

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. 478.] Saturday, February 26, 1831. [Price 2d.

* * * * *

AUTOGRAPHS OF EMINENT PERSONS.

[Illustration: *Autographs of eminent persons.*]

AUTOGRAPHS.

It is long since our pages were illustrated with such characteristic lineaments as those on the opposite page. The reader will, however, perceive that we have not entirely forgotten the quaint motto from Shenstone, in our earlier volumes—

“I want to see Mrs. Jago’s handwriting, that I may judge of her temper.”

Still the annexed Autographs have not been drawn from our own portfolio: they come “frae North,” being selected from an engraved Plate of forty-three signatures, published with No. 28 of the *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, and prefixed to a pleasing chapter on “the connexion between character and handwriting”—from which we select only a few anecdotal traits.



Anne Grant: “We have given Mrs. Grant of Laggan’s *present* hand, in which may be discovered a little of the instability of advancing life; but there is a well-rounded breadth and distinctness in the formation of the letters, which seems to carry along with it evidence of the clear and judicious mind of the talented authoress of ‘Letters from the Mountains.’”

D. Stewart:—“General Stewart of Garth, a free, bold, military hand; his signature is taken from a letter complimenting in high terms Mr. Chambers’s History of the Rebellion of 1745.”

Allan Cunningham:—an easy flow of tasteful handwriting. “Allan Cunningham,” observes the reviewer, “has raised himself like Hogg; but, instead of the plough, he has handled the chisel; and there is in his constitution an inherent love of the fine arts, which brings his thoughts into more grateful channels. We are well aware that there is a warmth and breadth of character about Cunningham which mark ‘the large-soul’d Scot;’ but looking forward to his forthcoming Lives of the British Painters, Sculptors, and Architects, we do not conceive this to be in the least inconsistent with the easy flow of his tasteful handwriting.”



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F. *Hemans*: “the very hand—fair, small, and beautifully feminine—in which should be embodied her gentle breathings of household love, her songs of the domestic affections, and all her lays of silvery sweetness and soft-breathing tenderness.”

F. LEVESON *Gower*, the distinguished translator of Goethe’s *Faust*.

H. *Brougham*: “a good deal like his own style of oratory—impressive and energetic, but not very polished.” We question the last; but, be this as it may, polish is only desirable so long as it does not impair truth and utility. Plain-speaking has been the best rule of conduct for public men in all ages.

Basil Hall: the observant traveller and very ingenious writer.

John Wilson (the reputed editor of *Blackwood’s Magazine*); and beneath, F. *Jeffrey* (late editor of the *Edinburgh Review*), who took his seat in Parliament not many days since. —“These are two names which stand at the head of the periodical literature of Scotland. The periodical writer must have a ready command of his pen and a versatile genius; he must be able to pass quickly from one subject to another; and instead of devoting himself to one continuous train of thought, he must have a mind whose quick perception and comprehensive grasp enable him to grapple with a thousand. See how this applies to the handwriting of Jeffrey and of Wilson. The style of both signatures implies a quick and careless motion of the hand, as if the writer was working against time, and was much more anxious to get his ideas sent to the printer, than to cover his paper with elegant penmanship. There is an evident similarity in the fashion of the two hands—only Mr. Jeffrey, being much inferior to the Professor in point of physical size and strength, naturally enough delights in a pen with a finer point, and writes therefore a lighter and more scratchy hand than the author of ‘Lights and Shadows.’ It will add to the interest of Mr. Jeffrey’s autograph to know that, as his hand is not at all altered, we have preferred, as a matter of curiosity, to engrave a signature of his which is twenty-three years old, being taken from a letter bearing date 1806.”

W. *Wordsworth*: “a good hand, more worthy of the author of the best parts of ‘The Excursion,’ than of the puerilities of many of the Lyrical Ballads.”

DUGALD *Stewart*: “a hand worthy of a moral philosopher—large, distinct, and dignified.”

W. JERDAN: Editor of the *Literary Gazette*; free and facile as his vein of criticism, and one of the finest signatures in the page.

J. *Baillie*: “it will be perceived that it has less of the delicate feebleness of a lady’s writing than any of the others. It would have been sadly against our theory had the most powerful dramatic authoress which this country has produced, written like a boarding-school girl recently in her teens. This is decidedly not the case. There is

something masculine and nervous in Miss Baillie's signature; it is quite a hand in which 'De Montfort' might be written."



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Percy B. Shelley: Free as its author's wild and beautiful poetry; but it is not the hand of a very clear or accurate thinker.

Thomas Chalmers: "We know of few more striking examples of character infusing itself into hand writing, than that presented by the autograph of Dr. Chalmers. No one who has ever heard him preach, can fail to observe, that the heavy and impressive manner in which he forms his letters is precisely similar to the straining and energetic style in which he fires off his words. There is something painfully earnest and laborious in his delivery, and a similar sensation of laborious earnestness is produced by looking at his hard pressed, though manly and distinct, signature. It is in a small space, an epitome of one of his sermons."

A. *Alison*; the author of "Essays on Taste," and other works of sound discrimination.

Washington Irving; the graceful author of the "Sketch Book," free as a crayon drawing, with all its exquisite light and shade.

Jane Porter: a fully more masculine though less tasteful hand than Washington Irving, with whom she happens to be in juxtaposition; and the fair authoress of "Thaddeus of Warsaw," and "the Scottish Chiefs" certainly appears to have as masculine a mind as the elegant but perhaps somewhat effeminate writer of "the Sketch Book."

W. *Tennant*: "full of originality, and in this resembles his own 'Anster Fair.' The notion may be a fanciful one, but there seems to be a sort of quiet humour in the writing, which makes its resemblance to 'Anster Fair' still more complete. The principle upon which the letters are formed is that of making all the hair strokes heavy, and all the heavy strokes light."

* * * * *

HALCYON DAYS.

(To the Editor.)

The following account of the origin and antiquity of Halcyon Days will, I feel convinced, prove a valuable addition to that given by your intelligent correspondent P.T.W., in No. 471 of *The Mirror*:—

Halcyon Days, in antiquity, implied seven days before, and as many after, the winter solstice—because the halcyon laid her eggs at this time of the year, and the weather during her incubation being, as your correspondent observes, usually calm. The phrase was afterwards employed to express any season of transient prosperity, or of brief tranquillity—the *septem placidae dies* of human life:



The winter solstice just elapsed; and now
Silent the season, sad alcyone
Builds near the sleeping wave her tranquil nest.

Eudokia.

When great Augustus made war's tempest cease,
His halcyon days brought forth the arts of peace.

Dryden.

The halcyon built her nest on the rocks adjacent to the brink of the ocean, or, as some maintain, on the surface of the sea itself:



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Alcyone compress'd
 Seven days sits brooding on her wat'ry nest,
 A wintry queen; her sire at length is kind,
 Calms every storm, and hushes every wind.

Ovid, by Dryden.

It is also said, that during the period of her incubation, she herself had absolute sway over the seas and the winds:

May halcyons smooth the waves, and calm the seas,
 And the rough south-east sink into a breeze;
 Halcyons of all the birds that haunt the main,
 Most lov'd and honour'd by the Nereid train.

Theocritus, by Fawkes.

