

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction

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Contents

The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	4
Page 1.....	5
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	8
Page 4.....	9
Page 5.....	10
Page 6.....	12
Page 7.....	14
Page 8.....	16
Page 9.....	18
Page 10.....	20
Page 11.....	22
Page 12.....	23
Page 13.....	25
Page 14.....	27
Page 15.....	28
Page 16.....	30
Page 17.....	32
Page 18.....	34
Page 19.....	36
Page 20.....	38
Page 21.....	40
Page 22.....	41



[Page 23.....42](#)
[Page 24.....43](#)
[Page 25.....45](#)



Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.		1
ANCIENT PARLIAMENTS.		5
ANCIENT BOROUGH OF LYDFORD.		6
A WORD FOR THE READERS OF THE MIRROR.		6
SONG.		7
WRITING INK.		7
SONG.		8
MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.		8
THE SELECTOR, AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.		10
ANATOMY OF SOCIETY.		12
THE NATURALIST.		15
SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.		16
FROM THE SPANISH.		18
THE SLAVE SHIP, A GALLEY YARN.		19
SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.		21
THE GATHERER.		24
EPITAPH ON STERNE.		24
FASTING.		25
ANNUAL OF SCIENCE.		25



Page 1

THE MIRROR OF LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

Vol. 17, No. 484.] Saturday, April 9, 1831. [Price 2d.

* * * * *

[Illustration: *Corfe castle.*]

Corfe castle.

The annexed Engravings are an interesting page in the early history of our country, and deserve all the space we have appropriated to them. Their political notoriety, of much less interesting character, we leave to be set down, said, sung, or set aside, elsewhere.

Corfe Castle nearly adjoins a town of the same name: both are situate in the Isle of Purbeck; and their histories are so incorporated, that we shall not attempt their separation.

The town, according to the *Beauties of England and Wales*, vol. iv. p. 386, is nearly in the centre of the Isle, at the foot of a range of hills, on a rising ground, declining to the east. Its origin must undoubtedly be attributed to the Castle, which existed previous to the year 980; though the town itself does not appear to have attained any importance till after the Conquest, as it was wholly unnoticed in the Domesday Book. The Manor and Castle seem always to have descended together, and were often granted to princes of the blood, and the favourites of our kings, yet as often reverted to the Crown by attainder or forfeiture. In the reign of Richard the Second, they were held by Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, jointly with Alicia, his wife. In the reign of Henry the Fourth, they were granted to the *Beauforts*, Earls of Somerset; but were taken from that family by Edward the Fourth, who bestowed them successively on Richard, Duke of York, and George, Duke of Clarence; on the attainder of the latter, they reverted to the Crown. Henry the Seventh granted them to his mother, the Countess of Richmond, for life. In the 27th of his successor, Henry the Eighth, an act of parliament was passed, by which they were given to Henry, Duke of Richmond, his natural son. After his death they reverted to the Crown, and were, by Edward the Sixth, bestowed on the Duke of Somerset; whose zeal for the Reformation was undoubtedly invigorated by the numerous grants of abbey lands made to him after the suppression of the monasteries. On the duke's attainder, the demesne lands of the Castle were leased for twenty-one years, on a fee-farm rent of 7l. 13s. 4d. In the 14th of Elizabeth, the Castle and Manor, with the whole Isle of Purbeck, were granted to Sir Christopher Hatton, whose heirs continued possessors till the commencement of the 17th century, when the Manor and Castle were given by Sir William Hatton to his lady, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, Earl of Exeter, and afterwards second wife to Lord Chief Justice Coke, who sold them, in the

year 1635, to Sir John Bankes, Attorney-General to Charles the First, and afterwards Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench. His descendant, Henry Bankes, Esq. and representative for this borough, is the present owner.



Page 2

Though this is an ancient borough by prescription, it was not incorporated till the 18th of Queen Elizabeth, when a charter was obtained by Sir Christopher Hatton, by which the inhabitants were invested with the same liberties as those of the Cinque Ports; besides being favoured with various other privileges. This charter was afterwards confirmed by James the First and Charles the Second. The government of the town is vested in a mayor and eight barons—the barons are those who have borne the office of mayor. The first return to, parliament was made in the 14th of Elizabeth. The right of election is possessed by all persons within the borough who are “seized in fee, in possession, or reversion, of any messuage, or tenement, or corporal hereditament; and in such as are tenants for life, or lives; and in want of such freehold, in tenants for years, determinable on any life, or lives, paying scot and lot.”[1] The number of voters is between forty and fifty.

[1] Hutchins’s Dorset, vol. i, p. 279, 2nd edit.

Corfe Castle “stands a little north of the town, opposite to the church, on a very steep rocky hill, mingled with hard rubble chalk stone, in the opening of those ranges of hills that inclose the east part of the Isle. Its situation between the ends of those hills deprives it much of its natural and artificial strength, being so commanded by them, that they overlook the tops of the highest towers; yet its structure is so strong, the ascent of the hill on all sides but the south so steep, and the walls so massy and thick, that it must have been one of the most impregnable fortresses in the kingdom before the invention of artillery. It was of great importance in respect to its command over the whole Isle: whence, our Saxon ancestors justly stiled it Corf Gate, as being the pass and avenue into the best part of the Isle.”

The Castle is separated from the town by a strong bridge of four very high, narrow, semi-circular arches, crossing a moat of considerable depth, but now dry. This bridge leads to the gate of the first ward, which remains pretty entire, probably from the thickness of the walls, which, from the outward to the inner facing, is full nine yards. The ruins of the entrance to the second ward, and of the tower near it, are very remarkable. “The latter (which once adjoined to the gate) was separated with a part of the arch at the time of the demolition of the Castle, and is moved down the precipice, preserving its perpendicularity, and projecting almost five feet below the corresponding part. Another of the towers on the same side is, on the contrary, inclined so much, that a spectator will tremble when passing under it. The singular position of these towers seems to have been occasioned through the foundations being undermined (for blowing them up) in an incomplete manner. On the higher part of the hill stands the keep, or citadel, which is at some distance from the centre of the fortress,



Page 3

and commands a view of boundless extent, to the north and west. It has not hitherto suffered much diminution from its original height; the fury of the winds being resisted less by the thickness of the walls than by the strength of the cement. The upper windows have Saxon arches, but are apparently of a later date than any other part of the building west of the keep, the stones of which being placed *herring-bone fashion* prove it to be of the earliest style. The Chapel is of a very late date, as appears from its obtuse Gothic arches; and I have really an idea that almost all the changes of architecture, from the reign of Edgar to that of Henry the Seventh, may be traced in this extensive and stupendous ruin.

“We could not view without horror the dungeons which remain in some of the towers: they recalled to our memory the truly diabolical cruelty of King John, by whose order twenty-two prisoners, confined in them were starved to death. Matthew of Paris, the historian, says, that many of those unfortunate men were among the first of the Poitevin nobility. Another instance of John's barbarous disposition was his treatment of Peter of Pontefract, a poor hermit, who was imprisoned in Corfe Castle for prophesying the deposition of that prince. Though the prophecy was in some measure fulfilled by the surrender which John made of his crown to the Pope's Legate, the year following, yet the imprudent prophet was sentenced to be dragged through the streets of Wareham, tied to horses' tails.”[2]

[2] Maton's Observations, vol. i. p. 12.

