner:—The land was divided into single acres, each bearing a peculiar mark cut in the turf, such as a horn, an ox, a horse, a cross, an oven, &c. On the Saturday before Old Midsummer Day, the several proprietors of contiguous estates or their tenants, assembled on these commons, with a number of apples marked with similar figures, which were distributed by a boy to each of the commoners from a bag; at the close of the distribution, each person repaired to allotment with the figure corresponding with the one upon his apple, and took possession of that piece of land for the ensuing year. Four acres were reserved to pay the expenses of an entertainment at the house of the Overseer of the Dale Moors, when the evening was spent in festivity.

Rutter's Division of Somerset.

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.
SHAKESPEARE.

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SLEEPING IN CHURCH.

From a Sermon by Swift.

(It may be somewhat derogatory to the genius of so great a writer as SWIFT, to allow this extract to occupy its present place in our arrangement—usually allotted to minor pieces. Our “Notes” are, for the most part, from new books, and a similar object is explained in our “Selector.” We could hardly place “Sleeping in Church” under “Manners and Customs,” and sleep altogether is rather prospective, (in dreaming,) than “Retrospective.”—Yet reader, here it is—a still subject—but fresh, vigorous, and written for all time.)

There is one moral disadvantage to which all preaching is subject; that those who, by the wickedness of their lives, stand in greatest need, have usually the smallest share; for either they are absent upon the account of idleness, or spleen, or hatred to religion, or in order to doze away the intemperance of the week; or, if they do come, they are sure to employ their minds rather any other way, than regarding or attending to the business of the place.

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There is no excuse so trivial, that will not pass upon some men's consciences to excuse their attendance at the public worship of God. Some are so unfortunate as to be always indisposed on the Lord's day, and think nothing so unwholesome as the air of a church. Others have their affairs so oddly contrived, as to be always unluckily prevented by business. With some it is a great mark of wit, and deep understanding, to stay at home on *Sundays*. Others again discover strange fits of laziness, that seize them, particularly on that day, and confine them to their beds. Others are absent out of mere contempt of religion. And, lastly, there are not a few who look upon it as a day of rest, and therefore claim the privilege of their castle, to keep the Sabbath by eating, drinking, and sleeping, after the toil and labour of the week. Now in all this the worst circumstance is, that these persons are such whose companies are most required, and who stand most in need of a physician.

But of all misbehaviour, none is comparable to that of those who come here to sleep; opium is not so stupifying to many persons as an afternoon sermon. Perpetual custom hath so brought it about, that the words, of whatever preacher, become only a sort of uniform sound at a distance, than which nothing is more effectual to lull the senses. For, that it is the very sound of the sermon which bindeth up their faculties, is manifest from hence, because they all awake so very regularly as soon as it ceaseth, and with much devotion receive the blessing, dozed and besotted with indecencies I am ashamed to repeat.

One cause of this neglect is, a heart set upon worldly things. Men whose minds are much enslaved to earthly affairs all the week, cannot disengage or break the chain of their thoughts so suddenly, as to apply to a discourse that is wholly foreign to what they have most at heart. Tell an usurer of charity, and mercy, and restitution, you talk to the deaf; his heart and soul, with all his senses, are got among his bags, or he is gravely asleep, and dreaming of a mortgage. Tell a man of business, that the cares of the world choke the good seed; that we must not encumber ourselves with much serving; that the salvation of his soul is the one thing necessary. You see, indeed, the shape of a man before you, but his faculties are all gone off among clients and papers, thinking how to defend a bad cause, or find flaws in a good one; or, he weareth out the time in drowsy nods.

There are many who place abundance of merit in going to church, although it be with no other prospect but that of being well entertained, wherein if they happen to fail, they return wholly disappointed. Hence it is become an impertinent vein among people of all sorts to hunt after what they call a good sermon, as if it were a matter of pastime and diversion.