Alcyone, or Halcyone, we are informed, was the daughter of Aeolus (king of storms and winds), and married to Ceyx, who was drowned in going to consult an oracle. The gods, it is said, apprized Alcyone, in a dream, of her husband's fate; and when she discovered, on the morrow, his body washed on shore, she precipitated herself into the watery element, and was, with her husband, metamorphosed into birds of a similar name, who, as before observed, keep the waters serene, while they build and sit on their nests.

Romford.

H.B.A.

* * * * *

RANSOMS.

(To the Editor.)

In a late number, you gave among the "County Collections," with which a correspondent had furnished you, the old Cornish proverb—

"Hinckston Down well wrought,
 Is worth London dearly bought."

Possibly your correspondent was not aware that the true reading of this proverb is the following:—



“Hinckston Down well wrought,
Is worth a monarch’s ransom dearly bought.”

The lines are thus quoted by Mr. Barrington, in his elaborate work on the middle ages, and refer to the prevailing belief, that Hinckston Down is a mass of copper, and in value, therefore, an equivalent for the price set on the head of a captive sovereign. Perhaps, as some elucidation of so intricate a subject as that of the ransoming prisoners during the middle ages, the following remarks may not be deemed altogether unworthy of insertion in your pages.

Originally, the supposed right of condemning captives to death rendered the reducing of them to perpetual slavery an act of mercy on the part of the conqueror, which practice was not entirely exploded even in the fourteenth century, when Louis Hutin in a letter to Edward II. his vassal and ally, desired him to arrest his enemies, the Flemings, and make them slaves and serfs. (*Mettre par deveres vous, si comme forfain a vous Sers et Esclaves a tous jours.*) Rymer. Booty, however, being equally with vengeance the cause of war, men were not unwilling to accept of advantages more convenient and useful than the services of a prisoner; whose maintenance might be perhaps a burden to them, and to whose death they were indifferent.

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For this reason even the most sanguinary nations condescended at last to accept of ransom for their captives; and during the period between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, fixed and general rules appear to have been established for the regulating such transactions. The principal of these seem to have been, the right of the captor to the persons of his prisoners, though in some cases the king claimed the prerogative of either restoring them to liberty, or of retaining them himself, at a price much inferior to what their original possessor had expected. On a similar principle, Henry IV. forbade the Percies to ransom their prisoners taken at Holmdown. In this case the captives consisted of the chief Scottish nobility, and the king in retaining them, had probably views of policy, which looked to objects far beyond the mere advantage of their ransom. It is mentioned by a French antiquary that the King of France had the privilege of purchasing any prisoner from his conqueror, on the payment of 10,000 livres; and as a confirmation of this, the money paid to Denis de Morbec for his captive John, King of France, by Edward III. amounted to this exact sum. The English monarch afterwards extorted the enormous ransom of three millions of gold crowns, amounting, as it has been calculated, to L1,500,000. of our present money, from his royal captive. The French author censures Edward somewhat unjustly for his share in this transaction; here as in the case of the Percies, state reasons interfered with private advantages. John yielded up to his conquerors not only the abovementioned sum, but whole towns and provinces became the property of the English nation; to these De Morbec could have no right. It was, however, notwithstanding the frequent mention in history of ransoms, still in the power of the persons in possession of a prisoner to refuse any advantage, however great, which his liberty might offer them, if dictated by motives of policy, dependant principally on his personal importance. Entius, King of Sardinia, son of Frederic II. was esteemed of such consequence to his father's affairs, that the Bolognese, to whom he became a prisoner in 1248, would accept of no price for his manumission; and he died in captivity, after a confinement of twenty-four years. Such was the conduct of Charles V. of France towards the Captal de Buche, for whose liberty he refused all the offers made to him by Edward III.

On this principle the Duke of Orleans and Comte d'Eu, were ordered by the dying injunctions of Henry V. to be retained in prison until his son should be capable of governing; nor was it until after a lapse of seventeen years, that permission was given to these noblemen to purchase their freedom.



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If no state reason interfered, the conqueror made what profit he could of his prisoners. Froissart, in speaking of Poitiers, adds, that the English became very rich, in consequence of that battle, as well by ransoms as by plunder, and M. St. Palaye, in his "Mem. sur la Chevalrie," mentions that the ransom of prisoners was the principal means by which the knights of olden time supported the magnificence for which they were so remarkable. In the next century, the articles of war drawn up by Henry V. previous to his invasion of France, contain the condition, "that be it at the battle or other deeds of arms, where the prisoners are taken, he that may first have his *Faye* shall have him for a prisoner, and need not abide by him;" by *Faye*, probably the promise given by the vanquished to his captor to remain his prisoner, is understood; as the expression *donner sa foi*, occurs in various French historians. The value of a ransom is sometimes estimated at one year's income of a man's estate, and this opinion is supported by the custom of allowing a year's liberty to captives to procure the sum agreed upon. By the feudal law, every tenant or vassal was bound to assist his lord in captivity, by a contribution proportionate to the land he held. As, however, the amount received for prisoners is very various, personal importance had no doubt great weight in the determination of a captive's value. Bertrand du Guesclin who had no property, valued his own ransom at 100,000 livres; and Froissart, at the same period mentions the ransom of a King of Majorca, of the house of Arragon, as being exactly that sum.

(*To be continued.*)

* * * * *

THE FATHERLAND.[1]

(FROM THE GERMAN OF ARNDT.)

(*For the Mirror.*)

What is the German's Fatherland?
On Prussia's coast, on Suabia's strand?
Where blooms the vine on Rhenish shores?
Where through the Belt the Baltic pours?
Oh no, oh no!
His Fatherland's not bounded so.

What is the German's Fatherland?
Bavaria's or Westphalia's strand?
Where o'er his sand the Oder glides?
Where Danube rolls his foaming tides?
Oh no, oh no!
His Fatherland's not bounded so.



What is the German's Fatherland?
Tell me at length that mighty land.
The Swilzer's hills, or Tyrolese?
Well do that land and people please,
 Oh no, oh no!
 His Fatherland's not bounded so.

What is the German's Fatherland?
Tell me at length the mighty land.
In noble Austria's realm it lies,
With honours rich and victories?
 Oh no, oh no!
 His Fatherland's not bounded so.

What is the German's Fatherland?
Tell me at length that mighty land,
Is it what Gallic fraud of yore,
From Kasier[2] and the empire tore?
 Oh no, oh no!
 His Fatherland's not bounded so.



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What is the German's Fatherland?
Tell me at length that mighty land,
'Tis there where German accents raise,
To God in heaven their songs of praise.
That shall it be
That German is the home for thee.

This is the German's Fatherland,
Where vows are sworn by press of hand,
Where truth in every forehead shines,
Where charity the heart inclines.
This shall it be,
This German is the home for thee.

This is the German's Fatherland,
Which Gallic vices dares withstand,
As enemies the wicked names,
Admits the good to friendship's claims.
This shall it be,
This German is the home for thee.

God! this for Fatherland we own,
Look down on us from heaven's high throne,
And give us ancient German spirit,
Its truth and valour to inherit.
This shall it be,
The whole united Germany.

H.

Of the author of this song some account was given in a preceding number of the *Mirror*. It was written on the same occasion as the *Patriot's Call*, when Napoleon invaded Germany, and was intended to tranquillize all petty feelings of jealousy between the separate German states. The translator believes that Messrs. Treuttel and Wuertz published this song in an English dress some few years since; he has, however, never seen a copy of that work.