The exact period when this fortress was erected is unknown; though some circumstances render it probable that it was built by King Edgar. That it did not exist previously to the year 887, or 888, the time when the Nunnery at Shaftesbury was founded, is certain, from an inquisition taken in the fifty-fourth of Henry the Third; wherein the jurors returned, “that the Abbess and Nuns at Shaston (Shaftesbury) had without molestation, *before the foundation of the Castle at Corfe*, all wrecks within their manor of Kingston, in the Isle of Purbeck.” Mr. Aubrey, in his *Monumenta Britannica*, observes, he was informed, “that mention was made of Corfe Castle in the reign of King Alfred; yet it seems very improbable that this should be the fact; for if it had actually existed in the time of that monarch, it would surely have been more publicly known. The short reigns that succeeded would not allow time for so extensive an undertaking; but Edgar enjoyed more peace than almost any of his predecessors, was superior in wealth and power, and a great builder; he having founded, or repaired, no fewer than forty-seven monasteries.” To him, then, the origin of this castle may with the greatest probability be ascribed, as his second wife, Elfrida, resided here at the commencement of her widowhood. During this residence was committed the foul murder on King Edward, Edgar's son and successor, of which William of Malmesbury relates the ensuing particulars.



Page 4

“King Edward being hunting in a forest neare the sea, upon the south-east coast of the countie of Dorset, and in the Isle of Purbecke, came neare unto a fair and stronge castell, seated on a little river called Corfe, wherein his mother-in-law, Elfrida, with her sonne Ethelred, then lived: the King, ever beareing a kinde affection to them, beeing soe neare, would needs make knowne soe much by his personall visitation; which haveing resolved, and beeing either of purpose or by chance, singled from his followers, hee rode to the Castell gate. The Queene, who long had looked for an opportunitie, that, by makeing him awaye, shee might make waye for her own sonne to the Crowne, was glad the occasion nowe offered itselfe; and therefore, with a modest and humble behaviour, she bade him welcome, desireing to enjoye his presence that night. But hee, haveing performed what hee purposed, and doubting his companie might find him misseing, tolde her, that he now intended on horseback to drink to her and his brother in a cuppe of wine, and soe leave her; which beeing presented unto him, the cuppe was no sooner at his mouth, but a knife was at his back, which a servant, appointed by this treacherous woman, stroke into him. The Kinge, finding himselfe hurt, sett spurs to his horse, thinking to recover his companie; but the wounde beeing deepe, and fainting through the losse of much blood, he felle from his horse, which dragged him by one foot hanging in the stirrop, untill he was left dead at Corfe gate, Anno Dom. 979.”

Thus far Malmesbury: Hutchins, in his History of Dorset, relates the circumstances of this event in the following words:—

“The first mention of this Castle in our histories, is A.D. 978, as the Saxon Annals (though some of our historians say 979 and 981), upon occasion of the barbarous murder of Edward, King of the West Saxons, son of King Edgar, committed here by his mother-in-law, Elfrith, or Elfrida; 15 cal. April, in the middle of lent: The foulest deed, says the Saxon annalist, ever committed by the Saxons since they landed in Britain.”

In the reign of King Stephen, the Castle was seized by Baldwin de Rivers, Earl of Devon; and though the King afterwards endeavoured to dispossess him, his efforts were ineffectual. King John appears to have made it for some time his place of residence, as several writs, issued by him in the fifteenth and sixteenth of his reign, are dated at Corfe. On the coronation of Henry the Third, Peter de Mauley, the governor of the Castle, was summoned to attend the ceremony, and to bring with him the regalia, “then in his custody in this Castle wherewith he had been entrusted by John.” The following year he delivered up the Castle to the King, with all the military engines, ammunition, and jewels, committed to his charge.—Edward the Second was removed hither from Kenelworth Castle, when a prisoner, by order of the Queen, and her favourite Mortimer. Henry the Seventh repaired the Castle for the residence of his mother, the Countess of Richmond, the parliament having granted 2,000l. for that purpose; yet it does not appear that it was ever inhabited by this princess. It was again repaired by Sir Christopher Hatton, and most probably by Sir John Bankes, whose lady became illustrious from the gallant manner in which she defended it from the attacks of the parliament’s forces, in the time of Charles the First.

Page 5

In the year 1645 and 1646, the Castle was again besieged, or rather blockaded, by the parliament's forces, who obtained possession through the treachery of Lieutenant-Colonel Pitman, an officer of the garrison. When it was delivered up, the parliament ordered it to be demolished; and the walls and towers were undermined, and thrown down, or blown up with gunpowder. "Thus this ancient and magnificent fabric was reduced to a heap of ruins, and remains a lasting monument of the dreadful effects of anarchy, and the rage of civil war. The ruins are large, and allowed to be the noblest and grandest in the kingdom, considering the extent of the ground on which they stand. The vast fragments of the King's Tower, the round towers leaning as if ready to fall, the broken walls, and vast pieces of them tumbled down into the vale below, form such a scene of havoc and desolation, as strikes every curious spectator with horror and concern." [3]

[3] Hutchins's Dorset, vol. i. p. 286, 2nd edit.

The tragical murder of Edward by Elfrida, at Corfe Castle, and its memorable defence by Lady Bankes, form two very interesting narratives in Hutchins's Dorset. Their details would occupy too much of our present sheet, although they are worth reprinting for the gratification of the general reader.

Corfe Castle, as we have already intimated, is proposed to be disfranchised by the Great Reform Bill now before Parliament.

A year or two hence, probably, the political consequence of the place will be humbled as the Castle itself!

* * * * *

ANCIENT PARLIAMENTS.

(To the Editor.)

In the *Literary Magazine* for 1792 I find the following list of places, which *formerly* sent members to parliament:—

Dunstable	Odiham	Langport
Newberry	Overton	Montacute
Ely	Bromyard	Stoke Curcy
Wisbeach	Ledbury	Watchet
Polurun	Ross	Were
Egremont	Berkhemstead	Farnham
Bradnesham	Stoteford	Kingston upon Thames



Crediton	Greenwich	Bradford
Exmouth	Tunbridge	Mere
Tremington	Manchester	Highworth
Liddeford	Melton Mowbray	Bromsgrove
Modbury	Spalding	Dudley
Southmolton	Waynfleet	Kidderminster
Teignmouth	Bamberg	Pershore
Torrington	Corbrigg	Doncaster
Blandford	Burford	Jervale
Winborn	Chipping Norton	Pickering
Sherborn	Doddington	Ravenser
Milton	Whitney	Tykhull
Chelmsford	Oxbridge	Hallifax
Bere Regis	Chard	Whitby
Alresford	Dunster	and
Alton	Glastonbury	Leeds
Basingstoke		
Fareham		

The three last named places were summoned during the Commonwealth—also Manchester;—when discontinued, not known. Greenwich was summoned 4th and 5th of Philip and Mary; discontinued 6th of Philip and Mary. The other places were principally summoned and discontinued during the reigns of Edward the First, Second, and Third. Calais, in France, was summoned the 27th of Henry the Eighth; discontinued 3rd of Philip and Mary.



Page 6

In the reign of Edward the Third, an act of Parliament, made in the reign of William the Conqueror, was pleaded in the case of the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury, and judicially allowed by the court. Hence it appears (says a writer on this subject) that parliaments, or general councils, are coeval with the kingdom itself.

The first triennial parliament was in the year 1561; the first septennial one, in the year 1716.

Henry the Eighth increased the representatives in parliament 38; Edward the Sixth, 44; Mary, 25; Elizabeth, 62; and James the First, 27.

P.T.W.

* * * * *

ANCIENT BOROUGH OF LYDFORD.