This indecent sloth is very much owing to that luxury and excess men usually practise upon this day, by which half the service thereof is turned to sin; men dividing the time between God and their bellies, when, after a gluttonous meal, their senses dozed and

stupified, they retire to God's house to sleep out the afternoon. Surely, brethren, these things ought not so to be.

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A CONVINCING PROOF.

Miss D. had the misfortune to become what the language of our neighbours delicately expresses by the compound word *fille-mere*, and wished to bestow, or rather to force, the honours of paternity on the prince. The subject of dispute having been brought into his presence, he glanced at the child's raven air, and coolly observed, "to convince me that this girl is mine, you must prove that black is white."—*Cabinet Library—Life and Reign of George IV.*

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ASTRONOMY.

A facetious fellow, after reading the Report of the Astronomical Society for the past year, (which is very favourable) observed, "Well! Astronomy is looking up."

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THE PENNANT.

The following shows the derivation of pennant at the head of the mainmast of a man of war:—

When Van Trump was sweeping the seas with his men of war, by way of a boast he put a *broom* at the head of his mast, for which, when Elizabeth had notice, she desired all her men of war to mount a *long strip of linen* at the head of their masts, as much as to say she would *flog* them soundly if they dared to molest her.

GEO. ST. CLAIR.

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CHESTNUTS

Are sold at the corners of every street in Florence, in seven different forms: raw, cooked, and hot, both roasted and boiled; dried by heat, (the skins being taken off,) in which state they have a much sweeter and superior flavour; and made into bread, a sort of stiff pudding; and into thin cakes like pancakes.[6] This valuable fruit constitutes a

considerable portion of the food of the lower classes, who must daily consume in Florence some tons.

[6] In the confectioner's shops at Paris, they are sold peeled, baked, and iced with sugar. We can answer for their being very delicious.

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Lord Hudson, in Queen Elizabeth's time, said, "To have courage to observe an affront, is to be even with an adversary. To have the patience to forgive it, is to be above him."

C.B.

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DEATH AMONGST LIONS.

It is remarkable that in 1438, all the lions in the Tower of London died.

T. GILL.

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ANTIQUITY OF PORTERS.

Saccarii, among the Romans were a company or fraternity of porters, who had the sole privilege to carry all goods from the harbour to the warehouses, none being allowed to employ their own slaves, and much less those of others, for that purpose.

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The modern *Saccarii*, alias tackle porters and ticket porters, are well known to Londoners, and have been thus poetized by Gay:

“If drawn by business to a street unknown,
Let the *sworn porter* point thee through the town.”

These *portly gentry* have been compared to kings. Howel says, “It is with *kings* sometimes as with *porters*, whose packs may jostle one against the other, yet remain good friends still.”

N.B. This is a *knotty* subject.

P.T.W.

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STANZAS ON MADAME VESTRIS HAVING ESTABLISHED A THEATRE OF HER OWN.

Written by Sir Lumley Skeffington.

Now Vestris, the tenth of the Muses,
To Mirth rears a fanciful dome,
We mark, while delight she infuses,
The Graces find beauty at home.
In her eye such vivacity glitters,
To her voice such perfections belong,
That care and the life it embitters,
Find balm in the sweets of her song.

When monarchs o'er valleys are ranging,
A court is transferr'd to the green;
And flowers, transplanted, are changing
Not fragrance, but merely the scene.
'Tis circumstance dignifies places;
A desert is charming with spring!
And pleasure finds twenty new graces,
Wherever the Vestris may sing!

Times.

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LORD ANSON.

(To the Editor.)

Being in Sussex a short time since, I observed at a public-house adjoining the Duke of Richmond's, at Goodwood, the figure head of the Centurion, the ship in which Lord Anson sailed round the world. On the pedestal that supported it against the house, are the following lines:—

Stay traveller awhile and view
One who has travelled more than you,
Quite round the world, through each degree,
Anson and I have ploughed the sea,
Torrid and frigid zones have past,
And safe at home arrived at last.

There follow two other lines, which are almost unintelligible.

O.P.Q.

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