[1] We suspect this to be the burthen of a beautiful Quintett which we heard sung *thrice* the other evening at Covent Garden Theatre, in Mr. Planche's pleasing "Romance of a Day."—ED.

[2] Emperor of Austria.



* * * * *

THE SELECTOR; AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

* * * * *

PLUNDER OF A SPANISH DILIGENCE.

(From the "Quarterly" Review, of "A Year in Spain." Unpublished.)

The author takes his seat about two in the morning in the cabriolet or front part of a diligence from Tarragona, and gives many amusing particulars concerning his fellow travellers, who, one after another, all surrender themselves to slumber. Thus powerfully invited by the examples of those near him, the lieutenant catches the drowsy infection, and having nestled snugly into his corner, soon loses entirely the realities of existence "in that mysterious state which Providence has provided as a cure for every ill." In short, he is indulged with a dream, which transports him into the midst of his own family circle beyond the Atlantic; but from this comfortable and sentimental nap he is soon aroused by the sudden stopping of the diligence, and a loud clamour all about him.



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There were voices without, speaking in accents of violence, and whose idiom was not of my country. I roused myself, rubbed my eyes, and directed them out of the windows. By the light of a lantern that blazed from the top of the diligence, I could discover that this part of the road was skirted by olive-trees, and that the mules, having come in contact with some obstacle to their progress, had been thrown into confusion, and stood huddled together, as if afraid to move, gazing upon each other, with pricked ears and frightened aspect. A single glance to the right-hand gave a clue to the mystery. Just beside the fore-wheel of the diligence stood a man, dressed in that wild garb of Valencia which I had seen for the first time in Amposta: his red cap, which flaunted far down his back, was in front drawn closely over his forehead; and his striped manta, instead of being rolled round him, hung unembarrassed from one shoulder. Whilst his left leg was thrown forward in preparation, a musket was levelled in his hands, along the barrel of which his eye glared fiercely upon the visage of the conductor. On the other side the scene was somewhat different. Pepe (the postilion) being awake when the interruption took place, was at once sensible of its nature. He had abandoned the reins, and jumped from his seat to the road-side, intending to escape among the trees. Unhappy youth, that he should not have accomplished his purpose! He was met by the muzzle of a musket when he had scarce touched the ground, and a third ruffian appearing at the same moment from the treacherous concealment of the very trees towards which he was flying, he was effectually taken, and brought round into the road, where he was made to stretch himself upon his face, as had already been done with the conductor.

I could now distinctly hear one of these robbers—for such they were—inquire in Spanish of the mayoral as to the number of passengers: if any were armed; whether there was any money in the diligence; and then, as a conclusion to the interrogatory, demanding *La bolsa!* in a more angry tone. The poor fellow meekly obeyed: he raised himself high enough to draw a large leathern purse from an inner pocket, and stretching his hand upward to deliver it, said, *Toma usted, caballero, pero no me quita usted la vida!* “Take it, cavalier; but do not take away my life!” The robber, however, was pitiless. Bringing a stone from a large heap, collected for the repair of the road, he fell to beating the mayoral upon the head with it. The unhappy man sent forth the most piteous cries for *misericordia* and *piedad*. He might as well have asked pity of that stone that smote him, as of the wretch who wielded it. In his agony he invoked *Jesu Christo, Santiago Apostol y Martir, La Virgin del Pilar*, and all those sacred names held in awful reverence by the people, and the most likely to arrest the rage of his assassin. All in vain: the murderer redoubled his blows, until, growing furious



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in the task, he laid his musket beside him, and worked with both hands upon his victim. The cries for pity which blows at first excited, blows at length quelled. They had gradually increased with the suffering to the most terrible shrieks; then declined into low and inarticulate moans; until a deep-drawn and agonized gasp for breath, and an occasional convulsion, alone remained to show that the vital principle had not yet departed.

It fared even worse with Pepe, though, instead of the cries for pity, which had availed the mayoral so little, he uttered nothing but low moans, that died away in the dust beneath him. One might have thought that the extreme youth of the lad would have ensured him compassion; but no such thing. The robbers were doubtless of Amposta; and, being known to him, dreaded discovery. When both the victims had been rendered insensible, there was a short pause, and a consultation in a low tone between the ruffians, who then proceeded to execute their plans. The first went round to the left side of the diligence, and, having unhooked the iron shoe and placed it under the wheel, as an additional security against escape, opened the door of the interior, and mounted on the steps. I could hear him distinctly utter a terrible threat in Spanish, and demand an ounce of gold from each of the passengers. This was answered by an expostulation from the Valencian shopkeeper, who said that they had not so much money, but what they had would be given willingly. There was then a jingling of purses, some pieces dropping on the floor in the hurry and agitation of the moment. Having remained a short time at the door of the interior, he did not come to the cabriolet, but passed at once to the rotunda. Here he used greater caution, doubtless from having seen the evening before, at Amposta, that it contained no women, but six young students, who were all stout fellows. They were made to come down, one by one, from their strong hold, deliver their money and watches, and then lie flat upon their faces in the road.

Meanwhile the second robber, after consulting with his companion, returned to the spot where the zagal Pepe lay rolling from side to side. As he went towards him, he drew a knife from the folds of his sash, and having opened it, placed one of his naked legs on either side of his victim. Pushing aside the jacket of the youth, he bent forward and dealt him repeated blows in every part of the body. The young priest, my companion, shrunk back shuddering into his corner, and hid his face within his trembling fingers; but my own eyes seemed spell-bound, for I could not withdraw them from the cruel spectacle, and my ears were more sensible than ever. Though the windows at the front and sides were still closed, I could distinctly hear each stroke of the murderous knife, as it entered its victim. It was not a blunt sound as of a weapon that meets with positive resistance, but a hissing noise, as if the household implement, made to part the bread of peace, performed unwillingly its task of treachery. This moment was the unhappiest of my life; and it struck me at the time, that if any situation could be more worthy of pity, than to die the dog's death of poor Pepe, it was to be compelled to witness his fate, without the power to aid him.

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Having completed the deed to his satisfaction, this cold-blooded murderer came to the door of the cabriolet, and endeavoured to open it. He shook it violently, calling to us to assist him; but it had chanced hitherto, that we had always got out on the other side, and the young priest, who had never before been in a diligence, thought, from the circumstance, that there was but one door, and therefore answered the fellow that he must go to the other side. On the first arrival of these unwelcome visitors, I had taken a valuable watch which I wore from my waistcoat pocket, and slipped it into my boot; but when they fell to beating in the heads of our guides, I bethought me that the few dollars I carried in my purse might not satisfy them, and replaced it again in readiness to be delivered at the shortest notice. These precautions were, however, unnecessary. The third ruffian, who had continued to make the circuit of the diligence with his musket in his hand, paused a moment in the road a-head of us, and having placed his head to the ground, as if to listen, presently came and spoke in an under tone to his companions. They stood for a moment over the mayoral, and struck his head with the butts of their muskets, whilst the fellow who had before used the knife returned to make a few farewell thrusts, and in another moment they had all disappeared from around us.

In consequence of the darkness, which was only partially dispelled in front of the diligence by the lantern, which had enabled me to see what occurred so immediately before me, we were not at once sensible of the departure of the robbers, but continued near half an hour after their disappearance in the same situation in which they left us. The short breathings and the chattering of teeth, lately so audible from within the interior, gradually subsided, and were succeeded by whispers of the females, and soon after by words pronounced in a louder tone; whilst our mangled guides, by groans and writhings, gave evidence of returning animation.