(*For the Mirror.*)

Lydford is a poor, decayed village, consisting of ragged cottages, situated about seven miles from the north of Tavistock, Devonshire. It was (says Britton) formerly a place of consequence; and Prince states, that this ancient town and borough was the largest parish in the county, or the kingdom, and that the whole forest of Dart belonged to it; to whose parson, or rector, all the tithes thereof are due. It is said that this town, in its best strength, was able to entertain Julius Caesar, at his second arrival here in Britain; but, anno 997 it was grievously spoiled by the inhuman Danes. Recovering again, it had, in the days of the Conqueror, 122 burgesses. This is still the principal town of the Stannaries, wherein the court is held relating to those causes. There is an ancient castle, in which the courts are held; and offenders against the stannary laws were here confined, in a dreary and dismal dungeon, which gave rise to a proverb—“*Lydford laws punish a criminal first, and try him afterwards.*”

It appears from the Domesday Book, that Lydford and London were rated in the same manner, and at the same time.

Lydford formerly sent members to parliament, but was excused from this burden, as it was then considered, by pleading *propter paupertatem*.

P.T.W.

* * * * *



A WORD FOR THE READERS OF THE MIRROR.

Cadwallader Colden, in his *Account of the Five Indian Nations of Canada*, says—“They think themselves by nature superior to the rest of mankind, and call themselves *Onguehonwe*—that is, men surpassing all others. The words expressing things lately come to their knowledge are all compounds. They have no labials in their language, nor can they pronounce perfectly any word wherein there is a labial; and when one endeavours to teach them to pronounce these words, they tell one they think it ridiculous that they must *shut their lips to speak*. Their language abounds with gutturals and strong aspirations: these make it very sonorous and bold; and their speeches abound with metaphors after the manner of the eastern nations. Sometimes one word among them includes an entire definition of the thing: for example—they call wine *Oneharadeschoengtseragherie*, as to say, a liquor made of the juice of the grape.”



Page 7

N.B. It is hoped the above *guttural* word will not stick in the *throat* of the reader.

P.T.W.

* * * * *

SONG.

(*For the Mirror.*)

Oh fly with me my lady love, my island home is free,
And its flowers will bloom more sweetly still, when gazed upon by thee;
Come, lady, come, the stars are bright—in all their radiant power,
As if they gave their fairy light to guide thee to my bower.

Oh fly with me, my little bark is waiting 'neath the steep,
And the midnight breeze is fresh to waft thee o'er the stilly deep;
Though tempests blow they should not raise thy fears, nor scathe thy form,
For love would hover o'er thee still, a halo in the storm.

I've found for thee, my lady love, the freshest flowing springs,
Whose cooling waters ever burst in crystal sparklings;
It is for thee my shaft will wing the wild bird in the air,
Or strike the swift gazelle to deck our simple mountain fare.

Oh 'tis thou canst bid my spirit throb with rapture's warmest sigh,
As gushing winds will make a lute's strings sleeping melody;
When other hopes have faded like the flow'rets of the spring,
Thou'lt be to me a joyous wreath for ever blossoming.

Then fly with me my lady love, my island borne is free,
And its flowers will bloom more sweetly still, when gazed upon by thee;
Come, lady, come, the stars are bright in all their radiant power,
As if they gave their fairy light to guide thee to my bower.

* * * * *

WRITING INK.

(*To the Editor.*)

I see in your admirable work one of the never ending disquisitions about making writing ink. As I have used as much as most people in the threescore and ten years of my life,



and my father used perhaps three times as much, and we never were nor are troubled, I suppose we manage as well as most folks—and as it is begged of me to a great amount, I infer that others like it.

I improve a little on my father's plan, by substituting a better vehicle, and the knowledge of this improvement I obtained from a lady to whom a Princess Esterhazy communicated it.

It is so convenient, that whenever I go to Leamington, Brighton, Tunbridge, or such places of temporary residence, I send to a chemist's my recipe, reduced to the quantity of half a pint; and my ink is in use as soon as it comes, improving daily.

My home quantities are these:

Three quarts of stale good beer, *not porter*.

Three quarters of a pound fresh blue Aleppo galls, beaten.

Four ounces of copperas.

Four ounces of gum Arabic in powder.

Two ounces of rock alum.

This is kept for a week in a wide-mouthed pitcher close to the fire, never ON it, frequently stirred with a stick, and slightly covered with a large cork or tile.



Page 8

My small quantity is—

Half a pint of good beer.
Two ounces of galls.
Half an ounce of copperas.
Ditto of gum Arabic.
Quarter of an ounce of rock alum.

It will never mould or lose its substance or colour. The large quantity will bear half as much beer for future use. If it thickens, thin it with beer.

I adopt the Italian ladies' method of keeping the roving of a bit of silk stocking in the glass, which the pen moving, preserves the consistency of the liquid and keeps the fingers from it.

If you have seen better ink than this, I yield my pre-eminence.[4]

BLACKY.

[4] Our correspondent's communication is in appearance "full, fair, and free," as all "representations" ought to be.—ED.

* * * * *

SONG.

(For the Mirror.)

O pledge me not in sparkling wine,
In cups with roses bound;
O hail me at no festive shrine,
In mirth and music's sound.
Or if you pledge me, let it be
When none are by to hear,
And in the wine you drink to me,
For me let fall a tear.

Forbear to breathe in pleasure's hall,
A name you should forget;
Lest echo's faintest whisper fall
On her who loves thee yet.
Or if you name me, let it be
When none are by to hear;



And as my name is sigh'd by thee,
For me let fall a tear.

O think not when the harp shall sound
The notes we lov'd again,
And gentle voices breathe around,
I mingle in the strain.
Oh! only think you hear me when
The night breeze whispers near;
In hours of thought, and quiet, then
For me let fall a tear.

Seek me not in the mazy dance,
Nor let your fancy trace
Resemblance in a timid glance;
Or distant form and face.
But if you seek me, be it when
No other forms are near;
And while in thought we meet again,
For me let fall a tear.

L.M.N.

* * * * *

MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF ALL NATIONS.

* * * * *

BULL-BAITING IN SUFFOLK.

(For the Mirror.)

Lavenham Market-place was once considered as one of the most celebrated "theatres for cruel scenes" in the county of Suffolk,

"Where bulls and dogs in useless contest fought,
And sons of reason satisfaction sought
From sights would sicken Feeling's gentle heart,
Where want of courage barb'd Oppression's dart." [5]

[5] Ribbans's "Effusions."

On every anniversary of the Popish powder-plot, it was customary here to bait bulls; and it was then pretty generally understood that no butcher could legally slaughter a bull without first baiting him; or in default of doing so, he must burn candles in his shop so long as a bit of the bull-beef remained there for sale.

Page 9

Whilst a bull, with false horns, has been defending himself at the stake, or ring, in this market-place, dogs have been seen in the streets quarrelling for a part of the tongue of the living bull! and daughters of reason have joined their treble screams to the yell of triumph when the bull either tossed or worried a dog, or a dog had pinned the bull, by fastening on his nose so desperately firm as even to suffer his limbs to be broken—nay, cut off—before he would let go his hold.

A man (of course of the bull-dog breed), not many years since, engaged to attack a bull with his teeth, and so far succeeded as to deprive the animal of power to hurt him.

In Bury, too, so late as the year 1801, a mob of “Christian savages were indulging in the inhuman amusement of baiting and branding a bull. The poor animal, who had been privately baited on the same day, burst from his tethers in a state of madness. He was again entangled, and, monstrous to relate, his hoofs were cut off, and he defended himself on his mangled, bleeding stumps!”

The public exhibition of this most cowardly pastime is now prohibited; and the bull-ring was taken up, by order of Mr. Buck, out of this market-place about eight years back.

The name of the Rev. James Buck, rector of Lavenham, deserves to stand recorded as one of the most indefatigable magistrates who, uniting authority with compassion, exerted himself to the last in the cause of humanity.

The common arguments which have ever been adduced to show that we have animals bred by nature for various sports, and that the poor man has as great a right to his share of amusement as the rich man—that there are in all countries animals originally formed and carefully trained to the exercise of sports—must be admitted; but the Creator of Brutes and the Judge of Man never can behold cruelty to animals without hearing their cry; and although they are all evidently sent for the wise purpose of affording food, and of contributing to the comfort and improvement of the condition of man, they never were created to be abused, lacerated, mangled, and whilst living, cut to pieces and baited by brutes of superior race, depraved at heart and debased by custom.

If two men choose to stand up and fib each other about (saying nothing of the practice), why let them do it; or if two dogs worry each other to death for a bone, or two cocks meet and contend for the sovereignty of a dunghill. In these last two cases the appearance of cruelty is out of the question, and how much soever we may be inclined to pity, we are entirely divested of the ability to blame. Dogs naturally quarrel; and any attempt to reform and reconcile two snarling puppies, would be as inconsistent as it would be foolish to abuse the nettle for stinging our flesh, or to upbraid the poppy for its disagreeable and choking odour.

The true criterion of perfection to civilization is in proportion to the kind feeling entertained, and the humanity practised, towards those animals (in particular) which are subject to the immediate control of man.



Page 10

Lavenham.

F. RIBBANS.

* * * * *

THE SELECTOR, AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

* * * * *

THE JEWS BEFORE THEIR DISPERSION.

In our second reading of *Levi and Sarah, or the Jewish Lovers*, we have been struck with the following narrative of the pristine celebrity of this favoured people:—

The most ancient of all the written histories of the human race, of their deeds and condition, is undoubtedly that of the people of Israel: a people to whom God himself was both leader and lawgiver—for whom the sea was divided, and the stony rocks poured forth fountains of water—whose food descended on them from heaven—for whom angels from above fought—and whom all nature cheerfully obeyed,—in short a people, who, through a course of many centuries, though surrounded with numerous Heathen nations, bore constant testimony to the existence of one God alone. It is not wonderful that such a people should think themselves exalted far above all others. Moses, the first of all instructors and legislators, desired to raise his people above the fate which had ruined other nations, by communicating to them firmness and perseverance in their adherence to such institutions, as should keep them a distinct nation from all others. These institutions were peculiarly appropriate to the time, to the situation, and the circumstances of the people for whom they were prescribed. It was not his design that the Children of Israel, when freed from their misery, after wandering forty years in the wilderness, should mix themselves up with the Heathens, and adopt their morals and principles. He desired that they should continue a distinct and holy people, that strangers should be extirpated, and their country be possessed by Jews alone. Their bounds were marked out by God himself, and extended from Lebanon and the Euphrates to the sea; and he commanded them to keep his commandments in the land which he had bestowed upon them, so that he alone should be their Lord. Hereupon, as I have before observed, Moses delivered such laws as were adapted to their situation. But these wanderers of the desert adhered not to the law delivered to them. We find even during the life of Moses much obstinacy, and an unbridled inclination to Heathenism was manifested, by their making objects of idolatrous worship. After the death of Moses, the seventy-two interpreters collected his doctrines; but they added to them some, withdrew others, and confused several, by which the pure Mosaic opinions must have been obscured. And we read accordingly, in the tenth



chapter of Judges, “that the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord.” They served Baal and Ashtaroth, the deities of the Syrians and Moabites, and even the gods of the Philistines, whom God had commanded they should not serve.[6] Their hearts became

Page 11

hardened in their apostacy. The siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnazar, and the captivity in Babylon, had the most corrupting influence on the purity of the Mosaic doctrines, and on the laws. The original writings discovered by Hilkiah, were retrenched, added to, and the order of the events displaced. From the long residence amongst, and a great intercourse with strange people, all the frightful prejudices, all the fanciful dreams of our rabbins, were introduced into the sacred books. We learn from the second book of Chronicles, chap. xxxvi. verse 17, "that the king slew the young men with the sword in the house of the sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age. And all the vessels of gold, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and of the king and all the princes, these he brought all to Babylon; and they burnt the house of God, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire."

[6] The greater part of the kings, both of Israel and of Judah, served strange gods. Under Josiah, as he cleared out the Temple, the book of the laws of Moses was found by Hilkiah the priest, and was delivered to the king, who was much struck with the threatenings it contained.

During the seventy years that this captivity lasted, only a few old men survived who had retained any recollection of the laws of Moses. Esdras collected, as far as was possible, the doctrines of Moses; but they were mingled with too many principles which were foreign to them, and some of them may be traced to Zoroaster. The existence of the three sects of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and Essenes, each of which give a different interpretation of the word of God, abundantly prove this. Hillel and Schamai, a little before the time of Vespasian, had a school. The Rabbi Jonathan Sillai, a pupil of Hillel, exalts his master by saying, "If every tree were a pen, and the whole ocean ink, I should not be able to describe the wisdom I have received from Hillel." What extravagant expressions! How well do they paint the fanaticism of sectarianism! It was not, however, long, before this blind zeal drew down on the people a punishment from Heaven, by the destruction of Jerusalem under the Roman chief, Titus. Read the work of Flavius Josephus, and you will behold the noble firmness and perseverance of the Israelites on one side, and on the other the melancholy truth, that raving enthusiasm and blind obstinacy precipitated the ruin of the most flourishing people in the world. The last siege and capture of Jerusalem will ever be memorable in the history of mankind. How violent was the exasperation between the two sects of the believers! What firmness and obstinacy in each party, who preferred death and the destruction of the whole nation to yielding up the smallest particle of their different opinions! At that time, there fell, by famine and the sword,

Page 12

more than a million of the Jews. One part of the people were left as food for the wild beasts of the field, whilst some were kept alive to grace the triumph of the victor; but that which above all moved the grief of the Israelites, was the destruction of that temple which had been erected by their own monarchs at so great an expense. Its glory has been described by the author already named; I find the description among my papers, and send it to you. You will weep as a true Israelite, and compare our former greatness with the degraded state to which the blindness and errors of our Elders have reduced us.

Under Hadrian, the Jews were once more excited to a contest.[7] Bar Cochef announced himself as the Messias, but in the sequel 580,000 of our nation were destroyed, and the name of Jerusalem was changed for that of Elia. The emperor Julian, usually called the Apostate, in his ambition for future fame, ordered the Temple of Solomon to be rebuilt. But the fathers of the Christian Church, as well as the contemporary author Ammianus Marcellinus, assert that a fire, which burst forth from the ground, suspended the operation at its commencement.

[7] About fifty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the great body of the Jews held the opinion that the time for the appearance of their Messias had arrived, there arose this man, who announced himself in that character, and called himself Bar Cochef, or the "Son of a Star." He was acknowledged by numbers of his people, who became his followers, declared him their king, and made war upon the Romans, many of whom were destroyed, both in Greece and in Africa. His power continued betwixt three and four years, when the very people who had supported him proclaimed him an impostor, and gave him the name Bar Cosifa, or the "Son of a Lie."

* * * * *

ANATOMY OF SOCIETY.

By J.A. St. John, Esq.