Our first care, when thus left to ourselves, was to see if anything could be done for our unfortunate guides. We found them rolling over in the dust, and moaning inarticulately, excepting that the conductor would occasionally murmur forth some of those sainted names whose aid he had vainly invoked in the moment of tribulation. Having taken down the light from the top of the coach, we found them so much disfigured with bruises and with blood, that recognition would have been impossible. The finery of poor Pepe, his silver buttons and his sash of silk, were scarcely less disfigured than his features. There happened to be in our party a student of medicine, who now took the lead in the Samaritan office of binding, with pieces of linen and pocket handkerchiefs, the wounds of these unhappy men.

The wounded men were at length placed in a cart, and sent back slowly to Amposta, the mayoral showing some signs of returning sensibility, but the unfortunate Pepe evidently in his last agony. The diligence proceeded on its route, and stopped to breakfast at Vinaroz.

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The kitchen of the posada at Vinaroz offered a scene of unusual confusion. The hostess was no other than the mother of Pepe, a very decent-looking Catalan woman, who, I understood, had been sent there the year before by the Diligence Company, which is concerned in all the inns at which their coaches stop throughout the line. She had already been told of the probable fate of her son, and was preparing to set off for Amposta in the deepest affliction; and yet her sorrow, though evidently real, was singularly combined with her habitual household cares. The unusual demand for breakfast by fourteen hungry passengers had created some little confusion, and the poor woman, instead of leaving these matters to take care of themselves, felt the force of habit, and was issuing a variety of orders to her assistant; nor was she unmindful of her appearance, but had already changed her frock and stockings, and thrown on her mantilla, preparatory to departure. It was indeed a singular and piteous sight to see the poor perplexed woman changing some fish that were frying, lest they should be burnt on one side, adjusting and repinning her mantilla, and sobbing and crying all the while. When the man came, however, to say that the mule was in readiness, every thing was forgotten but the feelings of the mother, and she hurried off in deep and unsuppressed affliction.

We may as well add here the catastrophe of this tragical tale. From information received by the Lieutenant, after his arrival in Madrid, it appears that poor Pepe breathed his last about eight hours after the attack, and long before his widowed mother could arrive to close the eyes of her child. The mayoral lingered for about a week, and then shared the fate of Pepe. The three robbers were detected and taken into custody; two of them were townsmen, and all three acquaintances of Pepe, whom they had doubtless murdered to prevent discovery. We ourselves passed over the scene of the robbery between two and three years after the event: there were two crosses to mark the bloody spot. The mayoral and the zagal of our diligence, the successors of those who had been murdered, pointed to the crosses with the *sang froid* with which Spaniards, from long habitude, contemplate mementos of the kind. The mayoral showed the very place where his predecessor had been beaten to death. On our expressing horror at the detail he readily concurred, though he appeared more indignant at the manner in which the crime had been committed than at the crime itself. "It is the ugliest thing (*lo mas feo*) that has been done in this neighbourhood for a long time past. Look you, sir, to shoot a man with a blunderbuss, or to stab him with a knife, is quite another kind of business; but to beat his brains out with a stone is to treat him, not like a Christian, but a dog!" It was evident that a frequent occurrence of such scenes had rendered the mayoral a critic in the art of murder.

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WIT.

Wit is the mind's chief judge, which doth control.
Of Fancy's court the judgments false and vain,
Will holds the royal sceptre in the soul,
And on the passions of the heart doth reign.

DAVIS.

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THE TOPOGRAPHER.

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TRAVELLING NOTES IN SOUTH WALES.

Gower,
Again receive me!—Let me greet
Thy “breezy hills, and soft retiring dales”—
Thy hoary ruins, monuments of old—
Thy headlands dark, and rocks stupendous,
That battle with the elements, and fiercely,
Bound old Ocean's empire.

History of the District of Gower, &c.

The peninsula which forms the western extremity of the county of Glamorgan is called Gower, derived from the Welsh *Gwyr*. The circumference of the district is about fifty miles: a slight reference to the map will explain its peculiar form better than any description we could give. The northern boundary extended east from the river Nedd, or Neath (of course including Swansea) to the Loughor, which runs into the large estuary, called the Burry River, and forms its western boundary, dividing the counties of Glamorgan and Carmarthen.

The history of Gower is interesting. It may not be out of place, however, to preface it with an outline of the history of Glamorgan. This county was conquered by the Romans, who had numerous stations in different parts, and also in the district of Gower, the traces of which still exist. Glamorgan is originally supposed to have extended from the river Tawy to Gloucester Bridge, including, besides the present county, the whole of Monmouthshire, and portions of the counties of Brecon, Hereford, and Gloucester. The Welsh princes of Glamorgan commenced paying tribute to the English in the reign of Edgar,—which was the cause of endless aggressions and disputes between them and



the independent princes of North Wales, who claimed this right. The county was made a conquest about the end of the eleventh century, by Sir Robert Fitzhamon (a relation of Henry I.) whose aid had been first called in by one of the petty princes of Glamorgan, in some of the intestine feuds which agitated South Wales. Fitzhamon, after entirely defeating the Welsh, kept Cardiff Castle and the surrounding district in his own possession, and divided the rest of the county amongst twelve Norman knights, his principal followers—between whom and the inhabitants of the hills there long existed a sort of Guerilla warfare. The Normans were almost obliged to confine themselves to their castles in consequence; and the Welsh joined Owen Glendower, when he invaded Glamorgan, for which they afterwards suffered heavily. It was not till the reign of Henry VIII. that Wales became tranquillized.

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The population of the county of Glamorgan, in 1821, comprised 101,727 persons.

To return to Gower. The first English or Norman conqueror of this lordship was Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, who, in the reign of Henry I. (1099), progressively defeated and drove out the sons of Caradoc ap Jestyn, the Welsh possessors of Gower; and to secure his conquest, built the castles of Swansea, Loughor, Llanridian, Penrice, &c. He is represented, like most of the feudal barons, as ruling with an iron hand. A few years after this conquest (1108), the peninsula was settled by a colony of Flemings, who had been obliged to emigrate, in consequence of a disastrous encroachment of the sea in the Low Countries. They first landed on the southern coast of England; but, on account of their lawless conduct, Henry I. drove them into South Wales; and they principally fixed themselves in Gower, where they became peaceable subjects; though a great number settled in the peninsula of Castle Martin, in Pembrokeshire, which bears a striking similarity in its natural features to Gower. Afterwards they mixed with the English, preserving their native manners and industry, and involved in disputes with the Welsh resembling the ancient Border warfare in the North. To this day the inhabitants of Gower are distinct from the Welsh, and all speak the English language. We were informed, and it is a remarkable fact, that in the southwestern portion of Gower, some of the descendants of the original colonists exist, who do not understand the Welsh language, rarely intermarry with them, and are otherwise distinguished by their dress and peculiar dialect. These people, who have thus successively, for more than seven centuries, preserved almost unmingled the manners of their progenitors, manufacture lace of the same fabric as that of Flanders. In the reign of Henry II. Thomas de Newburgh, son of Henry Earl of Warwick, the conqueror of Gower, parted with the lordship to the crown. King John, in the fourth year of his reign, granted the "whole land of Gower" to one of his favourites, William de Braose, created Lord of Gower, "to be held by the service of one knight's fee" and it continued in his family till the reign of Edward II. It afterwards passed, by marriage, to Sir Charles Somerset, an ancestor of the Duke of Beaufort, who now is hereditary lord paramount of the liberty of seignory of Gower, and possesses considerable property therein. Gower had distinct privileges, and was separate from Glamorgan till the reign of Henry VIII., when, by act of parliament, it was annexed to that county.