The title of this work leads the reader to expect a regular and connected series of illustrations of the constitution or frame-work of society, in which its scheme might be traced through the various ramifications. On the contrary, we have two volumes of essays of no consecutive interest, but well written, and in some cases abounding with turns of scholarly elegance. They seldom flag, or grow vapid, notwithstanding they are on subjects of common life and experience, upon which moralists have rung the



changes of words for centuries past. Occasionally, however, there are some new positions and little conceits which have more of prettiness than truth to recommend them. To call Cowper's line

God made the country, but man made the town!

"a piece of impious jargon" is no proof of Mr. St. John's acumen or fair comprehension of the poet's meaning, but accords with his unproved assertion "The mark of man's hand is as visible in the country as in the town to all those who make use of their eyes." Yet this sentiment is a fair specimen of the stern stuff of which Mr. St. John's creeds and opinions are made up.[8] Nevertheless, the volumes are entertaining, and in proof we have carved out a few laconic extracts:



Page 13

[8] One of Mr. St. John's lines in the *Essay on the Influence of Great Cities* (the worst in the volume,) is "The very name of London sounds sweetly to me." This is not a whit better than the man who thought "no garden like Covent Garden, and no flower like a cauliflower." Captain Morris's "sweet shady side of Pall Mall," compared to these sentiments, is a piece of delicious refinement.

Love of Pleasure.—The cause why men visit each other and converse, abstracting all considerations of business, seems to be simply the love of pleasure. This is the passion truly universal; this is the pivot upon which the world intellectual, as well as the world of sense, turns. Philosophers and saints feel it in their speculations and devotions, and yield to it too, in their way, as completely as the Sybaritish gourmand, whose stomach is his Baal and Ashtaroth. Nor is this at all surprising, in reality, for the gratification of this passion is *happiness*—a gem for which all the world search, and but few find.

Conversation.—The persons who shine most in conversation are, perhaps, those who attack established opinions and usages; for there is a kind of splendid Quixotism in standing up, even in the advocating of absurdity, against the whole world.

Love.—Do we imagine, when we open some new treatise on Love, that the author has discovered a fresh vein, and mined more deeply than all former adventurers? Not at all: we know very well that the little god has already usurped all beautiful epithets, all soft expressions, all bewitching sounds; and the utmost we expect from the skill of the writer is, that he has thrown all these together, so as to produce a new picture. Love is immortal, and does not grow wrinkled because we and our expressions fade. His heart is still as joyous and his foot as light as when he trod the green knolls of Paradise with Eve. He will be young when he sits upon the grave of the thousandth generation of our posterity, listening to the beating of his own heart, or sporting with his butterfly consort, as childishly as if he were no older than the daisy under his foot. His empire is a theme of which the tongue never grows weary, or utters all that seems to come quivering and gasping to the lips for utterance. We think, more than we ever spoke, of love; and if we have a curiosity when we first touch some erotic volume, it is to see whether the author has embodied our unutterable feelings, or divulged what we have never dared.

Wit in Season.—The jest of an ex-minister is as flavourless as a mummy; as unintelligible as its hieroglyphical epitaph. Three days after his fall, his wit, under the sponge of oblivion, has grown as much a mystery as the name of him who built the pyramid, or the taste of Lot's wife.

Read my book.—When Hobbes was at any time at a loss for arguments to defend his unsocial principles, *viva voce*, he always used to say—"I have published my opinions; consult my works; and, if I am wrong, confute me publicly." To most persons this mode

of confutation was by far too operose; but they might have confoundedly puzzled the philosopher in verbal disputation.



Page 14

In "*Vino Veritas*."—Horace with commendation of kings—

—who never chose a friend
Till with full bowls they had unmasked his soul,
And seen the bottom of his deepest thoughts.

But much dependence cannot be placed upon what is wrung out of a man under the influence of wine, which does not so much unveil as it disarranges our ideas; and, therefore, whoever contemplates the character from the combination of ideas produced by intoxication, views man in a false light. Violent anger has nearly the same effect as wine.

Cupid—was painted blind by the ancients, to signify that the affections prevent the sight, not so much from perceiving outward as inward defects.

Character.—Whoever would study the characters of those with whom he lives or converses, must keep up the appearance of a kind of recklessness and frivolity, for the mind closes itself up like the hedgehog, at the least sensible touch of observation, and will not be afterwards drawn out. Men have been known in the middle of a discovery of their character, to be stopped short by a look, which brought them to themselves, and traced before them in an instant the danger of their position and the methods of escape. A keen observer, indeed, may always adjust the temperature of his discourse by the faces of his auditors, which are saddened or brightened, like the face of the sea in April, as more or less of the sunshine of rhetoric breaks forth upon them.

Greatness.—What renders it difficult for ordinary minds to discover a great man before he has, like a tree, put forth his blossoms, is the manner, various and dissimilar, in which such persons evolve their powers. For as in nature the finest days are sometimes in the morning overclouded and dark, so the developement of genius follows no rule, but is hastened or retarded by position and circumstance. But to a keen eye there always appear, even in the first obscurity of extraordinary men, certain internal commotions and throes, denoting some *magna vis animi* at work within.

Physiognomy.—When Atticus advised Cicero to keep strict watch over his face, in his first interview with Caesar after the civil wars, he could not mean that he might thereby conceal his *character* from Caesar, who knew well enough what that was; but he meant, that by such precaution he might conceal from the tyrant his actual hatred and disgust for his person. Yet for the character and secret nature of a man, *fronti nulli fides*.

Writing.—It was Addison, we believe, who observed of the schoolmen, that they had not genius enough to write a small book, and therefore took refuge in folios of the largest magnitude. We are getting as fast as possible into the predicament of the schoolmen. No one knows when he has written enough; but, like a player at chess, still goes on with the self-same ideas, merely altering their position. This must



Page 15

arise from early habits and prejudices, from having been taught to regard with veneration vast collections of common-places, under the titles of this or that man's *works*. Tacitus may be carried about in one's pocket, while it will very shortly require a wagon to remove Sir Walter Scott's labours from place to place. Voltaire's *facility* was his greatest fault; better he had elaborated his periods, like Rousseau; who, notwithstanding, wrote too much. The latter, however, of all modern writers, best knew the value of his own mind. His prime of life was passed in vicissitude and study. He did not set himself about writing books for mankind, until he knew what they possessed and what they wanted. It was his opinion that a writer who would do any good should stand upon the pinnacle of his age, and from thence look into the future.

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THE NATURALIST.

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BIRDS CHANGING COLOUR.

In a letter to the Editor of the Literary Gazette.

Sir—Observing in the *Literary Gazette* of last week, a notice of Mr. Young's account of the change of colour in the plumage of birds from fear, I have been induced to mention some circumstances which, among others, fell under my own observation, and from which I am led to conclude that such changes among the volatile tribes are not so rare as may be imagined, and are often produced by disease, as well as by other mental passions besides terror.

Without referring to the celebrated *Jacobite* goldfinch of Miss Cicy Scott, which the good old maiden of Carubber's Close affirmed became of a deep sable hue on the day of Charles's martyrdom—though doubtless the natural philosopher would have discovered in this some more efficient cause than respect for the royal sufferer!—I myself recollect a partial change in the colour of a fine green parrot, belonging to Mr. Rutherford, of Ladfield. Like Miss Scott, the laird of Ladfield was a staunch adherent of the house of Stuart, and to his dying day cherished the hope of beholding their restoration to the throne of Britain.

In the meantime, Mr. Rutherford amused his declining years by teaching Charley to whistle "The king shall hae his ain again," and to gibber "Send the old rogue to Hanover;" for which he was always rewarded by a sugar-plum or a dole of wassail (Scotch short-bread). Those epicurean indulgences at length induced a state of



obesity; and so depraved became the appetite of the bird, that, rejecting his natural food, he used to pluck out the feathers from those parts of the back within his reach, and bruise them with his bill, to obtain the oily substance contained in the quills.

The feathers which grew on the denuded parts were whitish, and never resumed their natural hue. I often saw Charley long after the death of his master, and he looked as if Nature, in one of her sportive moods, had created him half parrot, half gosling—so strangely did his whitish back and tail contrast with his scarlet poll and brilliant green neck.



Page 16

A still more remarkable change of colour in a lark, belonging to Dr. Thos. Scott, of Fanash, occurred under my own eye, and which, I have no doubt, was produced by grief at being separated from a mavis. Their cages had long hung side by side in the parlour, and often had they striven to out-rival each other in the loudness of their song, till their minstrelsy became so stunning, that it was found necessary to remove the laverock to a drawing-room above stairs.

The poor bird gradually pined, moped, and ceased its song; its eyes grew dim, and its plumage assumed a dullish tint, which, in less than a fortnight, changed to a deep black.

The worthy physician watched with the eye of a naturalist this phenomenon; but, after awhile, fearing for the life of his favourite, he ordered it to be replaced alongside its companion.

In a short time it resumed its spirits and its song—recommenced its rivalry with the mavis; but, after every moulting, the new feathers were always of the same coal-black colour. The mavis evinced no corresponding feeling of attachment—neither, so far as I recollect, missing its companion, nor rejoicing at its restoration.

A.C. HALL.

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SPIRIT OF THE PUBLIC JOURNALS.

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BATTLE OF THE CATS.

(From the "Noctes" of Blackwood.)

Tickler.—A Battle of Cats.

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon the slates!"

Miss Tabitha having made an assignation with Tom Tortoiseshell, the feline phenomenon, they two sit curmurring, forgetful of mice and milk, of all but love! How meekly mews the Demure, relapsing into that sweet under-song—the Purr! And how curls Tom's whiskers like those of a Pashaw! The point of his tail—and the point only is alive—insidiously turning itself, with serpent-like seduction, towards that of Tabitha, pensive as a nun. His eyes are rubies, hers emeralds—as they should be—his lightning, hers lustre—for in her sight he is the lord, and in his, she is the lady of creation.



North.—

“O happy love! when love like this is found;—
O heartfelt raptures! blessed beyond compare!
I’ve paced much this weary mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare.—
If earth a draught of heavenly pleasure share,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In others arms breathe out the tender tale”—

Shepherd.—The last line wanna answer—

“Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale”

Tickler.—Woman or cat,—she who hesitates, is lost. But Diana, shining in heaven, the goddess of the Silver Bow, sees the peril of poor Pussy, and interposes her celestial aid to save the vestal. An enormous grimalkin, almost a wild cat, comes rattling along the roof, down from the chimney-top, and Tom Tortoiseshell, leaping from love to war, tackles to the Red Rover in single combat. Sniff—snuff—splutter—squeak—squall —- caterwaul—and throttle!



Page 17

North.—Where are the following lines?

“From the soft music of the spinning purr,
When no stiff hair disturbs the glossy fur,
The whining wail so piteous and so faint,
When through the house Puss moves with long complaint,
To that unearthly throttling caterwaul,
When feline legions storm the midnight wall,
And chant, with short snuff and alternate hiss,
The dismal song of hymeneal bliss”—

Shepherd.—Wheesht, North, wheesht.

Tickler.—Over the eaves sweeps the hairy hurricane. Two cats in one—like a prodigious monster with eight legs and a brace of heads and tails—and through among the lines on which clothes are hanging in the back-green, and which break the fall, the dual number plays squelch on the miry herbage.

Shepherd.—A pictur o’ a back-green in fowre words. I see it and them.

Tickler.—The four-story fall has given them fresh fury and more fiery life. What tails!—each as thick as my arm, and rustling with electricity like the northern streamers. The Red Rover is generally uppermost—but not always, for Tom has him by the jugular like a very bulldog—and his small, sharp, tiger-teeth, entangled in the fur, pierce deeper and deeper into the flesh—while Tommy keeps tearing away at his rival, as if he would eat his way into his wind-pipe. Heavier than Tom Tortoiseshell is the Red Rover by a good many pounds;—but what is weight to elasticity—what is body to soul? In the long tussle, the hero ever vanquishes the ruffian—as the Cock of the North the Gander.

North (bowing).—Proceed.

Tickler.—Cats’ heads are seen peering over the tops of walls, and then their lengthening bodies, running crouchingly along the copestones, with pricked-up ears and glaring eyes, all attracted towards one common centre—the back-green of the inextinguishable battle. Some dropping, and some leaping down, from all altitudes—lo! a general *melee*! For Tabitha, having through a skylight forced her way down stairs, and out of the kitchen-window into the back-area, is sitting pensively on the steps,

“And like another Helen fires another Troy.”

Detachments come wheeling into the field of battle from all imaginable and unimaginable quarters;—and you now see before you all the cats in Edinburgh, Stockbridge, and the suburbs—about as many, I should suppose, as the proposed constituents of our next city member.



Shepherd.—The Town-Council are naething to them in nummers. The back-green's absolutely composed o' cats.



Page 18

Tickler.—Up fly a thousand windows from ground-flat to attic, and what an exhibition of night-caps! Here elderly gentlemen, apparently in their shirts, with head night-gear from Kilmarnock, worthy of Tappitoury's self,—behind them their wives—grandmothers at the least—poking their white faces, like those of sheeted corpses, over the shoulders of the fathers of their numerous progeny—there chariest maids, prodigal enough to unveil their beauties to the moon, yet, in their alarm, folding the frills of their chemises across their bosoms—and lo! yonder the Captain of the Six Feet Club, with his gigantic shadow frightening that pretty damsel back to her couch, and till morning haunting her troubled dreams. “Fire! Fire!” “Murder! Murder!” is the cry—and there is wrath and wonderment at the absence of the police-officers and engines. A most multitudinous murder is in process of perpetration there—but as yet fire is there none; when lo! and hark! the flash and peal of musketry—and then the music of the singing slugs slaughtering the Catti, while bouncing up into the air, with Tommy Tortoise clinging to his carcass, the Red Rover yowls wolfishly to the moon, and then descending like lead into the stone area, gives up his nine-ghosts, never to chew cheese more, and dead as a herring. In mid-air the Phenomenon had let go his hold, and seeing it in vain to oppose the yeomanry, pursues Tabitha, the innocent cause of all this woe, into the coal-cellar, and there, like Paris and Helen,

“When first entranced, in Cranae's Isle they lay,
Lip press'd to lip, and breathed their souls away,”

entitled but not tempted to look at a king, the peerless pair begin to purr and play in that subterranean paradise, forgetful of the pile of cat-corpses that in that catastrophe was heaped half-way up the currant-bushes on the walls, so indiscriminate had been the Strages. All undreamed of by them the beauty of the rounded moon, now hanging over the city, once more steeped in stillness and in sleep!

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FROM THE SPANISH.

“That much a widowed wife will moan,
When her old husband's dead and gone,
I may conceive it;
But that she won't be brisk and gay,
If another offer the next day:
I won't believe it.

“That Cloris will repeat to me,
Of all men, I adore but thee,
I may conceive it;
But that she has not often sent



To fifty more the compliment,
I won't believe it.