Gower is rich in memorials of the olden times, as will appear by the sequel to the present paper—those strongholds of ancient despotism, which, by their very ruin, tell of the nothingness of man's power and ambition. We append the following observations of Mr. Britton, who has done more to make the study of antiquities popular, it has been truly observed, than all other antiquaries, past and present, put together.



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They do honour to his head and heart. After stating that “the subject is replete with amusement on all occasions, and intense interest on many,” the author goes on: “I will venture to entreat my countrymen, whenever and wherever they have power, to protect the remaining antiquities from further demolition or defacement. Every castle, abbey, cathedral, fine church, and old mansion, is a monument and memento of a former age, and of former persons;—they are so many indexes to memorable events, to heroes, statesmen, patriots, and philosophers. Architectural antiquities are objects and evidences of incalculable value and interest; whilst standing—however mutilated—they are indications of the vicissitudes and fluctuations of civilized society;—they show man in his domestic economy, and in his historical relations. The person, therefore, who protects one fine work of antiquity, is entitled to the applause of his contemporaries, and of posterity;—he who destroys, or heedlessly neglects it, deserves the reprobation of the civilized world. As Dr. Stukely indignantly hung, in graphic effigy, the man who wantonly broke up the vast and wondrous Celtic Temple of Abury, so every other similar delinquent should be condemned to the literary gibbet. The miserable fanatic who fired York Cathedral is properly incarcerated for life, and thus prevented from doing further public mischief; but there are other fanatics still roaming at large, and permitted to commit devastations on cathedrals and other churches—on castles, old mansions, &c.” “Such men, should not be trusted.”

VYVYAN.

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MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

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ST. NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

This is a local custom, very faithfully kept in many parts of the two northern counties. Early in the morning of the first of January, the *Fax-populi* assemble together, carrying *stangs* and baskets. Any inhabitant, stranger, or whoever joins not this ruffian tribe in sacrificing to their favourite Saint Day, if unfortunate enough to be met by any of the band, is immediately mounted across the stang (if a woman, she is basketed), and carried, shoulder high, to the nearest public-house, where the payment of sixpence immediately liberates the prisoner. No respect is paid to any person; the cobbler on that day thinks himself equal to the parson, who generally gets mounted like the rest of his flock; whilst one of his porters *boasts and prides himself* in having but just before got the *'Squire* across the pole. None, though ever so industriously inclined, are permitted to follow their respective avocations on that day.

J.G.B.

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MARRIAGE FEES.

At Northwich, in the county of Cheshire, a whimsical privilege is ascribed, by the charter of that church, to the senior scholar of the Grammar-school: namely—that he is to receive marriage fees to the same amount as the clerk; or, in lieu thereof, the bride's garters.



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J.G.B.

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ORIGIN OF THE PINE CALLED WHITE-HART SILVER.

Blackmoor Forest, at the spring of the Froome, was once called the Forest of White Hart, and at that time the seat of royalty, and greatly preferred by our kings, on account of the deer with which it abounded. King Henry III., with a mighty train of hunters, having one day entered on the chase in this neighbourhood, roused a milk-white hart. The creature afforded his Majesty so much sport, that at the pulling down, it was the royal pleasure to save the beast, and place round his neck a collar of brass, on which was engraved,

“I am a royal hart, let no one harm me.”

But the king and his retinue having run over and spoiled the lands of a gentleman of the county, named *Thomas de la Linde*, and refusing, upon remonstrance, to make good the injury, *De la Linde* imprudently resolved to spite King Henry; when, joining with others, he hunted the white hart, and having run it down, foolishly took the life of the king's favourite; and making merry over its haunches, was heard in his cups to utter many disrespectful speeches towards his sovereign, which were conveyed to Henry, who presently convinced *De la Linde* of his presumption, and so highly resented the indignity, that he made every one concerned in the death of the noble animal pay into his exchequer an annual fine, called “White Hart Silver,” which was not remitted during the reign of that monarch. This is also the origin of the White Hart for a sign at the different inns and houses of entertainment throughout England.

J.G.B.

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WHITSUNTIDE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

One of the most strange customs which time has handed down to us, prevails at St. Briavel's, in Gloucestershire. On Whit Sunday, several baskets full of bread and cheese, cut into small squares of about an inch each, are brought into the church; and immediately after divine service is ended, the churchwardens, or some other persons, take them into the galleries, from whence their contents are thrown amongst the congregation, who have a grand scramble for it in the body of the church, which occasions as great a tumult and uproar as the amusement of a village wake, the inhabitants being always extremely anxious in their attendance at worship on this day.



This custom is held for the purpose of preserving to the poor of St. Briavel's and Hewelfield, the right of cutting and carrying away wood from three thousand acres of coppice land, in Hudknolls and the Meends; and for which every housekeeper is assessed twopence, to buy the bread and cheese given away.

J.G.B.

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DRESSING THE CHRISTMAS TREE IN GERMANY.



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(From a Correspondent.)

This is performed with great ceremony and mystery, on Christmas Eve, by the elders of the family, without the knowledge of the younger members. They deck a large evergreen with presents of various kinds: to toys, bonbons, and such trifles, are added things of more value and use—working materials for the girls, knives, &c. for the boys, and books of amusement and instruction for both. Little tapers are attached to the branches of the shrub; and at break of day the children are roused from their slumber, and when all are ready (for no one is allowed to enter singly) they are admitted into the room, where the illuminated tree greets their eyes. Great is the anxiety of the young party to see who has been provided for, since the idea they are taught to entertain is, that these tempting objects are bestowed by an invisible agent, as a reward for good children, and that the naughty and ill-conducted will find no share allotted to them.

Hebel, in one of his pretty, simple poems, describes a mother sitting by her sleeping child, as she prepares its morning surprise. She enumerates the various gifts she hangs on the tree, pausing in her pleasing task as a moral reflection is suggested by any of the objects she has collected, and concluding by a prayer for the future welfare of her darling. Would not the Christmas-tree be a pleasant addition to our juvenile amusements? The Twelfth-night King and Queen might plant such a one in their royal domain, and graciously conclude their merry reign by distributing amongst those who have served them as liege subjects for the evening, the motley *fruits* that grace it. Each should be previously marked to correspond with the character to be drawn, which would secure a token of their majesties' favour for each individual of the sportive train.

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

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ST. JOHN LONG

Has distanced the majesty of British justice in the persons of the coroner, the bailiffs, and the Bow-street magistrates, after all. We knew that he would do so; but in this we take no possible credit to ourselves, for every one knew that he would do so. Public opinion is, we must confess, still divided as to the place of his retreat, some pronouncing it America, where his purpose is, to set up a bank with Rowland Stephenson; others, New South Wales, by a natural and pleasant anticipation; and others, Paris, which of late years has superseded Philadelphia, and even New York, as the general receptacle of "the unfortunate brave," the asylum of those men of genius, who have too much talent to live in England, the favoured spot of regeneration for those

brilliant speculators whose conceptions equally outrun their credit and their age.
However, the majority are clearly for Paris; and the objects of the visit are said to be

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political, and not personal. The friends of the ex-ministers, it is understood, have succeeded in engaging him; and he is about to put in operation a very extensive system of *counter-irritation* among the *canaille* of the French capital. Should his exertions be attended with success, he will, on his return, be retained by the Home-office, and despatched into the disturbed districts to *counter-irritate* the erring disciples of "Swing."

On the whole, we are convinced that St. John Long will be seriously missed at the West-end. His house was a pleasant lounge; his chocolate was unimpeachable, whatever his honesty might be; no one could ever question the strength of his coffee, whatever might be surmised of his science; and the sandwiches which promenaded the rooms regularly every half-hour, were a triumphant answer to all the aspersions that his patients lived upon air. We have no doubt that it was a much pleasanter place than the bazaars, to which such hosts of old peeresses order their carriages every day at one, with such matchless punctuality, to buy sixpence-worth of ribbon, and kill three hours. To this, St. John Long's promenade was a paradise. The comfortable manner in which all the comforts of the old ladies were provided for; the pleasantries arising from the nature of the scene between the various *rubbed*: the files of young women, with their mouths fixed to gas-pipes, and imbibing all sorts of vapours; and, never to be forgotten in the catalogue of attractions, the men of all ages who came to learn the art of being cured of all calamities, that of the purse inclusive. Then, too, St. John's own judicious generosity; the presents of invaluable snuff, of first-growth Champagne, of Mocha coffee to one, and of gunpowder tea to another, showed a knowledge of women and human nature, that must, but for the malice of justice, inevitably have led to fortune. What will now become of the countess, who led her daughters to this palace of Hygeia as regularly as the day came; and with a spirit worthy of the great cause, declared that, if she had twenty daughters, she would take every one of them every day to the same place, for the same rubbing? What will become of the heavy hours of him who declared St. John's gas a qualification for the Cabinet, and that a sick minister applying to this dispenser of all virtue, would be on his legs in the House, and making a victorious speech within the twenty-four hours? What will become of the battalion of beauties who, at every puff of the gas-pipe, ran to their mirrors, and received the congratulations of the surrounding dandies, or the revived carnation of their cheeks? "Othello's occupation's o'er." But a St. John Long, of some kind or other, is so essential to the West-end world, that a successor must be rapidly erected in his room. Every age has its St. John Long, formed by the mere necessities of the opulent and idle. A new Perkins, with a packet of metallic tractors on a new scale



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would be extremely acceptable in any handsome street in the neighbourhood of Grosvenor-square. Animal magnetism would thrive prodigiously between this and the dust-months, when London is left to the guardsmen and the cab-drivers; and when, as Lady Jersey says, nobody who is anybody is to be seen in the streets from morning till night, that is, from three till six. But the true man of success would be Dr. Graham, of famous memory; the heir of his talents would make a fortune in any season of the year; and now that St. John Long has vacated the throne, nothing could be more favourable for his ambition, than to take advantage of the interregnum, and make himself monarch of charlatanry without loss of time.—From “Notes of the Month,” by far the most piquant portion of the *Monthly Mag.*

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FLOWERS IN A ROOM OF SICKNESS.

“I desire, as I look on these, the ornaments and children of Earth, to know whether, indeed, such things I shall see no more!—whether they have no likeness, no archetype in the world in which my future home is to be cast? or whether they *have* their images above, only wrought in a more wondrous and delightful mould.”—*Conversations with an Ambitious Student in Ill Health.*

Bear them not from grassy dells,
Where wild bees have honey-cells;
Not from where sweet water-sounds
Thrill the green wood to its bounds;
Not to waste their scented breath
On the silent room of Death!

Kindred to the breeze they are,
And the glow-worm’s emerald star,
And the bird, whose song is free,
And the many-whispering tree;
Oh! too deep a love, and vain,
They would win to Earth again!

Spread them not before the eyes,
Closing fast on summer skies!
Woo then not the spirit back,
From its lone and viewless track,
With the bright things which have birth
Wide o’er all the coloured Earth!



With the violet's breath would rise
Thoughts too sad for her who dies;
From the lily's pearl-cup shed,
Dreams too sweet would haunt her bed;
Dreams of youth—of spring-time eves—
Music—beauty—all she leaves!

Hush! 'tis *thou* that dreaming art,
Calmer is *her* gentle heart.
Yes! o'er fountain, vale, and grove,
Leaf and flower, hath gush'd her love;
But that passion, deep and true,
Knows not of a last adieu.

Types of lovelier forms than these,
In her fragile mould she sees;
Shadows of yet richer things,
Borne beside immortal springs,
Into fuller glory wrought,
Kindled by surpassing thought!

Therefore, in the lily's leaf,
She can read no word of grief;
O'er the woodbine she can dwell,
Murmuring not—Farewell! farewell!
And her dim, yet speaking eye,
Greets the violet solemnly.



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Therefore, once, and yet again,
 Strew them o'er her bed of pain;
 From her chamber take the gloom,
 With a light and flush of bloom:
 So should one depart, who goes
 Where no Death can touch the Rose!

New Monthly Magazine.

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STANZAS.

Oh! ask me not to sing to-night,

Oh! ask me not to sing to-night
 Dejection chills my feeble powers,
 I own thy halls of glittering light
 Are festive as in former hours.
 But when I last amid them moved,
 I sung for friends beloved and dear,
 Their smiles inspired, their lips approved,
 Now all is changed—they are not here.

I gaze around—I view a throng,
 The radiant slaves of pride and art.
 Oh! can *they* prize my simple song,
 The soft low breathings of the, heart?
 Take back the lute, its tuneful string
 Is moisten'd by a sorrowing tear,
 To-night, I may not, cannot sing
 The friends that love me are not here!

Ibid.

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THE LATE MADAME DE GENLIS.

The following smart account of the late Madame de Genlis, is translated from that very piquant French paper the Figaro of the 4th January:—

She nearly died the day she came into the world; a mere chance saved her; and the noble lady lived eighty-five years. What a misfortune, not only for the Ducrest and the



Genlis, if the clumsy Bailiff who sat down in the arm-chair where the infant prodigy had been left by the careless nurse, had crushed under the ample and heavy development of his various femoral muscles, the hope of French literature! The concussion would have despoiled us of a hundred volumes, and Heaven can witness what volumes! History in romances; morality in proverbs; and religion in comedies. This is what the world of letters would have lost,—society would have lost a very different thing.

Such a nose as never was possessed before; a nose modelled by Love himself, and celebrated by ten court poets, and which the censor of praise was as unable to improve as a certain tumble which its owner had in infancy. Hands the most beautiful that could be, and which Madame de Genlis put up for exhibition during twenty years, upon the strings of a harp, now passed into a proverb. A form without fault, and which made the delight of the Palais Royal parties in the open air. A foot, alike triumphant at the Court and at the *Porcherons*. Eyes capable of making an impression upon the running footman of M. de Brancas, and of an innumerable crowd of dukes, lawyers, officers, and men of letters. A genius!—oh! for her genius, if she had not been encumbered with so much modesty, Madame de Genlis would have shone by it alone in the *first* rank; through feminine modesty she remained in the second.