"That Celia will accept the choice
Elected by her parents' voice,
I may conceive it;
But that, as soon as all is over,
She won't elect a younger lover,
I won't believe it.

"That when she sees her marriage gown,
Inez will modestly look down,
I may conceive it;
But that she does not from that hour,
Resolve to amplify her power,
I won't believe it.



Page 19

“That a kind husband to his wife,
Permits each pleasure of this life,
I may conceive it;
But that the man so blind should be
As not to see what all else see,
I won't believe it.

“That in a mirror young coquets
Should study all their traps and nets,
I may conceive it;
But that the mirror, above all,
Should be the object principal,
I won't believe it.”

Fraser's Magazine.

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THE SLAVE SHIP, A GALLEY YARN.

Come all you gallant sailors bold, that to the seas belong,
Oh listen unto me, my boys, while I recount my song;
'Tis concerning of an action that was fought the other day,
By the saucy little Primrose, on the coast of Africa.

One evening, while we the deep with gentle breezes plough,
A sail is seen from our mast-head, hard on the weather bow;
The gloom of night now coming on, of her we soon lose sight,
But down she bears, about five bells, as if prepared for fight.

Yet here she overreach'd herself, and prov'd she was mistaken,
Thinking by passing in the dark, that she could save her bacon;
For British tars don't lose a prize, by fault in looking out,
So we brought her to, with much ado, at eleven o'clock about.

All hands were call'd to quarters, our guns were clear'd away,
And every man within the ship, was anxious for the fray:
Our first lieutenant went on board, her hold to overhaul,
And found them training of their guns, to the boatswain's pipe and call.

To get near the main hatchway, our officer contrives,
But some ruffian-looking rascals surrounded him with knives;
For well they knew we peace must keep, unless that we could tell
That slaves were actually on board, detecting them by smell.



Striving this object to attain, he firm resistance met,
So then return'd on board in haste, fresh orders for to get;
Says he, "It is a spanking ship, I'm sure that she has slaves,
And bears from sacred house and home, the wretches o'er the waves."

"Oh! very well!" our captain cries, "for her we will lie by,
And on the morrow's coming dawn, a palaver we will try;
For should we now attempt to make a pell-mell night attack,
I fear our fight would heavy fall upon the harmless black."

So early the next morning, we gently edged away,
Our captain hail'd the stranger ship, and unto her did say—
"If you don't send your boat on board, and act as I desire,
Although you bear the flag of Spain, into your hull I'll fire."

The Slaver swore that all our threats should not his courage scare,
And that th' assault of such a sloop was quite beneath his care:
Our captain calls, "Stand by, my lads! and when I give the word,
We slap off two smart broadsides, and run her right on board."

Page 20

The signal then was given, a rattler we let fly,
And many a gloomy Spaniard upon her decks did die:
“Now fire again! my British boys, repeat the precious dose,
For round and grape, when plied so well, they cannot long oppose.”

Now peals the roar of battle strife, now British hearts expand,
And now the anxious sailor pants to combat hand to hand;
With grapnels and with hawsers, we lash’d her to our beam,
Although the muzzles of our guns did o’er our bulwarks gleam.

“Away, my men!” the captain cries, “’tis just the time to board,”
Upon her decks we jump’d amain, with tomahawk and sword;
The conflict now was sharp and fierce, for clemency had fled,
And streams of gore mark’d every blow—the dying and the dead.

Our captain heads the daring band, to make the Velos strike,
But soon received a dangerous thrust, from a well-hove boarding pike.
We thought ’twas all “clue up” with him, although he cheered us on,
And we determined, every man, the Slaver should be won.

We beat them on the main deck, till they could no longer stand,
When our leader sings out “Quarter!” some mercy to command;
But now the sherry which we made, with panic fill’d the horde,
For some dived down the hatchways, and some leap’d overboard.

Close to their scudding heels our lads did their attentions pay,
Cutlass in hand, to hold their own—to capture more than slay;
Through slippery gore we fought our way, the quarter-deck to gain,
And in loud cheers her mizen peak soon lost the flag of Spain.

Our prize we found was frigate-built, from Whydah she sail’d out,
With near six hundred slaves on board, and eight score seamen stout;
Equipp’d with stores of every sort, the missile war to wage,
And twenty long guns through her ports seem’d frowning to engage.

Of those that were made prisoners, they all were put abaft,
And we with well-arm’d sentinels paraded fore and aft;
We pick’d up all the slaughter’d men, and hove them in the deep,
Where, full in number fifty, they take their final sleep.

And twenty more disabled Dons, with eyelet holes and scars,
Were treated by our surgeon the same as our own tars;
For when they struck no time was lost, to the Primrose they were sent,
And arms and legs, and broken heads, strict ordeal underwent.



Our chief was badly wounded, likewise the master too,
One midshipman, the boatswain, and nine of our ship's crew;
Besides three seamen killed outright, who thus resign'd their breath,
And in the hour of vict'ry gained a patriotic death.

So now my story to conclude, although beyond my might,—
I write these lines to let you know, how loyal tars can fight;
So toast the health of those brave lads that bore the palm away,
And beat the Spanish ship Velos on the coast of Africa.



Page 21

United Service Journal.

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SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY.

* * * * *

VENTRILLOQUISM.

The art of the ventriloquist is well known: it consists in making his auditors believe that words and sounds proceed from certain persons and certain objects in his vicinity, while they are uttered by himself; and it is founded on that property of sound in virtue of which the human ear is unable to judge with any accuracy of the direction in which sounds reach it. This incapacity of the ear is the fertile source of many of those false judgments which impress a supernatural character upon sounds that have a fixed locality and a physical origin.—We know of a case, where a sort of hollow musical sound, originating within three or four feet of the ears of two persons in bed, baffled for months every attempt to ascertain its cause. Sometimes it seemed to issue from the roof, sometimes from a neighbouring apartment, but never from the spot from which it really came. Its supposed localities were carefully examined, but no cause for its production could be ascertained. Though it was always heard by both persons together, it was never heard when A. alone was in the apartment, and the time of its occurrence depended on the presence of B. This connected it with his destiny, and the imagination was not slow in turning the discovery to its own purposes. An event, however, which might never have occurred in the life-time of either party, revealed the real cause of the sound, the locality of which was never afterwards mistaken.

In order to understand what part this indecision of the ear performs in the feats of the ventriloquist, let the reader suppose two men placed before him in the open air, at the distance of one hundred feet, and standing close together. If they speak in succession, and if he does not know their voices, or see their lips move, he will be unable to tell which of them it is that speaks. If a man and a child are now placed so near the auditor that he can distinguish, without looking at them, the direction of the sounds which they utter, that is, whether the sound comes from the right or the left hand person, let the man be supposed capable of speaking in the voice of a child. When the man speaks in the language and the accents of the child, the auditor will suppose that the child is the speaker, although his ear could distinguish, under ordinary circumstances, that the sound came from the man. The knowledge conveyed to him by his ear is, in this case, made to yield to the more forcible conviction that the language and accents of a child could come only from the child; this conviction would be still further increased if the child should use gestures, or accommodate his features to the childish accents uttered by the man. If the man were to speak in his own character and his

Page 22

own voice, while the child exhibited the gestures and assumed the features which correspond with the words uttered, the auditor might be a little puzzled; but we are persuaded that the exhibition made to the eye would overpower his other sources of knowledge, and that he would believe the accents of the man to be uttered by the child: we suppose, of course, that the auditor is not allowed to observe the *features* of the person who speaks.