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Philosophy may breathe again. The author of “The Evenings at the Castle” was the Attila of philosophers;—she crushed Voltaire, considering him as a *mauvais sujet*; pursued Diderot and d’Alembert; breasted Rousseau; refuted the Encyclopaedia; and was always of the party in favour of the Altar and the Throne, excepting only the clay when the revolution of 1789 commenced.

Foul-mouthed people allege Madame de Genlis to have been a great coquette, which, is a calumny. She was virtue itself. No doubt she was the object of rude assaults; public declarations, scenes of despair, disguises, eulogies in verse, madrigals in prose—all were employed to seduce her affections; but she resisted always. To revenge her cruelty, they attacked her morals, and epigrams rained on her. She replied by her Memoirs—rather diffuse confessions, which Lavocat (the publisher) contrived to dilute further—but edifying, and which have demonstrated that if Mad. de Genlis was not canonized in her life-time, it was because there is no longer any religion to speak of, or that she neglected to cultivate interest with the Pope.

One poet had the audacity to put up Madame de Genlis’ honour at the Exchange for a dollar; the ladies of the Directory exclaimed against this; the Countess herself said nothing: she despised the exaggeration which nobody could credit. In truth, Madame de Genlis was quite as good as the particular Queen, whose modesty was only to fall before the millions of a Cardinal-Duke.

Mirabeau boasted, in one of his letters, that he had communicated his own tenderness to the charming tigress; but Mirabeau was a vain, good-for-nothing coxcomb, and the boudoir on four wheels which he presented as the theatre of his triumph, was a horrible invention. The proof is, that Madame de Genlis says nothing whatever about it in her Memoirs. Posterity should be just towards the illustrious Countess, and accept, as sincere, her revelations. Let us, then, consider her as the most virtuous of women; as the least arrogant; the most sensible; the most learned; for all, in fine, that she desired to appear; for Madame de Genlis never said what was untrue; she solemnly declares so.

Madame de Genlis had a talent that was very dear to her, but the title of a good housewife was that she coveted above all the rest. I can never forget the following circumstance, exemplifying the *naïf* vanity of the pretension to be without pretension, which the noble lady sometimes assumed. I was anxious to see this celebrated person, and wrote to ask the favour of a brief interview. She appointed the following day. At twelve o’clock I presented myself;—Madame de Genlis was writing; she laid down her pen, and obligingly offered me a seat, then said—“Allow me, sir, to finish my *pot an feu*; above being a woman of letters, I value myself as a good housewife.” And the Countess scraped the carrots and the leeks, tied them up, put them into the soup-kettle, skimmed the meat, and neither forgot cloves nor fried onions. Then taking off her kitchen apron, came with very good grace to offer herself to my curiosity. We talked upon art and literature; and I must say that she did not speak of her harp more than

twice, of her talent for acting more than once, or of her facility of writing—very much more than six times.



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Madame de Genlis died almost suddenly, and was employing herself as usual, when death struck her. She leaves two works, which will, no doubt, be published as soon as a bookseller is found to put them together, and idlers seem disposed to read them. The King offered her rooms in the Tuileries, and she had replied to his gracious proposal the evening before she died.

Louis Philip never forgot his preceptor—Madame de Genlis is said to have had some desire to be forgotten by her pupil.—*New Monthly Magazine*.

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FINE ARTS.

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EXHIBITION OF THE WORKS OF LIVING ARTISTS AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTION, PALL-MALL.

(From a Correspondent.)

This attractive Exhibition opened for the season on Monday, the 31st ult., and contains five hundred and fifty-two works of art. The display of pictures is certainly very splendid; and, as no portraits are admitted, the respective artists have employed their talents in representing pleasing and interesting subjects, some of which contain high poetical feeling—while others possess the power of raising our risibility by their novelty and genuine humour—a valuable quality in painting, to attain which, the artist treads an extremely difficult path. We must now select a few of the most sparkling gems of the collection.

No. 1. Lavinia, from Thomson's Seasons, painted by Sir Martin Archer Shee, is a chaste production. Lavinia is portrayed as a perfect rustic beauty.

3. A subject from. "The Lost Pleiad" of Miss L.E.L. is beautifully embodied by Henry Howard, R.A.

12. Part of the Corn-market at Caen, formerly the Church of St. Sauveur; painted by Roberts, in his peculiar and fascinating style.

36. The Auld Friends—

"Then here's a fig for snarling time,
Wi' features long and grim,
Come prime the cup, my gude auld friend,
And pledge me brim to brim."



Painted carefully by J.P. Knight, son of the late comedian.

59. Titania, Puck, and Bottom; by Mr. Partridge. This is a commanding work, and extremely rich in the colouring. The Queen of the Fairies is represented reposing on a grassy bed, and near her is seated the formidable Bottom, in his ludicrous metamorphosis: he is placed in such a situation, that her majesty must see him before any other object when she *awakes*. At a little distance Puck is displayed laughing at the trick he has played on the queen, and seems to anticipate with delight the amusement that is to ensue.

95. Falstaff's Assignation with Mrs. Ford—from the Merry Wives of Windsor—is remarkably delicate in the execution, possesses good colouring, and is altogether creditable to the painter, Mr. Clint.

153. Interior of the Painted Hall. Greenwich Hospital; by John S. Davis. This is an admirable specimen of rising genius, as it contains much knowledge of perspective, and great correctness in the distribution of light and shade.—Some portraits, and a statue of Nelson, are judiciously introduced.



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229. Teniers Painting the Temptation of St. Anthony; executed by Mr. Fraser, in a masterly manner.

447. Mount St. Michael; a magnificent production by Stanfield. The water is inimitable, possessing that beautiful greenish transparency so peculiar to the sea.

462. The Interior of Mr. Pinney's Gallery, Pall Mall; by Mr. Novice.—This is doubtless an arduous undertaking; the artist has evinced much skill in the arrangement of the various objects of the piece, and the effect is forcible and good. There is another representation of a picture-gallery in the exhibition No. 345, but we think it wants effect.

We are sorry that we can *only allude* to the names of several other excellent artists. They must not infer, however, that we fail to appreciate their merits; on the contrary, we would most gladly appropriate our time to the extension of this notice, were we permitted sufficient space, for to do ample justice would occupy several pages. Madame Comolera, Miss E. Drummond, and Miss Hague, deserve attention; as do Messrs. Clater, Fradelle, Hart, Edmondstone, Chisholme, Deane, Wilson, Brough, Stanley, Reinagle, and Webster.

Feb. 1, 1831.

G.W.N.

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NOTES OF A READER.

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ROYAL EQUIVOQUE.

(From the Life and Reign of George IV.)

A well-known individual, some time deceased, who was admitted to the prince's familiarity upon his first entrance into life, and for several years after, described or rather dramatized with much humour a scene which he professed to have had from the prince himself. So much depends upon tone and manner, that the spirit of these pleasantries evaporates on paper. The story was in substance as follows:—A new suit, destined for a ball that night at Cumberland-house, was brought home to the prince, but ordered back by him for the purpose of undergoing immediate alterations. He gave directions that the tailor's return with it should be instantly made known to him. The prince happened to pass the early part of the evening with the king and queen at Buckingham-house. Whilst he was seated in the royal group, a German page entered, and pronounced in a tone meant for his particular ear, but loud enough to be heard by every



one present, "Please your royal highness, *she* is come." There was a moment's awful pause. "Who is come?" said his royal highness, in a tone between surprise, embarrassment, and anger. "Sir, *she* is come," repeated the page, with his bad English and German phlegm. "Eh! what, what! who is come?" exclaimed the king. "*She*, your majesty," reiterated the unmoved German. "She is come!" cried the queen, bursting with wrath, and supposing that the visiter was one of the house of Luttrell, who already sought an undue influence over the prince. All was for a moment inexplicable confusion. The queen summoned another page, and asked him with fury in her looks, "*Who* is *she* that dares inquire for the Prince of Wales?" "Please your majesty," said the second oracle, "it is *Shea*, his royal highness's tailor."—*Dr. Lardner's Cabinet Library*, vol. ii.



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THE PRINCE OF WALES AND MRS. FITZHERBERT.

He had now formed an attachment of no common kind to a lady, whose name at this period came frequently before the public associated with his. A veil of ambiguity or mystery covered, and still covers, the relations of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert. She received all the respect and exercised all the influence which could belong to rank, character, accomplishments, and manners, in the highest class of society in this country daring her intimacy with the prince, and after their separation; and she is still living, surrounded, in her advanced years, with all the consideration which could do honour to the decline of a life the most estimable. Mrs. Fitzherbert was first married at sixteen, and had still all the graces of beauty and youth on the death of Colonel Fitzherbert. She was brought up abroad, with every advantage of a costly and consummate education. Her beauty had that soft and touching character, the result of fair complexion and blue eyes which distinguishes Englishwomen abroad, and obtained her the appellation of the angelic English *blonde*. The cousin of Lord Sefton, and related to other distinguished families, she lived in a sphere of society in London which necessarily made her acquainted with the Prince of Wales. He became enamoured, declared his passion, and was the cause of her retiring to the continent to avoid his importunities. Having remained abroad about three years, she returned to England in 1784. The prince on her return declared the continuance and repeated the sincerity of his attachment, with, it would appear, more success. Their intimacy for some time was known only to the initiated in high life; they moved and met in the same society, apparently on terms rather of formal than familiar acquaintance. The secret was divulged shortly before the prince's quarrel with the king, and base advantage was taken of it to wound the private feelings of the prince where manly feelings are the most vulnerable. She was of a Catholic family, herself a Catholic; and this was easily turned against the Prince of Wales, at a period of religious bigotry, and political alarm, especially in the mind of George III.—*Ibid.*

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A GREAT SLEEPER.

The Stadtholder, who had recently fled from Holland, was also the prince's guest, and afforded amusement by the whimsical incongruity with which he chose his occasions for going to sleep. The princess commanded a play for his entertainment: in spite of her vivacity and utmost efforts, he slept and snored in the box beside her, and was roused with some difficulty when the curtain fell. A ball having been given in compliment to him at the Castle-tavern, he fell asleep whilst eating his supper, and snored so loud as to disturb the harmony of the orchestra and the decorum of the assembly. His Dutch



highness was also entertained, if the term in this instance be admissible, with a grand masquerade, and was perplexed by the difficulty of resolving in what dress or character he should attend it. The Prince of Wales said he might go as *an old woman*.—*Ibid*.



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PRIVATE MEMOIRS OF GEORGE III.

It was well known to be the habit of Geo. III. to write in various folios, for an hour after he rose in the morning. This practice was not obviously consistent with his want of facility and taste in any sort of composition; but his manuscripts were only registers of names, with notes annexed of the services, the offences, and the characters, as he judged them, of the respective persons. "In addition," says a publication of 1779 "*to the numerous private registers always kept by the king*, and written with his own hand, he has lately kept another, of all those Americans who have either left the country voluntarily rather than submit to the rebels, and also of such as have been driven out by force; with an account of their losses and services." It is somewhat cruel to lay bare "the bosomed secrets" of any man, even after the grave has closed upon his passions and weaknesses; but if these registers of George III. still exist, and should ever come to light, they will be as curious private memoirs as have ever appeared: they doubtless promoted the remembrance and compensation of losses and services; but they also produced his petty long-cherished resentments, less hurtful to their objects than injurious to his own character and torturing to his breast.—*Ibid.*

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.
SHAKSPEARE.

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SUPPOSED POSTHUMOUS WORK OF DR. JOHNSON'S.

An Ode written April 15, 1786.

St. Paul's deep bell, from stately tower,
Had sounded once and twice the hour—
Blue burnt the midnight taper;
Hags their dark spells o'er cauldrons hewed,
While Sons of Ink their work pursued,
Printing "the Morning Paper."

Say, Herald, Chronicle, or Post,
Which then beheld great Johnson's ghost,
Grim, horrible, and squalid?



Compositors their letters dropt,
Pressmen their printing engines stopt,
And devils all grew pallid.

Enough! the spectre cried, Enough!
No more of your fugacious stuff,
Trite anecdotes and stories!
Rude martyrs of Sam. Johnson's name,
You rob him of his honest fame,
And tarnish all his glories.

First in the fertile tribe is seen
Tom Tyres, in the Magazine,
That teaser of Apollo!
With goose-quill he, like desperate knife,
Slices, as Vauxhall beef, my life,
And calls the town to swallow.

The cry once up, the dogs of news,
Who hunt for paragraphs the stews,
Yelp out "*Johnsoniana!*"
Their nauseous praise but moves my bile,
Like tartar, carduus, camomile,
Or ipecacuanha.



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Next Boswell comes, for 'twas my lot
To find at last *one* honest Scot
With constitutional veracity;
Yet garrulous he tells too much,
On fancied failings prone to touch
With sedulous loquacity.

At length, Job's patience it would try,
Brewed on my lees comes "*Thrale's Entrie*,"
Straining to draw my picture;
For *she* a common-place book kept,
"*Johnson at Streatluim dined and slept*,"
And who shall contradict her?

Thrale lost midst fiddles and sopranos,
With them plays fortes and pianos,
Adagio and allegro.
I loved Thrale's widow and Thrale's wife
But now, believe—to write my life!
I'd rather trust my negro.

I gave the public works of merit,
Written with vigour, fraught with spirit,
Applause crowned all my labours;
But thy delusive pages speak
My palsied powers, exhausted, weak,
The scoff of friends and neighbours.

They speak me insolent and rude,
Light, trivial, puerile, and crude,
The child of pride and vanity.
Poor Tuscan-like improvisation
Is but of English sense castration,
And infantine inanity.

Such idle rhymes, like Sybil's leaves,
Kindly the scattering winds receive—
The gatherer proves a scorner.
But hold! I see the coming day!
The spectre said—and stalked away,
To sleep in Poet's Corner.

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WORSE AND WORSE.

Doctor Perne happening to call a clergyman a fool, who was not totally undeserving of the title, but who resented the indignity so highly, that he threatened to complain to his diocesan, the Bishop of Ely, "Do so," says the Doctor, "and he will confirm you."

J.G.B.

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UNPARALLELED RIDING.

In 1603, one John Lepton, of Reprich, Esq., in the county of York, undertook to ride five several times betwixt London and York in six days, to be taken in one week, between Monday morning and Saturday night: he began his journey on Monday morning, and finished it on the Friday after, to the great admiration of all.—*Old History*.

T. GILL.

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