In this case the man has performed the part of a ventriloquist, in so far as he imitated accurately the accents of the child; but the auditor could not long be deceived by such a performance. If the man either hid his face or turned his back upon the auditor when he was executing his imitation, a suspicion would immediately arise, the auditor would attend more diligently to the circumstances of the exhibition, and would speedily detect the imposition. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that the ventriloquist shall possess another art, namely, that of speaking without moving his lips or the muscles of his face: how this is effected, and how the art is acquired, we do not certainly know; but we believe that it is accomplished by the muscles of the throat, assisted by the action of the tongue upon the palate, the teeth, and the inside of the lips—all of them being movements which are perfectly compatible with the immutability of the lips themselves, and the absolute expression of silence in the countenance. The sounds thus uttered are necessarily of a different character from those which are produced by the organs of speech when unimpeded, and this very circumstance gives double force to the deception, especially when the ventriloquist artfully presents the contrast to his auditor by occasionally speaking with his natural voice. If he carries in his hand those important personages Punch and Judy, and makes their movements even tolerably responsive to the sentiment of the dialogue, the spectator will be infinitely more disposed to refer the sounds to the lantern jaws and the timber lips of the puppets than to the conjurer himself, who presents to them the picture of absolute silence and repose.

Mr. Dugald Stewart, who has written an interesting article on ventriloquism in the appendix to the third volume of the “Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind,” has, we think, taken a very imperfect view of the subject. He not only doubts the fact, that ventriloquists possess the power of fetching a voice from within, but “he cannot conceive what aid the ventriloquist could derive in the exercise of his art from such an extraordinary power, if it were really in his possession.” He expresses himself “fully satisfied, that the imagination alone of the spectators, when skilfully managed, may be rendered subservient in a considerable degree to the purposes of the ventriloquist;” and he is rather inclined to think, that “when seconded by such powers of imitation as some mimics possess, it is quite sufficient to account for all the phenomena of ventriloquism of which we have heard.”



Page 23

From these observations it would appear, that Mr. Stewart had never witnessed those feats of the ventriloquist where his face is distinctly presented to the audience—a case in which he must necessarily speak *from within*. But independent of this fact, it is very obvious that there are many imitations, especially those of the cries of particular animals, and of sounds of a high pitch, which cannot be performed *pleno ore*, by the ordinary modes of utterance, but which require for their production that very faculty, of which Mr. Stewart doubts the existence. Such sounds are necessarily produced by the throat, without requiring the use of the mouth and lips; and the deception actually depends on the difference between such sounds, and those which are generated by the ordinary modes of utterance.

The *art* of ventriloquism, therefore, consists in the power of imitating all kinds of sound, not only in their ordinary character, but as modified by distance, obstructions, and other causes; and also in the power of executing those imitations by muscular exertions which cannot be seen by the spectators. But these powers, to whatever degree of perfection they may be possessed, would be of no avail if it were not for the incapacity of the ear to distinguish the directions of sounds—an incapacity not arising from any defect in the organ itself, but from the very nature of sound. If sound were propagated in straight lines, like light, and if the ear appreciated the direction of the one, as the eye does that of the other, the ventriloquist would exercise in vain all the powers of imitation and of internal utterance. Even in the present constitution of the ear, his art has its limits, beyond which he must be cautious of pushing it, unless he calls to his aid another principle, which, we believe, has not yet been tried. In order to explain this, we shall analyze some of the most common feats of ventriloquism. When M. Fitzjames imitated the watchman crying the hour in the street, and approaching nearer and nearer the house, till he came opposite the window, he threw up the window-sash, and asked the hour, which was immediately answered in the same tone, but clearer and louder; and upon shutting the window, the watchman's voice became less audible, and all at once very faint, when the ventriloquist called out, in his own voice, that he had turned the corner. Now, as the artist was stationed at the window, and as the sound from a real watchman must necessarily have entered by the window, the difference between the two directions was considerably less than that which the ear is unable to appreciate. Had the ventriloquist stood at one window, and tried to make the sound of a watchman's voice enter *another* window, he would have failed in his performance, because the difference of the two directions was too great. In like manner, when M. Alexandre introduced a boy from the street, and made him sing from his stomach the song of Malbrook, he placed his head as near as possible to the boy's chest, under the pretence of listening, whereas the real object of it was to assimilate as much as possible the true and the fictitious direction of the sounds. Had he placed the boy at the distance of six or eight feet, the real singer would have been soon detected.



Page 24

We have made several experiments with a view of determining the angle of uncertainty, or the angle within which the ear cannot discover the direction of sounds; but this is not easily done, for it varies with the state of the air and of surrounding objects. If the air is perfectly pure, and if no objects surround the sounding body, the angle of uncertainty will be less than under any other circumstances, as the sound suffers neither deviation nor reflection. If the sounding body is encircled with objects which reflect sound, the echoes arrive at the ear, at short distances, nearly at the same time with the direct sound; and as they form a single sound, the angle of uncertainty must then be much greater, for the sound really arrives at the ear from various quarters. The ventriloquist, therefore, might avail himself of this principle, and choose an apartment in which the reverberations from its different sides multiply the directions of the sounds which he utters, and thus facilitate his purpose of directing the imagination of his audience to the object from which he wishes these sounds to be thought to proceed.

Quarterly Review.

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THE GATHERER.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.

SHAKSPEARE.

* * * * *

EPITAPH ON STERNE.

How often wrongs our nomenclature,
How our names differ from our nature,
'Tis easy to discern:
"Here lies the quintessence of wit,
For mirth and humour none so fit,
And yet men call him—Stern—e!"

* * * * *

LADIES FORMERLY IN PARLIAMENT.

(For the Mirror.)



Gurdon, in his *Antiquities of Parliaments*, says, “The ladies of birth and quality sat in council with the Saxon Wita’s.” “The Abbess Hilda (says Bede,) presided in an ecclesiastical synod.”

“In Wighfred’s great council at Beconceld, A.D. 694, the abbesses sat and deliberated, and five of them signed the decrees of that council along with the king, bishops, and nobles.”

“King Edgar’s charter to the Abbey of Crowland, A.D. 961, was with the consent of the nobles and abbesses, who subscribed the charter.”

“In Henry the Third’s and Edward the First’s time, four abbesses were summoned to parliament, *viz.* of Shaftesbury, Berking, St. Mary of Winchester, and of Wilton.”

“In the 35th of Edward III. were summoned by writ to parliament, to appear there by their proxies, *viz.* Mary Countess of Norfolk, Alienor Countess of Ormond, Anna Despenser, Phillippa Countess of March, Johanna Fitz Water, Agneta Countess of Pembroke, Mary de St. Paul Countess of Pembroke, Margaret de Roos, Matilda Countess of Oxford, Catherine Countess of Athol. These ladies were called *Ad Colloquium et Tractatum*, by their proxies, a privilege peculiar to the peerage to appear and act by proxy.”



Page 25

P.T.W.

N.B. They no doubt *manfully asserted* their *colloquial rights*.

* * * * *

FASTING.

From a very old work, "Noble Numbers."

Is this a feast to keep,
The larder leane,
And clean,
From fat of veales and sheep?

Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh yet still
To fill
The platter high with *fish*?

Is it to fast an *hour*,
Or, ragged to go
Or show
A downcast look or snore?

No, 'tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate
And hate;
To circumcise thy life.

To show a heart grief rent,
To *starve* thy sin,
Not bin;
And *that's to keep* thy Lent.

* * * * *



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